



Westmoreland  
Conservation  
District   
ANNUAL REPORT 2008





*Dear friend of conservation –*

When it rains, it pours, the old saying goes.

And that certainly was the happy case for our stormwater program last year which received an unprecedented flood of support – \$200,000 – from foundations, businesses, and individuals.

The people at the Colcom Foundation started the ball rolling when they offered a challenge – that they would match, dollar-for-dollar, donations made to our stormwater program, up to a total of \$100,000.

So we asked our friends if they would give. And even in these tough economic times, they responded with such tremendous generosity that we were able to match the entire challenge amount!

We are most grateful to everyone who gave. And for the fact that the donors listed on page 13 recognize – as the Westmoreland County Commissioners did 21 years ago when they funded the first District stormwater program in Pennsylvania – that good stormwater management yields tremendous benefits for human health, for the livability of our communities, for the economy, and for our natural resources.

As 2008 drew to a close, we were already starting to put the challenge money to good use in the community, launching major conservation projects that had been only dreams for so many years, including taking the first steps toward addressing the decades-long problem of flooding along Little Pucketa Creek in New Kensington, and planning for the first-ever assessment of stormwater needs in each and every one of the county's watersheds.

We also expanded our stormwater education program, reaching out with new workshops to new audiences, including homeowners, construction-site inspectors, and the equestrian community, and adding five new interpretive stations to our self-guided stormwater trail.

I know that the benefits of this successful challenge will continue to be realized all during 2009, and far beyond.

And while our stormwater program registered dramatic growth with this infusion of financial support, our other District programs continued, as they always do, to also do a great job of meeting community needs.

- Our erosion control staff, for instance, set new records for both the amount of technical assistance provided to municipal officials during the year and the number of inspections they conducted of post-construction best-management practices (see page 5).
- Our nutrient management specialist helped bring significant new sources of funding to area farms for conservation projects (see page 7).
- Our administrative staff provided secretarial and accounting support to the new Westmoreland Land Trust to help it get up and running (see page 10).
- Our management team successfully rented the remaining space in our conservation incubator building, GreenForge (see page 11).
- Our Board reinstated our annual awards banquet after a self-imposed one-year hiatus due to budget constraints and we welcomed the largest crowd in the history of the event (see page 12).
- Our education staff hosted the second-ever Sustainable Energy Field Day (see page 11).
- Our forester helped to support the important work of the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association (see page 7), and
- Our watershed specialist helped the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association move its Brinkerton abandoned mine reclamation project closer to completion (see page 1).

We also took the first steps toward developing a new long-range plan, and in planning a celebration in 2009 of six decades of helping people use resources wisely.

All that we have been able to accomplish – in 2008 as well as in the 58 years that preceded it – has been the result of the dedication of our staff and volunteers, and the citizens who make conservation a part of their daily lives.

Thank you for joining with us.



*J. Roy Houston*

J. Roy Houston  
Chairman

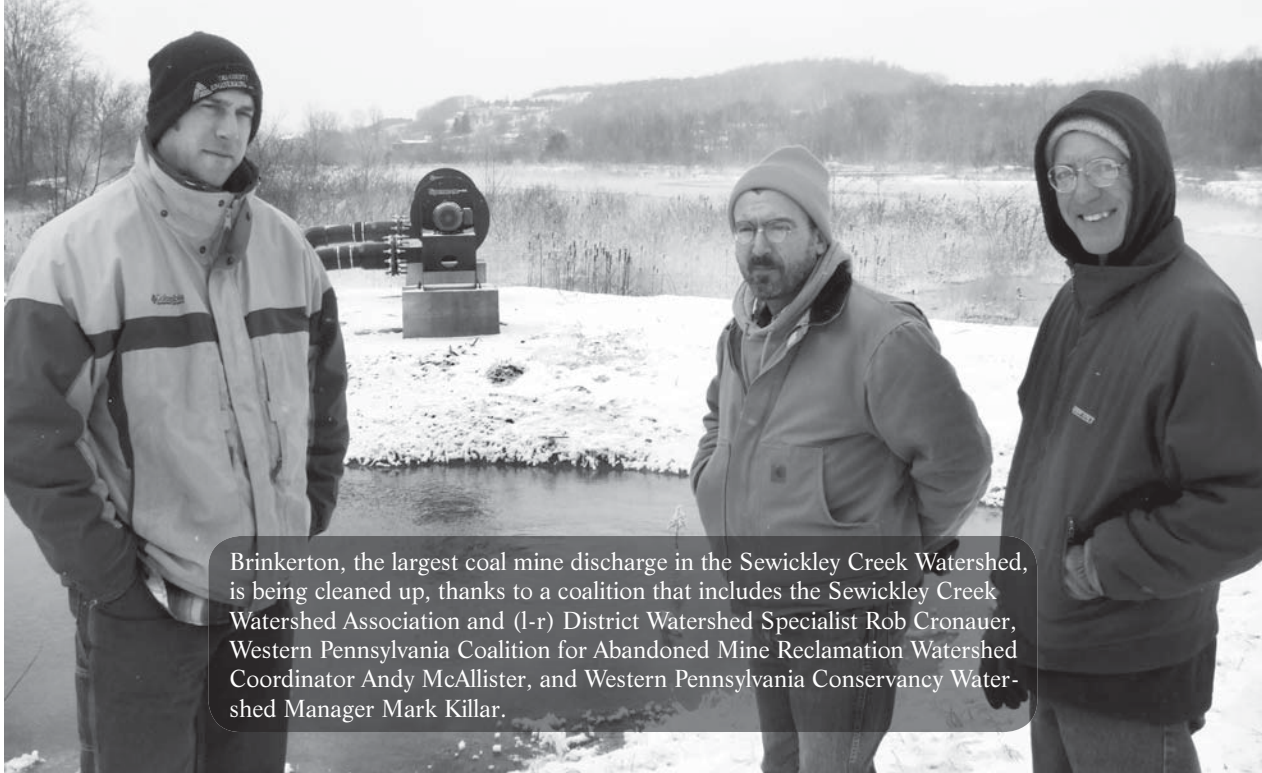
On the cover  
(Clockwise from top left)

Engineers at our annual workshop practice retrofitting a development with stormwater controls.

The first of 200 attendees sign in at Sustainable Energy Field Day.

Innovative controls manage stormwater and reduce erosion at a residential development in North Huntingdon.

Visitors take a self-guided tour of the new stations on our Stormwater Trail.



Brinkerton, the largest coal mine discharge in the Sewickley Creek Watershed, is being cleaned up, thanks to a coalition that includes the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association and (l-r) District Watershed Specialist Rob Cronauer, Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation Watershed Coordinator Andy McAllister, and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy Watershed Manager Mark Killar.

aging and deteriorating water systems across the region.

According to a federal Clean Water Needs Survey, Pennsylvania is facing nearly \$11 billion in unmet drinking water infrastructure needs and at least \$7.2 billion in unmet wastewater infrastructure needs.

**We were involved in a number of stream-improvement projects** during the year, but perhaps the most significant of these was near **Brinkerton** in Mount Pleasant Township. This site is the largest mine discharge in the entire Sewickley Creek Watershed.

At Brinkerton, water polluted with dissolved minerals from abandoned underground coal mines has been flowing into Sewickley Creek at a rate of at least 2,000 gallons per minute for nearly five decades.

To remedy the problem, a series of ponds had been constructed where the metal pollutants could settle out of the flow, and an aerator had been installed to help this process by adding oxygen to the water.

But before the system could go on line, a blowout occurred and created a second discharge, bypassing the aerator.

The District worked with Sewickley Creek Watershed Association during 2008 to see what could be done to make the needed repairs and get the aeration system on line.

We were able to convince the county commissioners to redirect \$60,000 from the state's Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative program toward moving the aerator so it could process the water from the new discharge as well as from the original one, and also toward installing a series of water diversion boxes and baffles to direct the flow through the treatment ponds.

The District also was instrumental in acquiring an additional \$40,000 for this project through a settlement agreement for erosion-control violations that occurred in the watershed.

We also helped to **improve water quality in the Jacobs Creek Watershed** by stabilizing a severely eroded streambank along Shupe Run near Willows Park in Mount Pleasant.

## CLEAN STREAMS & WATER RESOURCES

**Of all our technical programs, our stormwater management services continued to be in the most demand during 2008.**

Our two-person stormwater staff was kept extremely busy providing technical assistance to engineers and designers on how best to manage stormwater on their specific project sites, reviewing new development and retrofit plans for stormwater controls, and inspecting work in progress.

Awareness of the importance of stormwater management is increasing, and in many instances, progressive municipalities in the county are requesting that we review the stormwater plans for construction sites in their area, even if those sites are not required to obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. This leads to better and more innovative controls, such as using infiltration rather than simply detaining rainwater.

Because of his reputation as **one of the state's most knowledgeable individuals on this subject, our hydraulic engineer was asked to speak on stormwater management** at major events throughout the state, such as the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Southwest Regional Office Training, and the International Erosion Control Association's Mid-Atlantic Conference.

He and our Board vice chairman also spoke to the National Association of Conservation Districts' annual meeting in Reno, Nevada on working effectively with advisory committees.

