

# 60 YEARS Celebrated

2009 has been a year-long celebration marking 60 years since the founding of the Westmoreland Conservation District. Here are just a few of the anniversary highlights.



## Evening Reception and Daytime Open House at the District's Barn Headquarters

More than 200 people stopped in to the District on Thursday, September 10 and Friday, September 11 to enjoy a variety of hors d'oeuvres by Chef Dado of the Tin Lizzy restaurant in Youngstown, local wine and ice tea, "Then and Now" displays of farm equipment and conservation artifacts, and a large-format illustrated timeline of local conservation history that wrapped all the way around the room.

Guests also had a chance to win prizes and to purchase first-issue keepsake replicas of the District's barn by The Cat's Meow®.

Everyone took home either a Colorado blue spruce seedling or a gift bag that included a box of long-stemmed chocolate-covered cherries.

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## Thanks to all who gave support - Watershed Specialist Work Will Continue



It was touch-and-go, but watershed specialists will be able to continue to help restore streams, prevent flooding, and conserve our natural resources, thanks to continued funding through Growing Greener.

The two-year salary funding is good news for everyone in Westmoreland County, because, since 2000, our county watershed specialist has been a key part of

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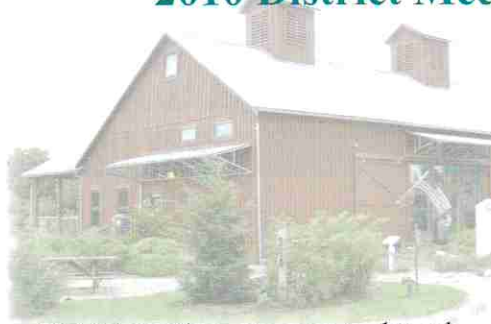
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**2010 District Meeting Schedule**



District meetings are open to the public and held at the District's headquarters, 218 Donohoe Road, Greensburg.

Agendas are regularly posted on the District's website, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com). Click on the meeting date on the interactive calendar in the upper righthand corner of the page.

- Wednesday, January 13, 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, February 10, 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, March 10, 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, April 14, 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 12, 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 9, 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 14, 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 11, 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 8, 5 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 13, 5 p.m.
- November - TBD
- Wednesday, December 8, 11 a.m.

**New Look for an Old Friend**

If you're old enough to remember the first time you watched your favorite show on a color TV, you may be getting a little of that same feeling now, holding the first-ever full-color copy of *Landmarks* in your hands.

Thanks to steady advances in design and print technology, color publications today are much more affordable than ever. So much so in fact, that the benefits of being able to tell the natural resources story in color far outweigh the marginal increase in cost to print *Landmarks* in color. And so we made the decision to launch the biggest visual change in *Landmarks*' 23-year history: making it a full-color publication.

Many other things that our readers like about *Landmarks* won't change: its variety of interesting conservation topics, its focus on people who are making a difference, and its easy-to-read format. *Landmarks* also continues to be printed with renewable wind energy and vegetable-based inks, and on paper with recycled content. We hope you enjoy the new look!

PS *Landmarks* also is available on our website, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).



**60 Seconds for Conservation**



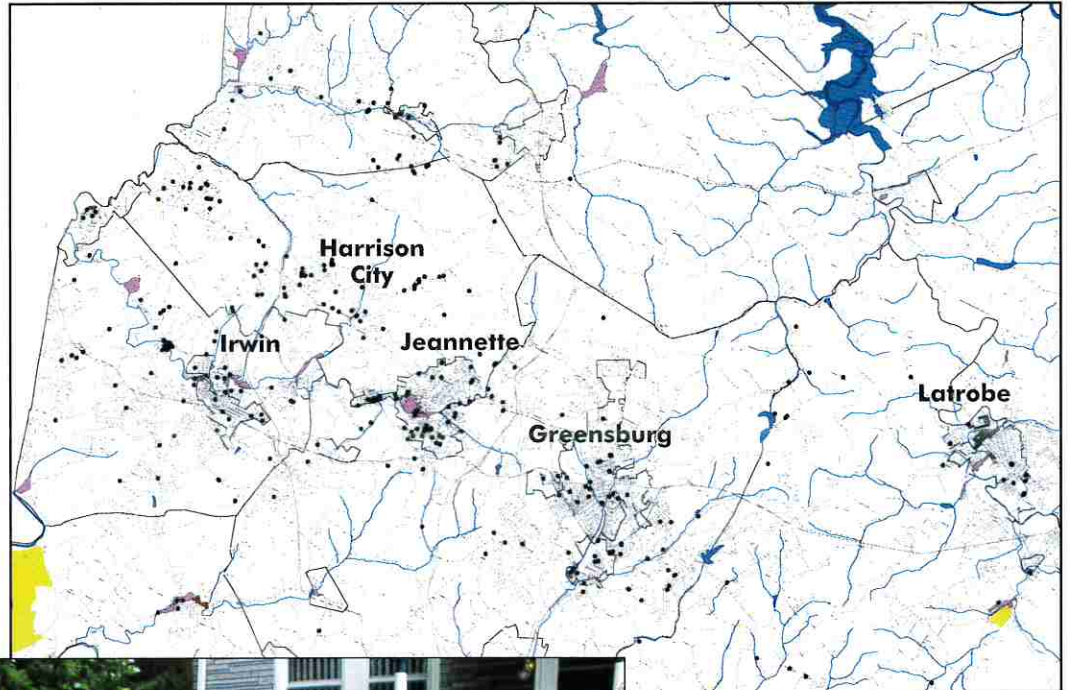
**Put your computer monitor to sleep when you leave your desk for a long meeting or at the end of the workday. Computer monitors draw more than 1/3 of your computer's total energy use.**



# Still Feeling the Storm

This section of a Westmoreland County Department of Public Safety 911 call map gives an idea of the areas affected by the June 17 storm and the flooding it caused.