Our staff participated in a public meeting, sponsored by State Senator Jim Ferlo for **Governor Rendell's Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force.**

The May meeting in Oakland brought together many different organizations and experts to address

The steep bank in this area had become so undercut that it compromised the integrity of the fence around the community's soccer field.

The District used Growing Greener funds to line the base of the slope with rock to slow the eroding effects of the stream and to cover the steep bank with matting and young willow trees to help stabilize the remaining soil.

**Stream improvement work continued on Mill Creek**, a high-quality stream that supplies drinking water for some residents of Ligonier Township.

During 2008, Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative program funds were used to make improvements at seven different sites in and along the stream. Work included planting trees, and adding deflectors to reduce streambank erosion and provide fish habitats.

This project continued to receive good coverage from the media. In September, for instance, the Tribune-Review did an extensive article that was featured on the front page of the Local section.

In Derry Township, we helped to prepare downstream neighbors for the effects of **a unique stream-restoration project on the Lydick Farm**.

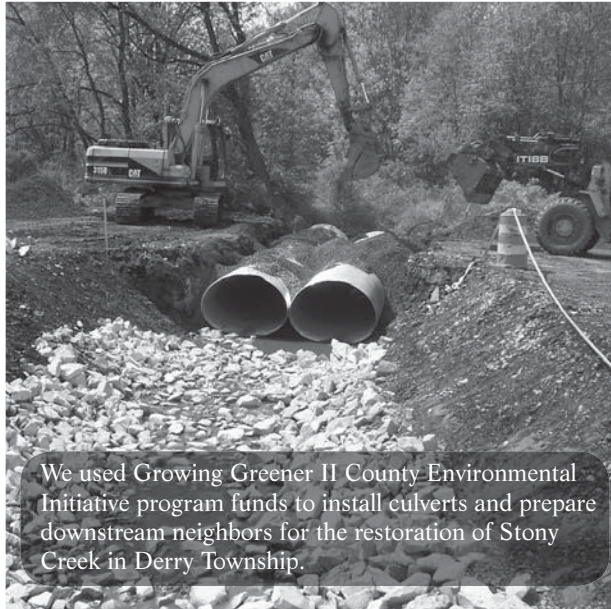
Here, years ago, coal was mined very shallowly beneath the stream. In time, a 20-foot-deep sinkhole formed and the stream, Stony Run, disappeared into it.

Currently, this area is being re-mined for coal and, when that work is complete, the sinkhole will be fixed and the stream restored so that it once again flows along the surface of the ground.

Downstream neighbors will be prepared for the appearance of the stream and the volume of water it carries, thanks to the District's work during 2008 to replace culverts.

Stony Run is a tributary of the Conemaugh River.

Our staff **helped Hempfield Area High School officials identify the reason a sizeable storm-water pond on their property was not holding water**, but instead, sending it onto the nearby heavily



We used Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative program funds to install culverts and prepare downstream neighbors for the restoration of Stony Creek in Derry Township.

traveled Route 136.

We found that water was leaking from the pond into the fractured bedrock beneath it, and recommended a solution that included using bentonite, a special volcanic clay sealer.

In the course of working on this project, it became apparent that a second detention pond, designed for the adjacent middle school and associated parking lots, was also in need of attention. The school district and its engineering firm subsequently began upgrading that pond as well, so that it will hold a greater volume of water.

Both of these improvements will reduce the overall stormwater impact on streambanks lower in the watershed.

Our stormwater staff continued to **work with officials in several older urban areas in the county to promote projects that would retrofit their cities** with rain gardens, infiltration parking lots, and other sustainable stormwater practices.

In Vandergrift, for instance, we have been encouraging town planners to include landscaped islands as an attractive and pedestrian-friendly alternative to

traditional stormwater management in their historic downtown.

**We developed a first-of-its kind program for area homeowners that introduced them to stormwater** and the problems and benefits it can create.

The two-hour workshop taught homeowners how to "read" their property – the nature of the soil, the contours of the ground, and how their roof, driveway, and other paved areas direct the path and force of water that may be resulting in a variety of problems – damp basements, ponding and mosquito breeding, or adding undue flow or pollutants to the community storm sewer system or nearby waterway.

The workshop, which was led by our landscape architect/stormwater technician and water quality educator, also presented solutions and showed how stormwater could be put to good use, such as in the creation of a rain garden.

The workshop was offered twice during the year and attracted more than 50 total participants, including students in an architectural technology course at Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus.

The vast natural gas reserves in the Marcellus Shale region, which under lays two-thirds of Pennsylvania, brought a significant increase in drilling in our area in 2008, and corresponding implications for the land and water.

The District has one of only two, full-time shared water-quality specialists in the entire state, and she spent a significant amount of time during the year **helping people understand how gas-well drilling might affect the quality of drinking water in nearby wells and springs**.

At events that reached early 600 people, she also offered practical information about other water concerns related to drilling, such as the large volume of water used and then discarded in the process of extracting the natural gas. This water can contain high concentrations of salt and other minerals, including cadmium, iron, aluminum, lead, chlorides, and magnesium. (Also see *Stable Soils*, page 4.)



Our shared water-quality specialist also **offered five specialized workshops on water-quality issues related to wells, ponds, and septic systems**, and she was a featured speaker at county and regional events that addressed water quality in the context of such timely topics as pharmaceutical use and bottled water and health.

In all, 1,200 people were reached through these events.

Our stormwater advisory committee was instrumental in adding perspective and advice on a number of issues during the year, including **the District's involvement in the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Chapter 105 General Permit program**. A person or company must obtain a Chapter 105 general permit before taking any actions that would encroach on a stream or wetland.

For the past several years, local citizens have been asking the District to assume responsibility from the state for reviewing the general permits related to this program, because local review simplifies the process and allows permits to be issued more quickly.

Our stormwater advisory committee recommended that the District assume this responsibility, and their recommendation was scheduled to go before the District Board of Directors for discussion and vote in early 2009.

Our stormwater advisory committee also recommended that we **revise the fee schedule for the Erosion & Sediment Pollution Control plan reviews that are related to stream encroachments**.

Specifically, they recommended that we abandon our current flat fee schedule and replace it with a graduated one, where fees increase as the length of disturbed area increases.

This proposal was scheduled to go before the District Board of Directors for discussion and vote in early 2009.

**Five new stations**, each detailing one of the innovative conservation features of the GreenForge building, **were added to the self-guided stormwater trail** on our campus thanks, in part, to funding

from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Education Grants Program and the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds.

Low-impact development techniques, green roofs, stormwater forebays, permeable concrete sidewalks and parking areas, and bioinfiltration swales are each explained with easy-to-understand language and inviting graphics.

The new additions now bring the total number of stations on the stormwater trail to 16. Others in the self-guided loop that takes visitors on an easy stroll around our headquarters, Donohoe Center, and the GreenForge building highlight native plants, rain gardens, cisterns, and other innovative stormwater management practices.

Many of the stations have free, take-home fact sheets on the practices demonstrated so that visitors can recreate them at their home or business location.

The trail is self-guided, and open to the public every day of the week during daylight hours.

**Retrofitting Stormwater Controls was the theme of the 2008 engineers' workshop** held in March.

Some 220 engineers attended the day-long event, which was offered twice, to learn how to take an existing urban landscape with little or no stormwater management and add best management practices that fit the location's size and needs, as well as the property owner's budget.

In a hands-on exercise, participants modified existing sites to include permeable pavement, bioinfiltration swales, trees, and low-impact features.

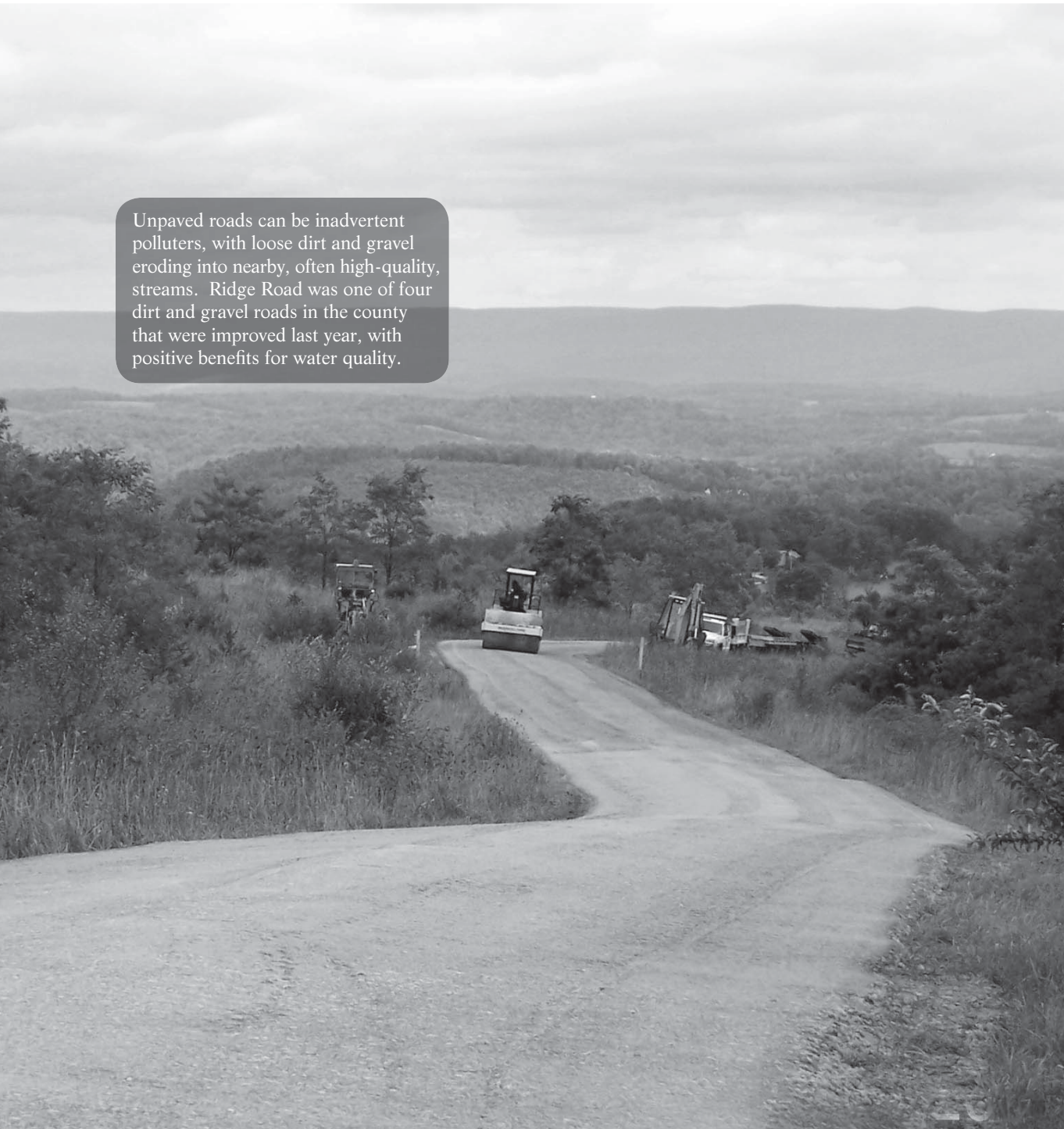
Our education and outreach program drew the interest of an area newspaper **reporter who did a two-part series on her personal experience of working with the District to assess and modify her own yard to better manage stormwater**.

The articles appeared in the Penn-Franklin, Delmont Salem, and Penn Trafford News prior to our Homeowner's Guide to Stormwater Management workshop in March.



Adding innovative stormwater controls to existing development sites and older urban areas can be a challenge. At our annual engineers' workshop, more than 200 engineers had the chance to gain experience designing these retrofits for an actual site.





## STABLE SOILS

Unpaved roads can be inadvertent polluters, with loose dirt and gravel eroding into nearby, often high-quality, streams. Ridge Road was one of four dirt and gravel roads in the county that were improved last year, with positive benefits for water quality.

The downturn in the economy resulted in **fewer plans for proposed housing developments being submitted to the District in 2008**, although the number of commercial and highway project plans we reviewed held relatively steady.

Because the latter two types of developments typically involve large sites, our staff spent a good deal of time during the year in the field, inspecting these works in progress.

**One of the largest earthmoving projects in the county during 2008 involved the Pennsylvania Turnpike** between the Irwin and New Stanton exits. Two new lanes are being added to this eight-mile stretch of highway and a portion of it is being completely rebuilt to eliminate a troublesome S-bend.

Because of its size and the many field changes that occur during construction, one of our erosion-control specialists spent a good deal of time inspecting this project with turnpike officials and their contractors to ensure that the erosion controls are installed and functioning.

**Work to widen and rehabilitate U.S. Route 22 also continued** during the year, with two new sections totaling 4-1/2 miles added to the 5-mile area that was already under construction.

This total construction area, which spanned our county from New Alexandria to the Indiana County line, was frequently visited by one of our technical specialists to ensure good erosion control.

Our two erosion-control specialists became involved as **natural-gas-well drilling in our area is increased.**

They attended multiple training sessions on the subject, and have been monitoring discussions at the state level regarding what involvement Districts may have with reviewing permits and plans for oil- and gas-drilling projects.

One of our specialists also was part of a statewide effort to identify the number and location of these wells in our county. (Also see *Clean Streams & Water Resources*, page 2.)

Our staff spent a good deal of time with engineers, architects, designers, and earthmovers during the year, helping them put together development plans that fit the specifics of the site and incorporate best-management practices to protect natural resources – all before the first shovel of dirt is turned.

This **proactive approach** is something the District initiated several years ago and it **has been making a significant, positive difference** in the way our natural resources are being protected once the earthmoving actually starts.

One of our erosion-control specialists **set new records for both the amount of technical assistance** he provided to municipal officials during the year... **and the number of inspections he conducted** of post-construction best-management practices, which are innovative ways of protecting the environment that can range from bio-ponds and StormTech® chambers, to innovative soil mixes and infiltration swales.

Our watershed specialist participated in an effort to **improve a five-acre former coal refuse site near Bovard.**

State bond money under the Landowner Reclamation Program was used to revamp the site's sediment basin and to cap, seed, and mulch the old boney pile.

A number of complaints from residents along a Hempfield Township road led one of our erosion-control specialists to **uncover a significant stormwater management problem in that area.**

The outfall from a shopping center detention pond was severely eroding a hillside, filling up a nearby high-way detention pond with sediment and causing muddy water to wash through adjacent residential backyards.

Our specialist notified the shopping center management group and subsequently worked with their engineering firm to design a pipe system to reduce the

stormwater velocity and to backfill the ravine.

He also notified the turnpike commission of the sediment buildup problem in its pond, and the commission subsequently removed 30 triaxle truckloads of sediment from it.

**Reducing erosion from nonpaved roads** is an important part of the District's conservation work and, in 2008, we helped to improve four such roads in the county.

Ridge Road, near the boundary between Mount Pleasant and Donegal townships, was improved by resurfacing the road for about half of its length with a driving surface aggregate. The aggregate is more compact and so lessens the amount of road material that ends up in the nearby stream, a tributary of the Loyalhanna Creek. The remaining length of Ridge Road will be improved in 2009, thanks to funding from the state's Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative program.

Other dirt and gravel road improvements in 2008, funded through the Dirt and Gravel Road program, were:

- Church Camp Road in Fairfield Township – \$1,558 was used to install two new cross pipes (benefiting Tub Mill Creek);
- Clark Hollow Road in Fairfield Township – \$4,194 was used to install five new cross pipes (benefiting Tub Mill Creek);
- Furnace Lane in St. Clair Township – \$7,578 was used to install two broad-based dips and add energy dissipaters (benefiting Baldwin Creek); and
- Oak Road in Donegal Township – \$12,137 was used to install road fill (benefiting Loyalhanna Creek).

**The Westmoreland Conservation District was one of two conservation district hosts for the 2008 Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Workshop.**

More than 150 conservation and road-maintenance

professionals attended this three-day event, which was held for the first time in Westmoreland County.

Field trips included some of the recent dirt and gravel road improvement projects done here in Westmoreland County.

One of our erosion-control specialists is one of 15 people selected to **help revise Pennsylvania's erosion- and sedimentation-pollution-control manual.**

The manual, which is used by engineers and others who design and build developments, has not been updated since 2000.

The planned revision will be very comprehensive and user-friendly, featuring new and innovative control methods that have been proven to work in the field, and good engineering practices.

During 2008, the committee gathered input from the public, engineers, and conservation district personnel statewide to help them shape the content of the new manual, and they hope to have a draft complete and available for public comment in 2009.

In 2008, we **renewed our Conservation Partnership Agreements with Unity Township and Cook Township.**

These documents outline the details of how the District and the municipality will work together to minimize the impact of development on the natural resources in that location.

We have Conservation Partnership Agreements with most of the larger Westmoreland County municipalities because these are the areas with the most development and activity. (See box on page 6.)

We developed and offered a **new technical workshop, targeted to a previously unreachd audience – construction site inspectors.**

This particular group – which includes those who inspect work-in-progress on major construction undertakings such as highways, utility lines, housing developments, and shopping centers – had never been specifically targeted with information to help them verify that



## Conservation Partnership Agreements

The District currently has Conservation Partnership Agreements with the following cities, boroughs, municipalities, and townships in Westmoreland County. These agreements detail how we and the municipality will work together to minimize the impact of development on the natural resources in that location. We periodically review and renew these agreements, and work to establish new ones with other municipalities, particularly in those areas where development is increasing.

**Allegheny Township**

**Cook Township**

**Derry Borough**

**Donegal Township**

**City of Greensburg**

**Hempfield Township**

**Irwin Borough**

**Ligonier Township**

**City of Lower Burrell**

**Loyalhanna Township**

**Manor Borough**

**Mount Pleasant Borough**

**Mount Pleasant Township**

**Municipality of Murrysville**

**Penn Township**

**Rostraver Township**

**Scottdale Borough**

**Sewickley Township**

**Unity Township**

**Youngwood Borough**

the erosion- and stormwater-control best-management practices on these construction sites were installed and functioning correctly.

The response to the initial workshop offering was so overwhelming that we repeated the event a total of three times within a week. The first session had 62 attendees...the second, 56...and the third, 33.