Each black dot represents one call made to the county's 911 phone center during the storm, which moved from west to east during the evening, dropping as much as five inches of rain in only a few hours.



More than 1,000 structures in the county were damaged by the flood waters.

This home in Grapeville was damaged by waters from Brush Creek (to the left in photo).

When as much as five inches of rain fell on the center of our county in just a few short hours during the evening of June 17, it overloaded streams and creeks, creating a powerful surge of water that collapsed small bridges, flooded basements, washed out roads, and left behind a scene of loss and havoc that all these months later still has not been completely restored.

More than 1,000 structures – from businesses like OMNOVA Solutions in Jeannette to entire streets of family

homes – were damaged by the storm waters, according to officials from the county's Department of Public Safety.

A seven-foot wall of rushing water decimated a community ball field complex in North Huntingdon. And structural damage to bridges and roads is estimated to cost some \$3.6 million to repair.

"This was the 100-year storm, or more," said Jim Pillsbury, District hydraulic engineer, referring to the kind of major rainfall that forecasters expect has only a

About 5% of the land in Westmoreland County is designated by the federal government to be in the "100-year floodplain."

This means that these places are expected to be flooded during a very large storm.

The District has added a new feature to its website – a library of information, resources, and contacts on floodplains and flood insurance:

<http://www.wcdpa.com/Stormwater/FloodplainManagement.shtml>.

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one percent chance of happening in any given year.

The June 17 storm hit hardest in central Westmoreland County municipalities, such as Greensburg, North Huntingdon, Export, and Penn, and produced the worst flooding Jeannette has seen in more than a century. It affected areas of our region that usually are safe from flooding, such as houses that are not near creeks. In many cases, debris, carried by the flowing water, clogged storm sewer grates, and caused water to back up on streets and run into houses.

Jim Pillsbury, along with District technical specialists Chris Droste and Nicole Miller, began responding to homeowners and business owners impacted by the evening flood the first thing the next morning – helping to expedite permits and providing technical advice on what could be done to avoid repeat problems.

Early on, Jim helped fast-track a necessary permit so a woman living on Route 66 north of Greensburg could remove flood debris blocking a creek on her property. He also helped a company in Manor get prompt technical assistance

to fix a damaged bridge that was the only way in and out of work for its employees.

In the early hours after the rainfall, Chris spent a lot of time on the telephone with PennDOT, working to get culverts cleared of flood debris. In his territory of North Huntingdon, when an entire residential street had flood waters in the lowest level of the homes, it was discovered that the Federal Emergency Management Agency maps, made many years ago with less than today's sophisticated techniques, were inaccurate and that the area was indeed in a floodplain. A floodplain designation is important in making flood insurance available to home and business owners. Chris is continuing to work with North Huntingdon Township to address this flooding situation.

One of the areas hardest-hit by the flooding was along Brush Creek in Jeannette. The storm washed debris into Grapeville and demolished home foundations. The Brown Avenue bridge was severely damaged and is closed until it can be replaced. The fruit market at Oakford Park was filled with three feet of water, as were about 50 homes in the Mill Street area of Jeannette. The

OMNOVA Solutions plant had \$2-1/2 million dollars' worth of damage to machinery and finished products and had to be shut down for a few weeks after debris partially blocked a culvert under the factory and caused water to back up and spill in the factory's windows.

The District, the City of Jeannette, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection have formed a task force that will be working for the next year or so to study what can be done to improve Brush Creek, and its major tributary, Down Run, which carries stormwater from major commercial developments along Route 30 in Hempfield Township.

"We'll be identifying areas along both creeks where severe erosion – both debris and sediment – is occurring and we'll be working on ways to fix those problems," Jim said. "We'll also be studying all the stormwater detention basins in the watershed to see why some worked and why some didn't and helping to fix those that need it."

The District is beginning a dialog with the County Department of Public Safety to explore how the two agencies can communicate more effectively and share important information on natural resource emergencies, such as floods and landslides.



The District also is part of a team that is just finishing the first-ever assessment of stormwater management conditions in each watershed in Westmoreland County.

They gathered a wealth of information about drainage problems, runoff characteristics, floodplain areas, and a host of other current and projected conditions in this process, which goes by the official name of the Countywide Act 167 Stormwater Management study.

The next step is to analyze this data, identifying the key geographic areas and specific stormwater management actions that will create better quality of life, such as less risk of flooding.

Unfortunately, the money allocated for this second phase of the work was eliminated in the recently passed state budget. The District and its partners are working to identify alternative sources of funding to complete this important project.

The Brown Avenue Bridge that crosses Brush Creek to connect Jeannette and Grapeville was damaged by the flood and is closed.

Note the accumulation of flood debris that blocked the bridge opening.



A private driveway bridge upstream of Grapeville destroyed by floodwaters.

The Department of Environmental Protection requires permits to repair structures damaged by floodwaters, and the District has helped many property owners with the necessary information to obtain these permits.







## *Bob Berich Named 2009 “Farmer of the Year”*



Bob's farm pastures feature a rotational grazing system that accomodates both cattle and sheep. Fencing and buffers protect streams.

**B**ob Berich of South Huntingdon Township has been named 2009 “Farmer of the Year” by the Westmoreland Conservation District.

Although it's only been about a year since Bob became the owner and operator of a 50-acre farm that's about midway between Scottdale and Smithton, he has been helping to work this land for almost his whole life – first as a boy growing up there in the 1970s and '80s, and then as an adult, living five miles away but returning daily to help his dad keep up the family's 40-year agricultural operation.

When his father passed away in 2008, Bob, his wife Jen, and their children Tim and Katie moved into the farm's 1860s-era house and began making some changes to make the farm more sustainable.

One of the most significant was putting in rotational grazing, an effective conservation practice that uses fencing to divide farm fields into a number of separate areas or paddocks. By allowing animals to graze in only one fenced area at a time, grass and vegetation in the other paddocks have a chance to regrow. The

farmer keeps a close eye on the extent of grazing and makes decisions about when to move the animals from paddock to paddock.

Rotational grazing is a boon to both the farmer and the community. For the farmer, it improves animal health, saves on feed costs, and produces more product. For the community, it reduces soil erosion, improves the use of animal manure, and improves water quality.

Bob rotationally grazes his state-certified Angus beef cattle and the legacy sheep herd that was his father's, letting the sheep into a paddock right after the cows have been there. “It's amazing how much this system has helped the operation,” Bob said. “I'm feeding far less hay. And because the sheep pick out the things that the cattle didn't eat, it's almost like they're “free riders,” and not eating at all. Plus, they really bring up the nutrient level of the pasture.”

Bob has installed some 7,600 feet of rotational grazing fencing, creating 29 acres of paddocks for his 40 cattle and 20 sheep.

About 2,500 feet of the fencing he installed is along the stream that flows

through his property. This streamside fencing, along with three new dedicated areas he created for the animals to cross the stream, have limited the access his livestock have to this tributary of Meadow Run, helping water quality in this stream and those it flows into, namely Jacobs Creek and the Youghiogheny River.

To provide water for his animals, Bob installed three spring developments with water troughs. He also installed 100 feet of stabilized animal walkway and next year he plans to add a manure storage area and a heavy-use feed pad. He also recently voluntarily developed a nutrient management plan for his farm.

Like his parents before him, Bob uses his farm to raise a variety of local products – not only Angus beef cattle, pigs, and free-range chickens and turkeys, but also sheep, which he breeds for the Easter lamb market. He raises all without hormones or antibiotics and sells directly to consumers. For more information: <http://www.pennmade.com/vendor.php?id=2> or 724-858-8938 or [jbberich@verizon.net](mailto:jbberich@verizon.net).



many of our area's most important conservation projects, including:

- the wetlands at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe that clean up Monastery Run,
- the measures at Valley High School in New Kensington that reduce flooding on Little Pucketa Creek, and
- the work on Mill Creek in Ligonier Township that improved drinking water quality.

The photographs on this and the following page show some projects that the District's current watershed specialist, Rob Cronauer, is working on.



Polluted drainage from abandoned coal mines is at the top of the priority list of the watershed specialist's work in Westmoreland County.

In addition to cleanup projects at Saint Vincent College, Lowber, and Wilson Run, he is part of a major effort under way at Brinkerton – the largest mine discharge in the entire Sewickley Creek Watershed.

Recent refinements to the treatment process at this site have meant that about 80% of the iron is being removed from the mine's discharge water. Further work (e.g., adding electricity and an aerator) should result in removing nearly 100% of the polluting iron. (See page 14 for more information on Brinkerton.)



At the Westmoreland Fairgrounds in Mount Pleasant Township, work is under way to reduce runoff at the heavily used Grandstand Arena. A retention basin was added to reduce the amount of sediment that ends up in the nearby creek, which is part of the Sewickley Creek Watershed.

In the lower photo, green erosion-control matting is being added to stabilize the slopes of the new, 80-foot by 200-foot stormwater/sediment basin.

More work is planned for the Westmoreland Fairgrounds next year, including construction of a channel to direct water to the new stormwater/sediment basin, and construction of another basin to control runoff from Fairgrounds Road.

Thanks to everyone – including the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation; the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts; the Loyalhanna, Sewickley Creek, and Turtle Creek watershed associations; Westmoreland Cleanways; and the PA Fish and Boat Commission – who wrote letters, published articles and editorials, called their representatives, created videos, and in any way joined the effort to convince the state that the \$52,000 annual investment in our county's watershed specialist was money well-spent. Your efforts made the difference in making sure this important work will continue through June 2010.





On a site just above the town of Wyano, the District is helping a landowner reclaim some 59 acres of property that was both deep- and strip-mined by previous owners.

The parcel, which was essentially a large coal-refuse pile, is being systematically returned to a “green” condition by being covered over with soil from a nearby hillside and planted with grass.

An existing sediment basin on the property will be retrofitted to capture sediment while the restoration work is going on and to protect nearby Hunter’s Run, a tributary of Sewickley Creek.



After decades of ongoing problems, there may finally be a little less chance of flooding along Little Pucketa Creek near Valley High School in New Kensington thanks to a coalition of partners that includes the Westmoreland Conservation District.

Nearly 2,000 tons of debris has been removed from the creek bed and more than 400 tons of rock has been used to shore up the streambank and create rock-vane deflectors.

More work is planned for this watershed, which is one of the most storm-water-impacted watersheds in all of Westmoreland County.

The photos below show the stream channel before (left), clogged with years of sediment that had created a small grass-covered island and left only a narrow channel for the water, and after (right) once the sediment was cleared and the channel opened up.



Funding for the Fairgrounds work is being provided through an allocation by the Westmoreland County Commissioners from the state’s Growing Greener II fund. The landowner reclamation project is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection bond forfeiture money and the Little Pucketa Creek work is being made possible through a combination of funding sources, including PennDOT, Westmoreland County (through the Growing Greener II County Initiative), and the Colcom Foundation.



## Relocating the 50th Anniversary Time Capsule



Just a few years after its 50th anniversary in 1999, the District moved into its new barn headquarters. But the time capsule it had buried for that landmark anniversary remained in front of the organization's former home, Donohoe Center.

This year, the District moved the time capsule to a location in front of its current headquarters, the barn.

The site will be marked with a plaque.

## "60 Seconds for Conservation"

This helpful little item has been running all year on our website, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com), and offering a changing array of conservation-minded things that can be done in a minute or less.

Some recent examples: Read the label before you buy fertilizers and pesticides, and choose less-toxic options. Scrape your kitchen scraps into a compost bucket instead of the garbage can to reduce trash and build "black gold" for your garden.



## Colorado Blue Spruce Seedlings

Instead of a printed coffee mug or ballpoint pen – both of which most of us already have too many of – the District marked its 60th anniversary by handing out something natural, renewable, and good for the environment.