As has been the case with so many of the District's programs, attendees came from not only Westmoreland County, but from other areas of the region as well, including Washington, Allegheny, and Somerset counties.

All attendees received a take-home copy of a new 45-page reference binder, developed by the District, showing photo illustrations and schematics of best-management practices.

## HEALTHY FORESTS

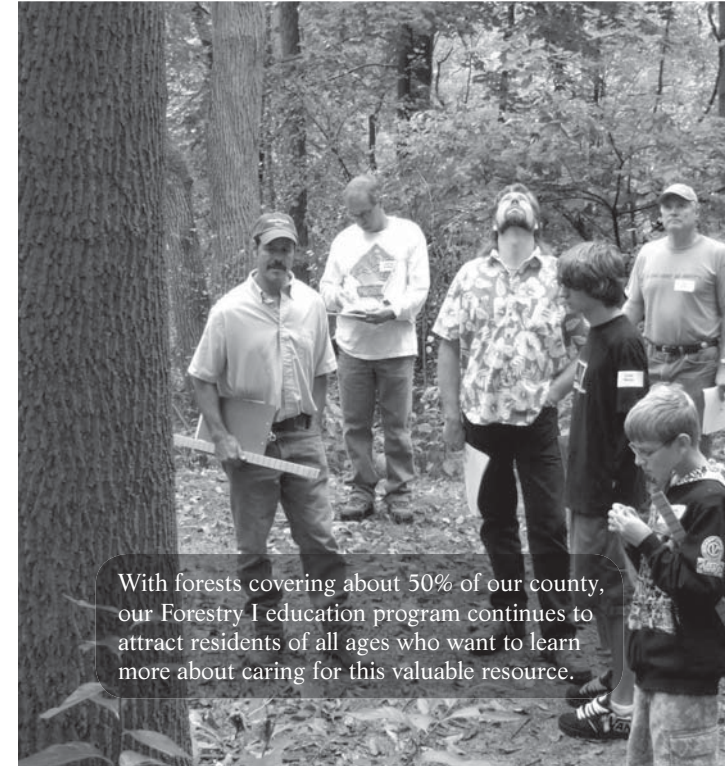
**The overall number of logging plans that the District received in 2008 was down about 19 percent from 2007**, because many loggers chose to delay their harvests until the economy rebounds and the price of timber increases.

Even so, our work of protecting natural resources on potential and active sites continued with a record number of pre-harvest meetings and visits to active sites.

In 2008, our forester had more opportunities than ever before to ensure that soils and streams would be protected on timber-harvesting sites long before the first tree was cut.

He **held a record 23 pre-harvest meetings with loggers**, in which they reviewed the specific conditions of the wooded area, and identified what erosion controls and stream-protection measures would need to be put in place before work could start.

These meetings were initiated by the loggers, who have become more aware of conservation measures by attending District workshops, such as a new offering in 2007 on preparing an effective erosion- and sediment-control plan for a logging site.



With forests covering about 50% of our county, our Forestry I education program continues to attract residents of all ages who want to learn more about caring for this valuable resource.

Our Conservation Partnership Agreements with area municipalities, which recommend that loggers meet with the District, also have raised awareness of the need to address conservation before harvesting.

Our forester also **personally visited active logging sites in the county** to make sure that work was being done according to the erosion- and sediment-control plan.

Controlling erosion is a challenge on most logging jobs because roads have to be cut across the forest's earthen floor to get the harvesting equipment to the trees, and then to provide a pathway for hauling the heavy logs out.

Our forester also **conducted several woodlot exams and evaluations**.

Landowners request these site visits to help them evaluate their timber and develop a plan for managing and improving it.



In 2008, we continued to work with the Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation on **forest stewardship projects at Hanna's Town and the Loyalhanna Gorge.**

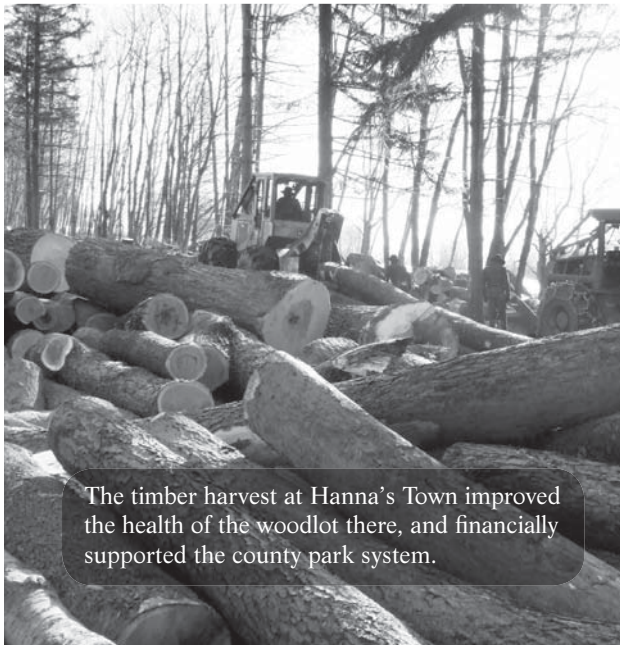
Permits were obtained, bids solicited, and a contract was signed during the year in preparation for a timber harvest on 26 of Hanna's Town's 120 acres. The harvest will improve the woodlot and initiate regeneration. Income from the timber sale will be used to support the Westmoreland County park system.

Discussions also continued during the year to finalize the details of a forestry management plan that will be used to care for the 1,300-acre Loyalhanna Gorge.

The completed plan will help the county steward this scenic property between Latrobe and Ligonier.

**A total of 60 people came to workshops during the year to learn more about good forest stewardship.**

In March, we co-sponsored the Western PA Woodlands & Wildlife Conference and our forester and Board vice chairman, a consulting forester, joined with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry to present information



The timber harvest at Hanna's Town improved the health of the woodlot there, and financially supported the county park system.

on Managing Your Forest for Timber & Wildlife.

In September, we offered the popular Forestry I workshop in conjunction with the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association. This introductory workshop presents common forestry terms, basic tree identification, and shows participants how to use a forester's prism.

## PRODUCTIVE FARMS

**A multi-year effort to install best management practices on area farms was completed in 2008.**

Four farms received a combined total of \$35,000 from the Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative program during the year, and the farmers also personally invested in these conservation improvements by matching their respective allotment of Growing Greener funds.

The money was used to make specialized improvements that will benefit the individual farm operations and also the larger community by reducing pollutants entering the streams and improving water quality.

Some of the many conservation enhancements included:

- barn roof gutters and downspouts, and an access road with fencing on the Scott Allen farm in Salem Township, benefiting the Loyalhanna Watershed;
- a spring development and an access road with fencing on the Costello family farm (Friendship Farms) in Unity Township, benefiting the nearby headwaters of the Sewickley Creek Watershed;
- streambank fencing that established a riparian buffer of more than two acres on the Kim Miller farm in Ligonier Township, benefiting the Loyalhanna Watershed;
- a spring development with a water trough, and streambank fencing on the John Orgavan farm in Derry Township, benefiting the Loyalhanna Watershed.

Previously under the Growing Greener II program, five other farms in the county had implemented \$75,000 of similar improvements that benefited the Jacobs Creek, Sewickley, and Loyalhanna watersheds.

Our agricultural technician helped 16 area farmers apply for the new Resource Enhancement and Protection program, and ultimately they **received a combined total of more than half a million dollars' worth of tax credits to install best management practices on their farms.**

Westmoreland County was one of the top counties in the western half of the state to receive these tax credits in 2008, thanks in part to the prompt action of our agricultural technician in getting the application notice out to area farmers.

The Resource Enhancement and Protection program awards tax credits to eligible farmers on a first-come/first-served basis. It is administered by the State Conservation Commission and must be re-appropriated every year.

Our agricultural technician **made a number of personal visits to area farms during the year.**

These personal visits are an opportunity for our staff to learn more about the farmer and the agricultural operation, and to provide site-specific assistance on topics ranging from appropriate conservation practices to funding programs available for agriculture.

**Ten farmers voluntarily submitted nutrient management plans for their operations in 2008,** bringing to 43 the number of farms in Westmoreland County that now have plans in place to manage fertilizers and animal wastes profitably and efficiently, based on the specific conditions and needs of the land.

With the addition of these combined 2,756 acres, there are now more than 15,000 acres in our county being managed according to good conservation practices that not only save the farmer time and money, but also help the community by keeping excess nutrients out of nearby streams and waterways.





Good agricultural practices – such as the contour strips and grass waterways seen in this aerial of the Unity Township countryside – protect valuable topsoil and keep waterways clean.

The farmers whose plans were approved by the District Board of Directors in 2008 and the watershed neighbors who benefit from their stewardship are:

- Roger Altman, 140 acres in Hempfield Township, benefiting the Sewickley Creek Watershed;
- Adam Battistella, 150 acres in Hempfield Township, benefiting the Loyalhanna Watershed;
- Scott Branthoover, 200 acres in South Huntingdon Township, benefiting the Sewickley Creek Watershed;
- Wayne and Hope Frye, 1,017 acres in Salem Township, benefiting the Loyalhanna Watershed;
- Blaine Hutter, 406 acres in Mount Pleasant Township, benefiting the Jacobs Creek Watershed;
- Vince Makovics, 150 acres in Rostraver Township, benefiting the Yough Watershed;
- Dave Smith, 175 acres in South Huntingdon Township, benefiting the Jacobs Creek Watershed;
- Bill Snyder, 120 acres in Ligonier Township, benefiting the Loyalhanna Watershed;
- Debbie Thir, 13 acres in Unity Township, benefiting the Loyalhanna Watershed; and
- Alvin Vance, 385 acres in East Huntingdon Township, benefiting the Sewickley Creek Watershed.

The potential to **use farms to turn food waste from grocery stores and school cafeterias into valuable compost** took a major step forward this year as a committee on which our agricultural technician serves successfully lobbied the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to create a general permit allowing such operations.

In this conservation practice, clean, separated organic waste from places such as food distribution centers is sent to local farms instead of being trucked to a landfill. On the farms, it is managed until it decays into compost, a rich soil amendment that farmers can use to enrich their fields or sell to others, such as commercial landscapers.



A 2007 waste audit showed that 34 percent of the 9 million tons of material that Pennsylvanians throw away each year is easily composted organic matter. Another 33 percent is paper, much of which can also be composted.

**Our Annual Awards Banquet again featured an all-local meal**, created with food products grown, raised, or made right here in Westmoreland County.

From organic garlic to ice cream, and relishes to lamb, products from 11 area food producers were masterfully combined by the chef of the Westmoreland Country Club into an outstanding meal of five entrees and all the accompaniments.

New local suppliers who provided foodstuffs for the banquet this year included Fisher's Honey of Greensburg, Greenawalt Farms of West Newton, and Morris Farm of Irwin. (Also see *Sustainable Communities*, page 10 and *Education & Outreach*, page 12.)

Even though the District has been working with large-animal owners for nearly 60 years, one audience that we have not typically reached is the **equestrian community** – horse barn owners, boarders, stable managers, and those who keep horses on their property.

Yet these folks face many of the same land- and water-quality challenges dairy farmers do: keeping a healthy pasture area, preventing over-grazing, and managing mud and manure.

During the summer, the District remedied that by joining with Penn State Cooperative Extension Westmoreland County, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Lindwood Farm to offer horse owners and boarders a Pasture Walk – an event that used both classroom speakers and an on-site visit to a local horse farm to illustrate specific ways to create safe and healthy horse pastures, reduce erosion, and maintain water quality.

Nineteen horse owners and boarders joined us for this program.

In November, the Second Chance Equine Associa-

tion, a group that rescues and rehabilitates horses, asked us to present a similar program at their monthly meeting.

**Pasture management, water quality, nutrient management plans, and cost-share programs were discussed** with the group's 38 attendees.

For the fourth year in a row, the District also was a cosponsor of a **regional Tillage Conference** to promote minimum- and no-till farming methods.

This innovative way of farming reduces the number of trips a farmer has to make across the field before crops are planted, saving time, reducing costs, creating bigger crop yields, and reducing erosion.

More than 120 people attended.

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

During 2008, we began to plan how we could most effectively go about **identifying those area watersheds in Westmoreland County with the most urgent stormwater management needs**.

As Westmoreland County covers more than 1,000 square miles, such an assessment is a major undertaking, and something that has never been done before in this county on this scale. So we began by seeking the support of other county partners, starting with the Westmoreland County Planning Department.

In meetings with the Planning Department, we presented the need for and benefits of such a countywide watershed assessment, and the District's ability to help support such an undertaking, thanks in part to the generosity of the Colcom Foundation (see *Organizational Development*, page 13).

As a result of those discussions, we were successful in securing a commitment from Planning and, ultimately, from the Westmoreland County Commissioners that, contingent on additional funding support from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protec-

tion, the county, with the Conservation District as a lead player, will conduct a stormwater assessment of all county watersheds, beginning in 2009.

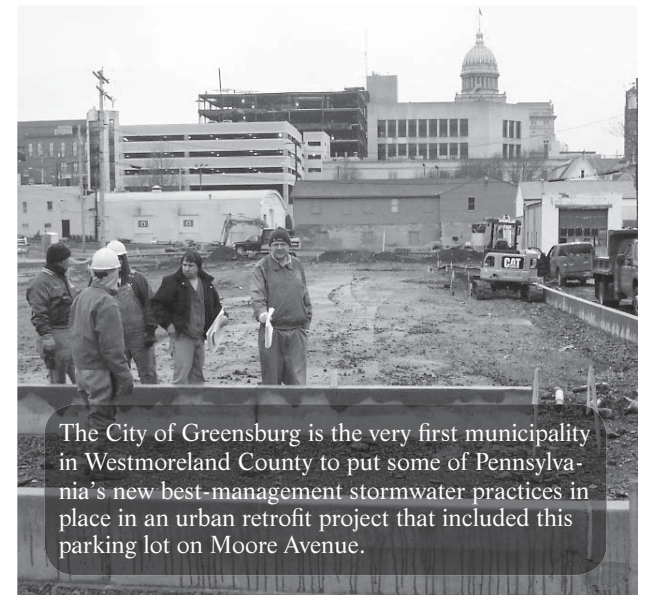
**We formed a coalition of state and local government and private partners in the New Kensington area to address the frequent flooding of Little Pucketa Creek** in the vicinity of Valley High School.

The high school was built on a flood plain and has experienced numerous floods over the years, including one during Hurricane Ivan in 2004 that brought the creek to within one inch of the school's front doorway.

Phase I of the improvement project began in the fall by stabilizing the streambank near the school's athletic field. Phases II and III are planned for 2009.

Longer-term, we hope to undertake additional projects in the upper parts of the watershed to better control stormwater.

**We are working with New Alexandria municipal officials and area foundations on a plan to replace the town's aging storm sewers** with porous pavement, landscaped areas, and other innovative infiltration methods, and to do it at the same time that



The City of Greensburg is the very first municipality in Westmoreland County to put some of Pennsylvania's new best-management stormwater practices in place in an urban retrofit project that included this parking lot on Moore Avenue.

the local municipal authority constructs a new sanitary sewer system.

Money has been allocated for the new sewage treatment plant and collection system, which officials hope to have in place by 2011.

**A project to control stormwater and sediment at the Westmoreland Fairgrounds** moved closer to the design stage, with aerial photography, topographical mapping, and other preliminary work completed in 2008.

The goal of the project is to control runoff from the Grandstand Arena, an area that is always disturbed during fairgrounds activities, as well as runoff from Fairgrounds Road, the main access to the property.

Our Board vice chairman was **part of a major planning effort to determine how money allocated in late 2006 from the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 will be used in Pennsylvania.**

The Department of Environmental Protection is revamping its abandoned mine reclamation program, especially as it concerns abandoned mine drainage cleanup.

New rules allow as much as 30 percent of Pennsylvania's estimated \$80 million annual reclamation grant to be spent on abandoned mine drainage projects.

We also continued to support abandoned mine reclamation efforts through our involvement with the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, an organization that works to clean up land and water damaged by past coal-mining practices in 24 counties in western Pennsylvania.

Our District manager serves as treasurer of the coalition, and our Board treasurer serves as the District's representative.

The District **supported the new Westmoreland Land Trust during its first year of operation** by providing administrative and graphic support as well as the use of our headquarters as the trust's official mailing address and meeting place.



The new Westmoreland Land Trust will help preserve land of special value to our community.



Our forester and two of our associate directors serve as volunteers on the Westmoreland Land Trust Board, and are helping the young organization preserve land of value to the community. *(Also see following item.)*

**Outstanding area conservationists were recognized at the District's Annual Awards Banquet in November.**

Charles Duritsa and Karen Jurkovic received the Conservation Volunteer award for their work in forming the new Westmoreland Land Trust, an organization that seeks to preserve land of special community value.

The City of Greensburg was awarded the Municipal Conservation Partner award for its creation of two innovative parking lots that infiltrate stormwater from some three acres of land instead of sending it into the urban storm sewer system. *(See photo on page 9.)*

The Costello Family/Friendship Farms was selected as the Conservation Farmer of the Year for the many conservation practices they've implemented, including changing over their entire 270-acre Mount Pleasant

Township farm to rotational grazing, a model conservation practice that allows animals to graze in only one area of the pasture at a time while the other areas are rested.

P. Roy Kemerer, a long-time volunteer on the District's Board of Directors, was posthumously inducted into the Conservation Hall of Honor. *(Also see Productive Farms, page 9 and Education & Outreach, page 12.)*

**We had a waiting list for our annual conservation bus tour, which this year gave participants a "top-to-bottom" look at the Sewickley Creek watershed.**

Fifty-nine people joined us for this day trip to see the variety of land uses in Westmoreland County's central watershed – from farms and forests to commercial communities and resource-extraction sites – and to get a better understanding of how each affects the quality of water we rely on for drinking, recreation, and economy.



## GREEN BUILDING & ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

The recently refurbished 23,000-square-foot **GreenForge building became fully rented on July 1 when the Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County moved in.**

Full occupancy helps the District financially sustain this combination demonstration green building and conservation incubator.