It partnered with the National Arbor Day Foundation to distribute more than 450 Colorado blue spruce seedlings to people who came to its events throughout the year. These 9-inch hardy young trees included instructions for easy planting and follow-up care, and were encased in a plastic tube that could be made into a bird feeder.

In addition to contributing to healthy water quality, evergreens provide year-round habitat for birds and wildlife.

If all of these seedlings were planted in one location and spaced according to the Pennsylvania Game Commission's guidelines, they would cover about 3/4 of an acre of ground.



## Proclamation by Westmoreland County Commissioners

In October, the Westmoreland County Commissioners issued a proclamation, recognizing the District's efforts to promote, educate, and implement conservation principles through its examples and programs.

In making the proclamation at a public meeting, County Commission Chairman Tom Balya added that he has enjoyed working with the District over the years, calling it "a very valuable resource in helping to bring about the wise use of our resources, and in balancing preservation with development."

The Commissioners also arranged for the District's conservation timeline to be on public display at the courthouse for several weeks in October.

Pictured l-r: Commissioners Tom Balya and Charles Anderson, District Board Vice Chairman Ron Rohall and District Manager/CEO Greg Phillips, and Commissioner Tom Ceraso.



## "60 Easy Things You Can Do To Conserve Westmoreland County"

This handy pocket-size reference suggests a variety of simple acts that you can do in your home, your yard, your workplace, and your community to make a big difference for conservation – from choosing compact fluorescent light bulbs to giving watershed association memberships for holiday gifts.

It was created as a public service by the District and distributed to area libraries. It also has been handed out at District events during the year.

Pick up a free, printed copy next time you stop at the District office. Or download the PDF from the website, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).



### Other Acknowledgements

The State Conservation Commission recognized the District's "60 years of service and dedication to the conservation of natural resources" with an Award of Appreciation.

The Pennsylvania Senate and the Pennsylvania House of Representatives each issued official citations and congratulations to the District on its anniversary.

### 60th Anniversary Logo

The words "60 Years" and a ribbon flourish stating "Helping People Use Resources Wisely" were added to the District's logo and used all year long on letterhead, publications, the website, and communications of all types.



### Conservation Timeline

This chronicle of conservation highlights major events in District history, beginning in the 1930s with the first – unsuccessful – efforts to form a conservation district in Westmoreland County.

Pioneering local people and community-driven programs are featured within the larger context of national, state, and regional events (see item on District history below).

The timeline was displayed at the Reception/Open House, and for several weeks in the fall at the Westmoreland County Courthouse. Plans are to show it at other venues in the community in upcoming months. Watch the website [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com) for details.



Photo - NRCS

### District History

Researching more than 60 years of conservation history for the timeline unearthed some interesting information.

Like the fact that there almost wasn't a Westmoreland Conservation District.

The idea was soundly voted down the first time it was proposed here in Westmoreland County in 1938.

And it took 11 more years for public opinion to move in favor of forming an organization that would help landowners conserve soil and water.

Finally, in October 1949, a group of determined area farmers petitioned the Westmoreland County Commissioners and successfully got their wish: The creation of a conservation district in Westmoreland County to help them conserve the rich agricultural soils that formed the foundation of their livelihoods.

As the county has grown and changed in the six decades since then, the Westmoreland Conservation District has responded in kind, adding new programs for managing stormwater; restoring streams and land damaged by past coal mining; controlling erosion and sediment; stewarding forests and woodlots; and encouraging sustainable communities.

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### Commemorative Items Available

The District created two commemorative items for the 60th anniversary: a collectors'-quality keepsake created by nationally known company, The Cat's Meow® and an anniversary polo shirt.

The Cat's Meow® keepsake is a wooden replica of the District's 1880s barn head-quarters, featuring the 60th anniversary logo on the front and a brief history of the barn on the back. Approx. 7-3/4" X 4-3/4". \$12.

The 60th Anniversary Polo Shirt is a 100% premium pima cotton, short sleeve, colored shirt with three-button front and the District's 60th anniversary logo. For men or women. White. Sizes run large. Choose from sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL. \$23.

Items are available for sale at the District office, by mail using the form below, or through the website [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).

### Westmoreland Conservation District 60th Anniversary Commemorative Item Order Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**The Cat's Meow® Keepsake**    Quantity \_\_\_\_\_ X \$12 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Polo shirt**  
Size(s): \_\_\_ S\* \_\_\_ M\* \_\_\_ L \_\_\_ XL \_\_\_ XXL \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity X \$23 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* Small and Medium sizes are special order

All mail orders, add standard shipping & handling \$ 4.00

(Note: Items can be purchased in person at the District office without a shipping and handling fee.)

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Westmoreland Conservation District.

Mail this order form and your check to:

**Westmoreland Conservation District**

Donohoe Center, 218 Donohoe Road, Greensburg, PA 15601.

FOR EVEN EASIER ORDERING – You can place your order and pay online with PayPal. Start with the information on the homepage, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com), or go straight to the order form at <https://wcd.wufoo.com/forms/order-form/>

### Special Thanks!

...to our 60th anniversary sponsor, Adam Eidemiller, Inc., Greensburg.

...to the individuals who supplied equipment for the "Then and Now" exhibits:

- Fred Slezak and Dave Slezak of West Central Equipment, New Alexandria, for the 2009 Great Plains No-till Drill and the 2009 John Deere Tractor (83 PTO horse-power)
- Jim Rugh of Greensburg for the early 1970s International No-till Drill
- Sam Stoner of Latrobe for the early 1960s Two-bottom Moldboard Plow, and
- Roger and Joyce West of Ligonier for the 1949 International Harvester McCormack Farmall Tractor.

...to Terry Matty of Matty Farms, West Newton, for supplying the hay bales.

...to J. W. Wilkinsons' Nurseries, Inc., Armbrust, for providing flowers and greenery.