It also brings the benefits of daily interaction with another like-minded agency to our campus.

The Smart Growth Partnership provides education and technical assistance to the county's cities, townships, and boroughs to help them enhance their viability, quality of life, and long-term sustainability.

**GreenForge continued to attract interest** during the year from other sectors of the community considering constructing their own green building.

Our staff shared information and experience gained during GreenForge's rehabilitation with officials from the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, who are interested in putting a green building – complete with green roof – on their campus, and the Pittsburgh Sports and Exhibition Authority, which is exploring the installation of a geothermal system for the new ice arena.

A bright, **new canopy was installed over the front entrance of GreenForge** with the dual purpose of attracting attention to the building and shading the inside entrance lobby to reduce the amount of energy needed to cool that glass-ceilinged area in the summer.

The canopy was funded in part with the help of the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County's Westmoreland Now & Forever Fund.

The District agreed to be a partner in a **project to renovate and "green" the Monessen Memorial Stadium.**

We recommended a number of conservation elements for this project, including bleachers made of recycled materials, a rain garden, infiltration trenches

and vegetative swales, and landscaping with native trees and plants.

Our second-ever **Sustainable Energy Field Day was a resounding success**, drawing more than 200 people who came to learn about ways to make their homes, yards, and lives more energy-efficient.

The biennial field day included workshops led by experts on topics ranging from reducing phantom power users to loan programs for energy improvements, and an open house featuring vendor displays and activities.

Many partners joined with us in making this event a success, including new sponsors Allegheny Power, The Home Depot, the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, and the Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve at Saint Vincent College. (Also see *Education & Outreach*, page 12.)

**The National Concrete Masonry Association selected the Westmoreland Conservation District's GreenForge building to receive an Award of Honor** for its "outstanding use of concrete masonry products."

The award was presented in February at the association's annual meeting in Denver.

**GreenForge was one of nine award recipients of the Sixth Annual Allegheny Energy/Smart Growth Awards** in May.

The award recognized GreenForge for implementing many smart-growth "firsts" in this area, including: the first green rehabilitation of a commercial building in Westmoreland County; the first green roof in Westmoreland County; and the first installation of permeable concrete in Westmoreland County.

GreenForge also was noted for its alternative energy and energy-efficiency measures, its innovative and environmentally sensitive site planning, and the benefits it provides to nonprofit and grassroots conservation organizations by providing reasonably priced office space.



Green building, energy audits, and alternative energy were featured at our second-ever Sustainable Energy Field Day, which attracted more than 200 visitors.

## EDUCATION & OUTREACH

**A record crowd of 300 joined us when the District's 2008 Annual Awards Banquet returned this year** after a one-year absence necessitated by budget constraints.

Attendees from conservation organizations throughout the region and other friends of the District had an opportunity to enjoy great food, laugh with featured speaker Jack Bogut, network with each other, and learn about a number of important conservation initiatives in the county – from infiltration parking lots in the city of Greensburg to the new land trust. (Also see *Productive Farms*, page 9 and *Sustainable Communities*, page 10.)

More than 70 students representing 10 area schools participated in the annual **Westmoreland County Envirothon**.

Held in May at Twin Lakes Park, this academic competition tested students' knowledge of soils, forests, aquatic environments, wildlife, and the year's special challenge: recreational impacts on the natural environment.

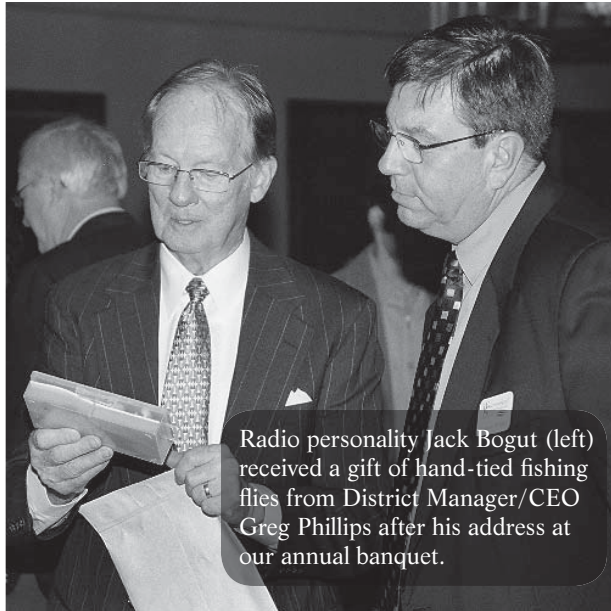
Students from the Westmoreland Enrichment Classes (a group of home-school students based in Norwin) placed first and went on to the state competition, where they placed sixth out of a field of 66 teams.

Second place in the Westmoreland County Envirothon went to Yough High School and third place to Kiski Area High School Team #1.

The Westmoreland Conservation District has been sponsoring the Envirothon for 23 years.

After a complete redesign in 2007, **the District's website started coming into its own in 2008, attracting between 300 and 600 visitors a week.**

With several staff members having the ability to add and edit information at any time, the site stayed inviting and relevant.



Radio personality Jack Bogut (left) received a gift of hand-tied fishing flies from District Manager/CEO Greg Phillips after his address at our annual banquet.

Publications were posted in PDF format as they were published, complete agendas of Board meetings were included in the calendar section, a photo blog was added, and event flyers were downloadable, making it easier than ever to register for workshops.

Our outreach efforts for Sustainable Energy Field Day got a major boost from **Allegheny Power, which, as part of its sponsorship, designed a flyer announcing the event and included it in the company's billing statement** to thousands of customers in Westmoreland County. (Also see *Green Building & Alternative Energy*, page 11.)

**The Greensburg-Hempfield Area Library also helped us raise conservation awareness** by making its exhibit case available to the District for a six-week period.

We used it to promote the Hidden in Plain View tours featured in our annual reports several years ago, and offered free copies of the driving routes and conservation highlights.

More than 200 copies of the conservation tours were distributed through this exhibit.

We issued 16 news releases during the year, with a **high pickup rate by the regional media**, including several releases that led to lead articles in the Tribune-Review's Local section. (Also see *Clean Streams & Water Resources*, pages 2 and 3, and *Organizational Development*, page 14.)

We also produced **two comprehensive issues of our award-winning newsletter, Landmarks, and a two-color annual report, Helping People Use Resources Wisely.**

*Landmarks* and the annual report are printed with soy inks on paper with recycled content. In addition, *Landmarks* is printed by a company that uses wind-generated energy.

Our print publications reach more than 4,100 households with each distribution.

Our outreach efforts also got a boost from our ongoing work to regularly update and improve the functionality of our **9,100-name database**, which allows us to tailor the conservation information we develop to the individuals and organizations for which it is most relevant, such as providing nutrient management information to livestock and horse farmers.

## ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Under the leadership of our Board vice chairman, the District began in the fall to **take the first steps toward creating a new long-range plan.**

A group of staff and Board members undertook a goal-by-goal review of the District's current long-range plan and found that virtually 100 percent of the goals outlined there have been accomplished.

During 2009, all District staff, volunteers, and partners, as well as members of the community will be invited to offer input in formulating the new plan, which



will serve as the District's guiding document for the next three to five years.

The District continued during the year to **seek funding support to complete minor finishing touches on its GreenForge building and to offset the more than \$1.2 million in debt** it still carries from creating this model green building and conservation incubator.

We thank the following donors who supported the project in 2008.

## GreenForge Donors

### Patron

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

The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County's Westmoreland Now & Forever Fund

### Sponsor

(\$1,000 to \$2,499)

Mr. and Mrs. Robert P. Fawcett (*second donation*)

We worked hard in 2008 to solicit donations to **match the generous \$100,000 challenge grant the Colcom Foundation offered the previous year in support of our growing stormwater management program.**

Thanks to many community and government organizations, businesses, and friends, we were able to match the grant, dollar-for-dollar, and meet the challenge by the September deadline.

## Stormwater Management Program Donors

### Benefactor

(\$10,000 and above)

Colcom Foundation

Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative\*

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation\*

State of Pennsylvania Safe Water Appropriation\*

### Friend

(\$2,500 to \$4,999)

R & L Development Company

### Sponsor

(\$1,000 to \$2,499)

Anonymous (2)

John L. Brentzel, JLB Holding, Inc.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert P. Fawcett

Manor Development Group II

Bob and Sally Shuster, RWS Development Co., Inc.

### Partner

(\$500 to \$999)

Bierwerth-Barton & Assoc. – Surveyors

Blazosky Associates, Inc.

Roland S. Catarinella

Collective Efforts, LLC

The EADS Group, Inc.

Fahringer, McCarty, Grey, Inc.

Gibson-Thomas Engineering Co. Inc. – Consulting Engineers

Glasser Family Foundation, Inc.

Hampton Technical Associates Inc.

The Meritage Group, L.P.

R. F. Mitall & Associates, Inc.

Pashek Associates

Terre Hill Stormwater Systems

John Timko

Keith Walters Electric Service\*

### Associate

(\$250 to \$499)

Donegal Construction Corp.

Kacin Companies

### Donor

(up to \$249)

Commissioner Tom Balya

Cenkner Engineering, Inc.

Charles A. Duritsa

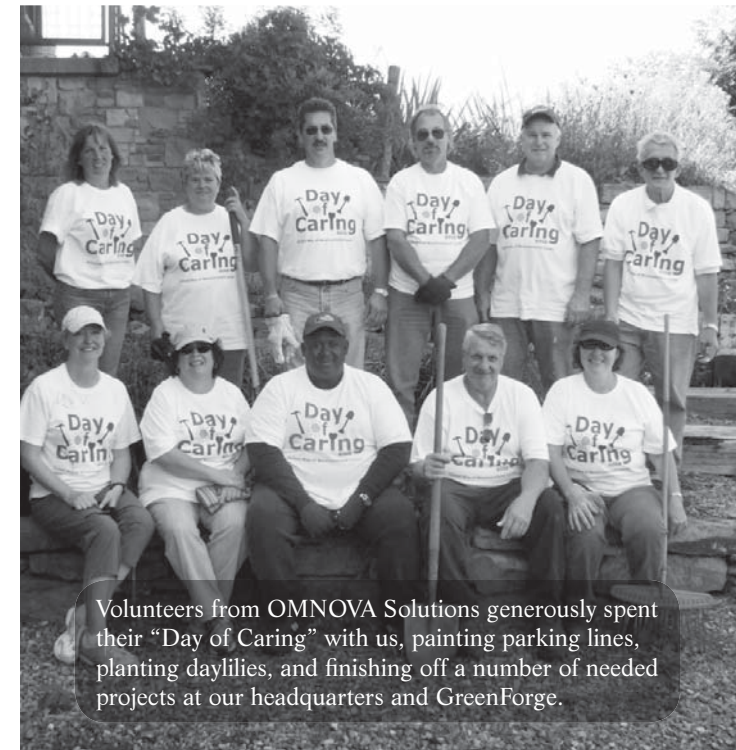
Bill and Donna Doney

W. Cleland Dowler, Jr.

Jules Labarthe

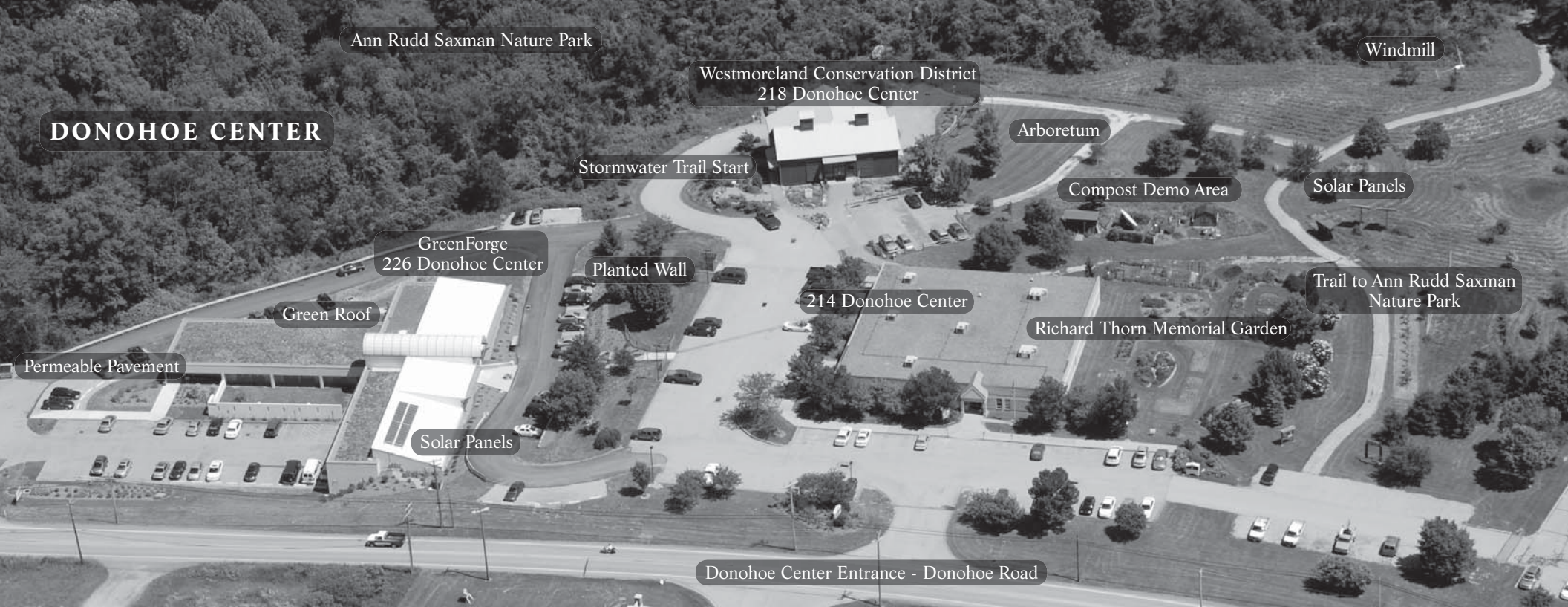
DW LaSota Engineering, Inc.

Lee-Simpson Associates, Inc.



Volunteers from OMNOVA Solutions generously spent their "Day of Caring" with us, painting parking lines, planting daylilies, and finishing off a number of needed projects at our headquarters and GreenForge.

\* Donation committed and pending as of 12-31-08



# DONOHOE CENTER

We also received generous **support for our general District operations** during the year from the following individuals, foundations, grant programs, and businesses.

## Sustaining Donors

### Benefactor

(\$10,000 and above)

Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative  
 Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation (see next item)

### Friend

(\$2,500 to \$4,999)

Keith Walters Electric Service

### Sponsor

(\$1,000 to \$2,499)

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection,  
 Environmental Education Grants Program

### Partner

(\$500 to \$999)

Kim Edward Miller

### Donor

(up to \$249)

Robert and Shirley Gosnell

Thanks to a generous **\$25,000 grant from the Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation, we were able to make a number of improvements to our conservation campus** that better integrated the three buildings, improved stormwater infiltration, and enhanced aesthetics.

A new crosswalk of porous pavers creates a pedestrian-friendly path between GreenForge and the 214 Donohoe Road building.

And new lighting and evergreen plantings around all three buildings have added to the campus's safety and visual appeal.

In a related project, **the Lauffer family generously donated a unique bronze plaque**, featuring a low-relief montage of photos documenting the barn's history from its ownership by their ancestor, Peter, in the 1800s to the present day.

The plaque was unveiled at the Lauffer family reunion in August, and the event received extensive coverage by the media, including an article on the front page of the Local section of the Tribune-Review.

**The Dominion Foundation awarded us a \$7,000 grant to enhance our education and outreach efforts.**

The money will be used in 2009 to produce a family of brochures on the District's various programs, including forestry, erosion control, stormwater management, nutrient management, alternative energy, green building, and conservation education...and to purchase a video camera that our in-house visual communications specialist will use to create short films on a number of



subjects, including: conservation projects being done in the community, education events, tours of our conservation campus, and so on. These films will be used in workshops, one-on-one training, and on the District's website.

We also **successfully petitioned the Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Education Program for a \$3,000 grant** to cover the cost of researching, writing, filming and producing a short educational video on the variety of leading-edge conservation features that have been incorporated into the District's GreenForge building.

Work on this project will begin in the spring of 2009.

**We are especially grateful to the Westmoreland County Commissioners,** who continued to recognize the value of the work that we do and to support our operations through a 2008 budget allocation.

We recognize the extreme difficulty of budgeting in these challenging economic times and are especially grateful that, after six years of operating with no increase, the commissioners voted to modestly increase our annual allocation.

We plan to use the increase to offer more information to the community on the natural resources impacts of oil- and natural-gas well drilling, and to help undertake a comprehensive organizational planning process. Our last such District planning effort was completed in 1997.

The work we did in 2007 to initiate fees for our stormwater services and to bring our other fee schedules more in line with the actual investment of staff time and effort involved resulted in **a combined income of \$80,500 from these charges during 2008.**

This money helps to cover the costs of our stormwater, erosion-control, and forestry programs.

We always had a good idea of our direct program costs, but during 2008, we undertook an effort to **identify the indirect costs associated with our**

**programs,** such as leases and maintenance costs on office equipment, utilities, required insurances, and computer and professional services support.

This new information will help us to recover costs at a more accurate level.

Our Board vice chairman and erosion-control specialist spent two days in Harrisburg in March, **meeting directly with our state legislators to discuss conservation issues, funding, and energy strategy.**

In all, they were able to talk directly with eight of the representatives and six of the senators who represent Westmoreland County.

Our Board vice chairman additionally went to Washington, D.C. in July and met on the same matters with staff members of three of the four representatives and both of the senators who make up Westmoreland County's federal delegation.

In accordance with **Pennsylvania's new Right to Know Law,** the District Board of Directors adopted an Open Records Policy and named our administrative assistant as the Open Records Officer.

The new law was signed by the Governor in February 2008 and goes into effect January 1, 2009. It states that government agencies must presume that a record is a public record, available for inspection or copying.

Spurred in part by rising fuel costs in early 2008, **the District initiated a flextime policy,** allowing people in certain positions to work four days at 10 hours per day to equal the full, 40-hour workweek.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture presented a **Leadership Development Award to the District's Board of Directors** in August for their ability to "promote and inspire district leadership excellence."