...to our door prize providers:

- Farmers' Market Association of Central Westmoreland County
- Latrobe Farmers Market, Latrobe
- Ligonier Country Market, Ligonier
- Dorothy Madore, One Tuff Cookie, Greensburg
- Nature's Way Market, Greensburg
- Schramm Farms & Orchards, Jeannette, and
- Stone Villa Wine Cellars, Acme.

...to our planning committee: Bill Doney, Sandy Dzendzel, Mark Jackson, Karen Jurkovic, Nicole Miller, Greg Phillips, Dorothy Stoner, and Mimi Thomas-Brooker.



## Long-range Plan Progresses



At the barn meetings, area citizens suggested that the District may have to respond to new and changing local conditions caused by a number of factors, including: increased Marcellus Shale drilling, an aging population, the growth of niche agriculture, and increased traffic/development.

Because our primary goal is to help local people use resources wisely, we were especially appreciative of the 59 area citizens who came to the “barn meetings” we held in August to give us their suggestions on how the District can best respond to community needs now, and during upcoming years.

The meetings were facilitated by the Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management at Robert Morris University, a highly respected strategic-planning consultant for nonprofit organizations. The Bayer Center is using the public comments to help develop a plan that will guide the District’s operations for the next three to five years.

The Bayer Center also held similar, separate meetings for District board members and District staff.

It currently is gathering additional community input by conducting one-on-one interviews with area citizens representing a variety of the District’s constituents.

The plan is being funded with grants from The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, The Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, and The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts. It is expected to be complete next spring.

## Donor Update

Thank you! to these donors who have recently supported the District’s conservation efforts.

### Stormwater Management Program

(Supporting the District’s ability to provide technical advice and assistance in managing stormwater)

#### Partner

(\$500 to \$999)

Fahringer McCarty Grey

Keith Walters Electric Service

### GreenForge Project

(Supporting the District’s demonstration green building and conservation incubator)

#### Benefactor

(\$10,000 and above)

Bruce Construction, LLC

#### Friend

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

Mr. and Mrs. Robert P. Fawcett (third donation)

John N. Ward, Esquire – Ward & Christner, P.C.

#### Sponsor

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

Video Graphics Inc.

### Sustaining Donors

(Supporting general District operations)

#### Patron

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

Dominion Foundation

#### Friend

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

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

#### Sponsor

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

Anonymous

Bove Engineering Company

Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds

#### Partner

(\$500 to \$999)

botanic, LLC

Glasser Family Foundation, Inc.

Kim Edward Miller

Greg, Leanne and Brandon Phillips

#### Associate

(\$250 to \$499)

Robert and Shirley Gosnell (third donation)

List reflects donations received from 12-31-08 to 11-30-09.



# People In The News

## Directors and Associate Directors



**Paul Sarver**, owner and operator of Sarver's Hill Organic Farm and CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) in Greensburg was appointed to the District Board of Directors.

Paul also manages the Farmers' Market Association of Central Westmoreland County, which hosts farm markets in Greensburg and Hempfield Township.

He is a member of the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture and the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association, and a former board member of the Westmoreland County Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

Current District Board Members **Al Barnett** and **Tom Balya** were reappointed to the board for terms that will run until 2012 and 2010, respectively.



**Jesse Jon Salensky** of Export and **Dorothy Stoner** of Unity Township were named as associate directors of the District.

**Jesse** is a principal in botanic, LLC, landscape designers and builders. He also serves as director of business development for Bruce Construction, LLC and as a principal and certified arborist for pH<sup>+</sup>, LLC.

He is a board member and director of the Committee for Sustainability for the Vandergrift Improvement Program, a member of the International Society of Arboriculture, and a Pennsylvania certified horticulturist through the Pennsylvania Landscape and Nurseryman's Association.



**Dorothy Stoner** is a retired Unity Township dairy farmer who continues to assist her son and daughter-in-law with financial management of the 120-acre family farm.

She served on several local township committees as well as on the group Pro-Ag. She is a former member of the Farmers Home Administration Committee, the ASCS Community Committee, and the Board of Directors of the Westmoreland Conservation District, on which she served for 10 years (1995-2005).

Westmoreland Conservation District directors and associate directors are volunteers who share their time, professional expertise, skills and insights to help encourage the conservation of our county's natural resources – our productive farms, healthy forests, stable soils, and clean streams.

## Staff



One of our erosion control specialists, **Nicole Miller**, completed the courses and successfully passed the exam to become a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control.

This designation certifies individuals who are qualified to practice in the fields of erosion and sediment control or stormwater quality, based on a thorough examination and review of their educational, scientific, and service activities.

## Intern



**Andrea Romano**, a fourth-year landscape architecture student at Penn State University recently completed an internship with the District in stormwater management and sustainable practices.

Her hands-on experience ran the gamut from helping to design rain gardens for Mount Pleasant to inspecting development sites for erosion and sediment control measures.

The intern experience, she said, helped to solidify her belief that she has chosen the right profession, which allows her to incorporate her interests in math, science and art.

Andrea's summer internship wasn't her first encounter with the District. As a student at Burrell High School, she competed in the annual Envirothon during all four years of high school, from 2003 through 2006.

She is a daughter of Joe and Nancy Romano of Lower Burrell.

## Volunteers

Thanks to everyone who gave time, talent, and energy in support of the District's conservation efforts in the past few months.



**Maintenance gardening on GreenForge's Green Roof** – Thanks to: **Students from Outside In** and their supervisors **Stan Bruno** and **John Seavor**... **students from Blairsville High School**



and their advisor **Mark Wydareny...**  
**students from Greensburg-Salem High**  
**School...Sandi Mason...Sarah Pillsbury.**



**Day of Caring** – Thanks to volunteers from **Cedar Ridge Bottling Company of Latrobe and 1st Summit Bank in Greensburg.**

The District has a variety of volunteer opportunities available for adults who want to support conservation in our county, including: office work, such as copying and mailing; event setup; light landscaping work (mulching, weeding, and planting); guiding tours of the District's barn headquarters; researching information; minor building maintenance; and more.

If you have some free time and an interest in supporting conservation,

contact Mimi Thomas-Brooker at [mimi@wcdpa.com](mailto:mimi@wcdpa.com) or 724-837-5271, ext. 211.

### Partner Organizations



Congratulations to **Patty Miller** (right) of Bullskin Township who was recently named as executive director of the Jacobs Creek Watershed Association.

Patty is the first executive director in the history of the association, which originally was formed in the 1960s to address flooding along Jacobs Creek. The original organization disbanded after a few years, but was reformed in 1999.

Patty said she especially plans to focus on making the community aware of what the association is doing, reviving mem-

bership, and getting people involved.

She can be reached at 724-887-8220, ext. 3.

### Transitions



**Bill Kotsenas**, associate director of the District from 1993 through September 2006, passed away on June 11, just about two weeks shy of his 90th birthday.

Bill was a passionate advocate for native plants and wildflowers. He was president of the Westmoreland Botanical Society from 1988 to 1996, and served as the group's conservation chairman from 2000 to 2006.

He organized one of the region's first "plant rescues" in the late 1980s, relocating hundreds of native plants that were about to be lost in a major highway construction project to Twin Lakes Park.

## Envirothon Results

**F**irst place and the Special Wildlife Award in this year's Westmoreland County Envirothon went to Kiski Area High School Team 1 (pictured, l-r) Emily Brosko; Matt Miller; Patrick Wilkinson; Ralph Lemmon, advisor; George Petree; and Eric Hrvosky.

Second place went to Yough Senior High School Team 1 – Christine Barrett, Sam Greenawalt, Jenna Johnstone, Cady Muziani, and Neil Trout (faculty advisor Greg King).

Third place went to Greensburg Salem High School Team 1 – David Kaser, Briana Kissel, Angela Liprand, Ricky Miller, and Jacob Pedder (faculty advisor Angelo Ross).

Special Aquatics Award went to The Kiski School – Guillermo Frutos-Miranda, Derek Green, Dan Hogland, Frank Kowalewski, and Zack Urbany (faculty advisor Nancy Wells).

Congratulations ... and thanks to all the students from these schools who participated: Burrell, Derry Area Senior, Greensburg Central Catholic, Greensburg Salem, Kiski Area, Mount Pleasant, Norwin Senior, Southmoreland, and Yough Senior high schools, and The Kiski School.



If your school didn't participate this year, contact Mimi at 724-837-5271, ext. 211, or [mimi@wcdpa.com](mailto:mimi@wcdpa.com) to see how you can be part of the fun in 2010!





## GreenForge Story Told in Video

The finishing touches are now being added to a new nine-minute video showing the transformation of GreenForge from an empty, energy-inefficient building to a model of sustainability and a home for grassroots conservation organizations.

The building's geothermal heating and cooling system, solar array, and green roof are featured, along with its low-E windows, dense-pack cellulose fiber insulation, updated linoleum, and many other sustainable elements. Many of these applications can be used in homes and residential buildings, as well as in commercial and industrial sites.

The video will be incorporated into upcoming education programs, and will be accessible on the District website. A copy also can be viewed anytime during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday) in the District's resource library.

Support for the video was provided by a \$3,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental Education Grant Program, and some in-kind work provided by Video Graphics Inc.

## Brinkerton Fact Sheet Available

About halfway between Armbrust and United, in the small rural town of Brinkerton, is the largest abandoned coal mine discharge in the entire Sewickley Creek Watershed.

Water has been flowing out of the mine and into Sewickley Creek at a rate of 2,000 to 4,000 gallons per minute, depending on the time of the year, for nearly five decades.

A new fact sheet gives more information on this significant discharge and the ongoing efforts of a number of conservation organizations to remedy it.

Pick up a copy at the District office, the Sewickley Creek Watershed Association office, or the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation office. Or download the PDF from the District's website, [www.wedpa.com](http://www.wedpa.com).



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by Karen Barnhart

### PUMPKIN BARS

#### Cake

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup oil
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1-1/2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 15-oz. can pumpkin

Sift dry ingredients together. Stir sugar, pumpkin and oil together. Add dry ingredients.

Bake 25 minutes at 350 degrees in a greased and floured 9 X 13 pan. Make frosting while cake is cooling.

#### Frosting

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 3-oz. package cream cheese
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups powdered sugar

Cream butter and cream cheese together, then add the sugar and vanilla. Frost cooled cake.







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## KATHY'S KIDS KORNER by Kathy Fritz 60th Anniversary

Find each of the following words which relate to the Westmoreland Conservation District's 60th Anniversary Celebration.

Antique tractor	R P G W O N D N A N E H T B C
Cats Meow	O S R E N O I S S I M M O C O
Chef Dado	O S R E N O I S S I M M O C O
Commissioners	T N E M P I U Q E M R A F O N
Conservation	C O E S P T I C L J Q K E R S
Conserve	C O E S P T I C L J Q K E R S
Corn Husking	A I N R K A E S U E R I L N E
Directors	R T B O T V M E S S Y N C H R
Farm equipment	T A U T M R J E P B R G Y U V
Green building	T A U T M R J E P B R G Y U V
History	E M I C H E F D A D O B C S E
Making butter	U A L E T S W L C A T U E K N
Open house	Q L D R C N J I E Z S T R I I
Proclamation	Q L D R C N J I E Z S T R I I
Reception	I C I I Q O D N M M I T X N L
Recycle	T O N D E C S G I R H E G G E
Reuse	N R G W O E M S T A C R O Z M
Seedlings	N R G W O E M S T A C R O Z M
Then and Now	A P E S U O H N E P O Y Q T I
Time capsule	N O I T P E C E R O Q H M A T
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## LANDMARKS

The Official Newsletter of the  
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Rob Cronauer, Chris Droste,  
Mimi Thomas-Brooker

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# New Field Guide Looks at Aquatic Plants



"A Field Guide to Common Aquatic Plants of Pennsylvania" is published by the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences.