Board members were recognized specifically for their efforts to assure the relevancy of the organization to the community and its long-term viability.

## Financial Statement

### Concise Statement of Financial Position

Combined Funds – December 31, 2008

#### ASSETS

Cash	\$ 433,181
Loan Receivable-GreenForge, Inc.	1,195,335
General Fixed Assets	<u>37,371</u>
TOTAL	\$1,665,887

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	\$ 1,726
Loan Payable for GreenForge, Inc.	1,147,335
Funding Source Share of Equipment	<u>37,371</u>
Total Liabilities	1,186,432
Net Assets	479,455
TOTAL	\$1,665,887

### Concise Statement of Activities

Combined Funds – Year Ended December 31, 2008

#### SUPPORT

Westmoreland County	\$ 832,979
State Grants	260,250
Other Revenue	112,437
Fees	127,900
Farmland Preservation	6,760
WPCAMR	-
Interest Income	1,324
Special Projects	<u>184,292</u>
	\$1,525,942

#### EXPENDITURES

Program Services	\$ 980,926
Management & General	422,361
Fundraising	<u>0</u>
	\$ 1,403,287
Excess (Deficiency) – Current	122,655
Net Assets – Beginning Balance	356,800
Net Assets – End of Year	\$ 479,455



District Director Fred Slezak hosted area legislators and farm agency personnel on his New Alexandria farm, giving them a firsthand look at innovative agricultural practices such as no-till, and discussing the interests of farmers.

Our District Board underwent some changes in 2008.

**William Doney**, a Board member since 2001, was elected to the position of Board secretary, replacing P. Roy Kemerer, who passed away in November 2007.

**Thomas Kuzemchak**, operator of a 130-acre beef and crop farm and retired senior loan officer with Ag Choice Farm Credit, was appointed to the Board by the Westmoreland County Commissioners to fill Roy's farmer-director position through the end of its term in December 2008.

**Albert Barnett** was reappointed to the Board for a new four-year term, which runs through the end of 2012.

Westmoreland County Commission Chairman **Tom Balya** also was reappointed to the Board for one year (January through December 2008).

Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell **appointed District Manager/CEO Greg Phillips to The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission.**

He will serve as one of three commissioners representing Pennsylvania on this commission, which works to control and abate pollution in the Ohio River Basin.

All of the water in the streams that flow through Westmoreland County eventually ends up in the Ohio River and so contributes to the overall water quality of this basin.

**Dana Rizzo, water quality educator, was named to the Board of Directors of the Environment & Natural Resources Institute**, and made part of the Sustainable Environment Team for the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences.

In addition, she was named secretary for the Pennsylvania Association of County Agricultural Agents.



Our Board added six new volunteer associate directors in 2008. Top (l-r): Bruce Corna, Jr., principal in Bruce Construction, LLC; Joseph Dietrick, professional engineer; Karen Jurkovic, a professional writer specializing in conservation; and bottom (l-r): Ellen Keefe, executive director of Westmoreland Cleanways; Barbara D. McMillan, active conservationist; and Dwight Sarver, a local beef producer.

Our staff participated in a variety of **professional development opportunities** during the year.

Our hydraulic engineer completed two graduate-level civil engineering classes through Villanova University in watershed management and lake and wetland ecology.

Our landscape architect/stormwater technician attended a land ethics symposium sponsored by Bowman's Hill Nature Preserve that discussed expanding the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design green building certification to also include the sites on which the buildings are constructed.

Several of our technical staff attended the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's training on oil- and gas-well drilling and the annual training on Chapters 102 and 105 of the Pennsylvania Code, which have to do with erosion and sediment control and encroachment of waterways.



Our visual communications specialist attended a summit on signs offered by the Allegheny Trail Alliance, a communication webinar sponsored by the Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management, and a refresher class in the graphics-editing computer software program Photoshop.

Our financial administrator and secretary attended training sessions on the QuickBooks business accounting computer software program.

**Mimi Thomas-Brooker joined our staff during the year as the education program coordinator.**

She brings experience with the American Red Cross, a professional development firm, and the U.S. military.

Part of her new responsibilities will be to develop a more comprehensive volunteer program.

Our administrative assistant **kept our computers running efficiently** with installation of faster wireless access points, updated software and hardware at six staff workstations, and the purchase of new backup batteries for the server and a sectional wall rack for the server and equipment related to the District's network.

She also greatly reduced nuisance emails by obtaining sophisticated filtering software that has made spam almost nonexistent.



# Westmoreland Conservation District

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- J. Roy Houston, *Chairman*
- Ron Rohall, *Vice Chairman*
- Conrad Donovan, *Treasurer*
- William Doney, *Secretary*
- County Commissioner Tom Balya
- Albert Barnett
- Kim Edward Miller
- Paul R. Sarver
- Fred J. Slezak

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS**

- Robert Ackerman
- Bruce J. Corna Jr.
- Joseph Dietrick
- Charles Duritsa
- Alexander J. Graziani, AICP
- Karen Jurkovic
- Joseph Kalinowski
- Ellen Keefe
- Ted Kopas
- Barbara D. McMillan
- Theresa Gay Rohall
- Dwight Sarver
- Elmer Slezak
- John Turack
- Keith Walters

**STAFF**

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

Joanne Kitsko  
*Receptionist/Secretary*

**Technical Staff**

- James W. Pillsbury, PE  
*Hydraulic Engineer*
- Kathryn Hamilton, RLA  
*Landscape Architect/Stormwater Technician*
- Robert D. Cronauer  
*Watershed Specialist*
- Christopher Droste  
*Erosion Control Specialist*
- Nicole Miller  
*Erosion Control Specialist*
- Daniel Griffith  
*Nutrient Management Specialist/Agricultural Conservation Technician*
- Kathleen Fritz  
*E & S Program Administrative Assistant*

**Education Staff**

- Mimi Thomas-Brooker  
*Education Program Coordinator*
- Dana Rizzo  
*District/Penn State Extension Water Quality Educator*
- Christie Sebek  
*Secretary*

**ADVISORY COMMITTEES\***

**Communications**

- Karen Jurkovic
- Ted Kopas
- John Turack

**Conservation Education**

- Angela Belli
- William Doney
- Karen Jurkovic
- Tom Pearson
- Theresa Gay Rohall
- Tom Sierzega
- Joseph Stefko
- Dorothy Stoner

**Dirt and Gravel Roads**

- Ron Rohall
- Tom Sierzega
- James Vatter

**Forestry**

- Robert Ackerman
- Edward Callahan
- Mike DiRinaldo
- Thomas Fitzgerald
- Ron Rohall

**Nutrient Management**

- William Clouser
- Carolyn Graham
- Leanne Griffith
- John Lohr
- John Scott
- Gary Sheppard
- Tom Sierzega
- Larry Stokum

**Stormwater**

- Andrew Blenko
- Emil Bove
- Lucien Bove

- John Campfield
- Joseph Dietrick
- Kim Gales
- Donald Hixson
- Charles Kubasik
- Dallas Leonard
- Suzy Meyer
- Kim Edward Miller
- Les Mlakar
- Kenneth Murin
- Ken Orie
- Stephen Pilipovich
- Bob Regola
- Darl Rosenquest
- Robert Scheib
- Tom Sierzega
- Tamira Spedaliere
- John Surmacz
- R.D. Whitting

**Sustainable Energy**

- Charlie Frederickson
- Maggie Hall
- Karen Jurkovic
- Karen Kuhns
- Barbara D. McMillan
- John A. Malone
- Gary Sheppard

**Water Quality**

- Michael Barrick
- Michael Bazley
- Todd Burd
- M. Curtis Fontaine
- Barbara D. McMillan
- Larry Myers
- Ron Rohall
- John Turack

\* District staff members also serve on these committees.



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~working outside the box~





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## Native Plant Nursery & Conservation Services

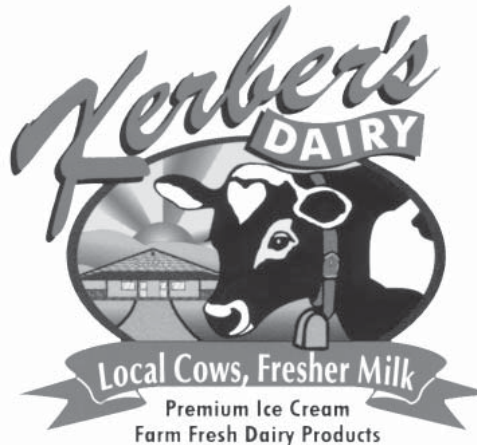
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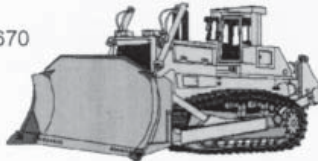
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For more information, contact Sandy at 724-837-5271 or [sandy@wcdpa.com](mailto:sandy@wcdpa.com).



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1949-2009

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Westmoreland Conservation District  
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 (Back l-r) Fred Slezak, Commissioner Tom Balya, Kim Miller, Albert Barnett.  
 (Not pictured) Paul R. Sarver



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