Hard copies are available for \$11.00 at the office of the Penn State Cooperative Extension Westmoreland County, 214 Donohoe Road, Suite E, Greensburg, PA 15601. For mail orders, add \$2.00 shipping.

The guide is also available on the District's website, [www.wcdpa.com](http://www.wcdpa.com).

When Dana Rizzo, the District/Penn State Extension water quality educator, first started helping people manage their ponds, she wasn't always sure what aquatic plant she was looking at. Was it friend or foe? Benefit or nuisance? And if it was a troublesome species, what was the best way to eradicate it?

To get the answers, she'd carefully take a sample of the plant or a photograph, or both, and then head back to

the office to do some research.

Today, she can identify most aquatic plants right on the spot, thanks to a new field guide that she and her counterpart in Beaver County, water-quality educator Susan Boser, created.

Amazingly, no such field guide on Pennsylvania's common aquatic plants had ever been compiled. So this new pocket-size resource, which provides a written description, drawing, and photograph for each of more than 40 common plants, is generating interest.

The guide also provides information on the benefits of the various aquatic plants, such as pennywort's ability to

provide food and shelter for animals, duckweeds' reputation for reducing mosquito reproduction, and the American lotus' clear beauty.

It flags invasive as well as endangered species and cautions that trying to mechanically control some plants can actually make them become more of a problem if they reproduce quickly when broken apart.

The guide took more than two years to complete and was compiled with input from water-quality educators across the state as well as from Bryan Swistock, Penn State's water resources extension associate.



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# Investment Helps Local Agriculture and Community

The largest investment of Growing Greener funds ever made on a single farm in Westmoreland County is now under way on a beef farm in the Stony Run Watershed in Derry Township.

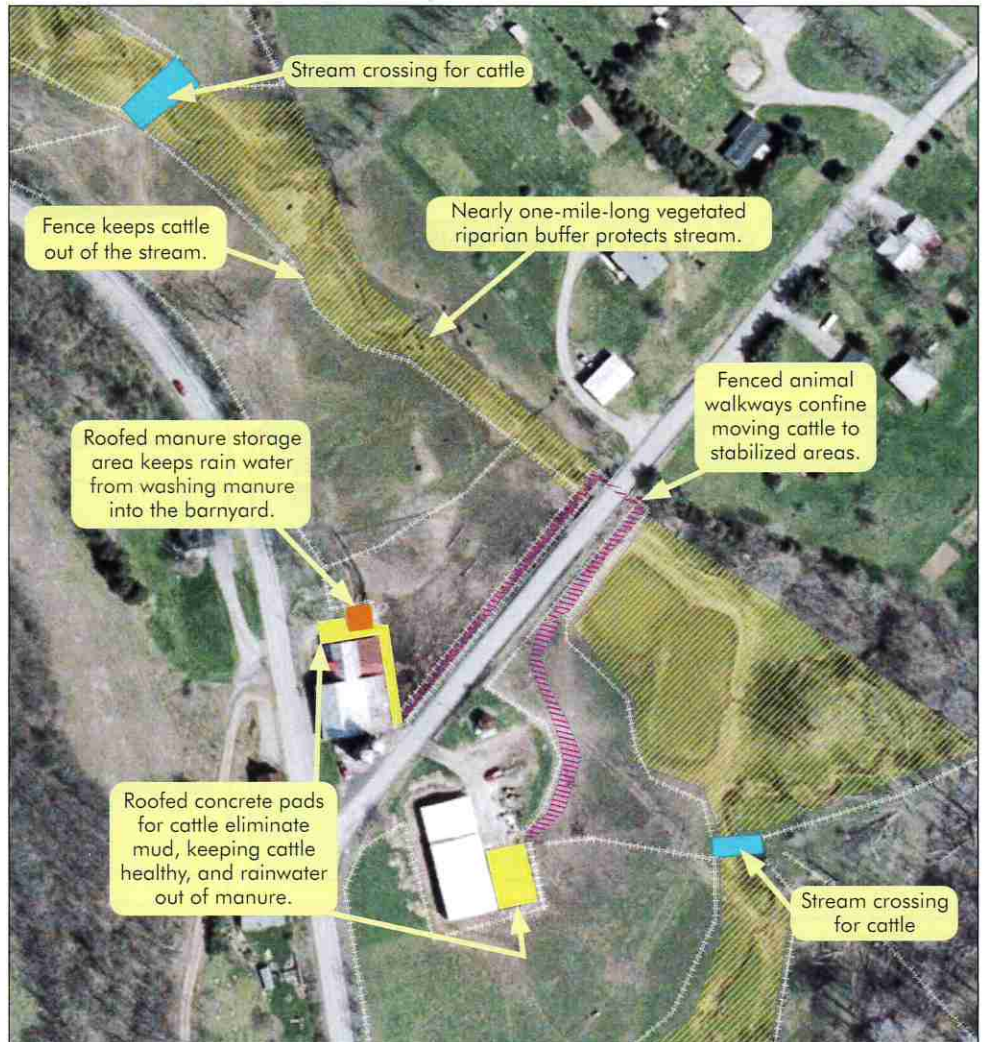
Fifty thousand dollars in Growing Greener funds will be used on this property to create a nearly one-mile-long riparian buffer along the stream, an animal walkway that's more than 700 feet long, two stream crossings, a concrete pad with a roof, and a manure storage area.

These improvements will help farmer Ken Laughlin limit the access his 40 beef cattle and their calves have to Stony Run from 3,500 feet to just 100 feet, and significantly reduce mud, manure, and erosion in the barnyard, all of which contribute to better animal health and improved viability of his operation.

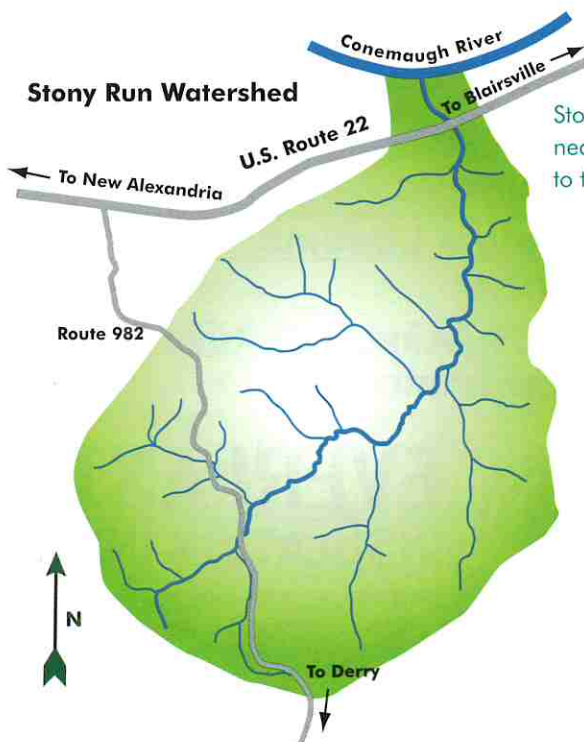
The new conservation measures also benefit the community by supporting our county's number one industry, agriculture, and by creating better water quality for everyone downstream.

The remainder of the \$133,485 Growing Greener II funds awarded in February for conservation work in this watershed will be used for similar improvements on one or two other farms.

The Stony Run Watershed has been identified as one of the highest in Westmoreland County in the amount of sediment and nutrient pollution.



This aerial photo of the Ken Laughlin farm shows the range of conservation improvements planned and under way. Drain lines, water troughs, and lined waterways also will be installed.

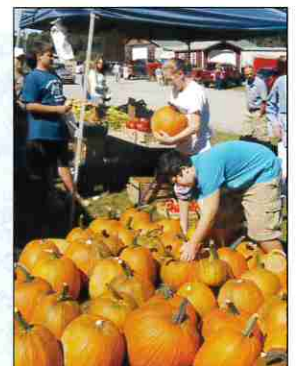


Stony Run Watershed is in northeastern Westmoreland County, near Blairville. From its headwaters, it flows north seven miles to the Conemaugh River and drains a total of 13 square miles.

Most citizens who participated in the development of Westmoreland County's Comprehensive Plan felt that farming should be preserved as a way of life in the county.

Area farm markets and growing awareness of the benefits of buying food locally are helping to support the industry, which is the county's leader in terms of gross dollar product.

For 60 years, the District has been working one-on-one with area farmers, helping them identify conservation measures that help them operate their farms more efficiently.





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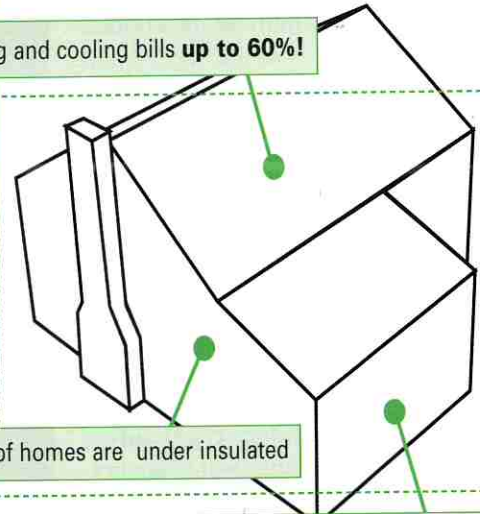
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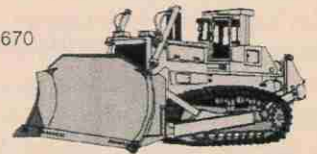
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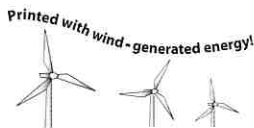




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## District Board Votes to Take Additional Steps to Protect Resources

**V**oluntary compliance has been a hallmark of the District's philosophy since its founding in 1949.

Through 60 years of practical, day-to-day experience with loggers, developers, farmers, engineers, earthmovers, contractors, and others, we have found that the vast majority of people will voluntarily take measures to protect the natural resources, especially when we help them do so by meeting with them on their job site, providing information, offering practical demonstrations and technical support, and helping to monitor the site's natural resources as work is being done.

Of course, there always are a few instances where, no matter how much support we provide, a person or company simply refuses to comply with state environmental regulations. When that happens, our last resort has been to turn the situation over to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. A compliance specialist from this state agency would then review the problem situation and, if there were violations of Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Law, could stop work at the site and/or levy penalties.

In recent years, however, tight state

budgets have decreased the number of state compliance specialists, and created a backlog of problem sites waiting for state review. Meanwhile, earth-moving activity on these sites continues, often for a significant amount of time after the problem has been identified, and often with detrimental effects on the soil, water, and other natural resources.

Our board of directors and staff have been concerned about this situation, and have lobbied for the past few years to get more consistent and timely state enforcement of the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law. Unfortunately, that has not happened.

So, in October, the District Board voted to ask the Department of Environmental Protection to delegate its ability to enforce the Clean Streams Law in Westmoreland County to the Westmoreland Conservation District. This is the first step in a process that ultimately will give the District the ability to take the same steps that the state agency's compliance specialists did.

"Our goal in asking for this additional authority is not to levy fines, but to be able to take quick and definitive action to correct violations on problem sites and

### Upcoming Education Events

Mark your calendar, and watch for more information on these upcoming conservation programs.

#### 2010

##### February

Southwest Regional Tillage Conference

##### March

Engineers' Workshop

##### March/April

Stormwater For Homeowners

##### Spring

Backyard Woods Workshop

##### May

Pasture Walk

##### July

Teacher Workshops

##### September

Bus tour to seasonal rotational grazing farm

##### October

Sustainable Energy Days

protect our natural resources," said J. Roy Houston, chairman of the District's Board of Directors.

The District expects to have this enforcement ability by early 2010.