



Ohio Farmers Tour Westmoreland County

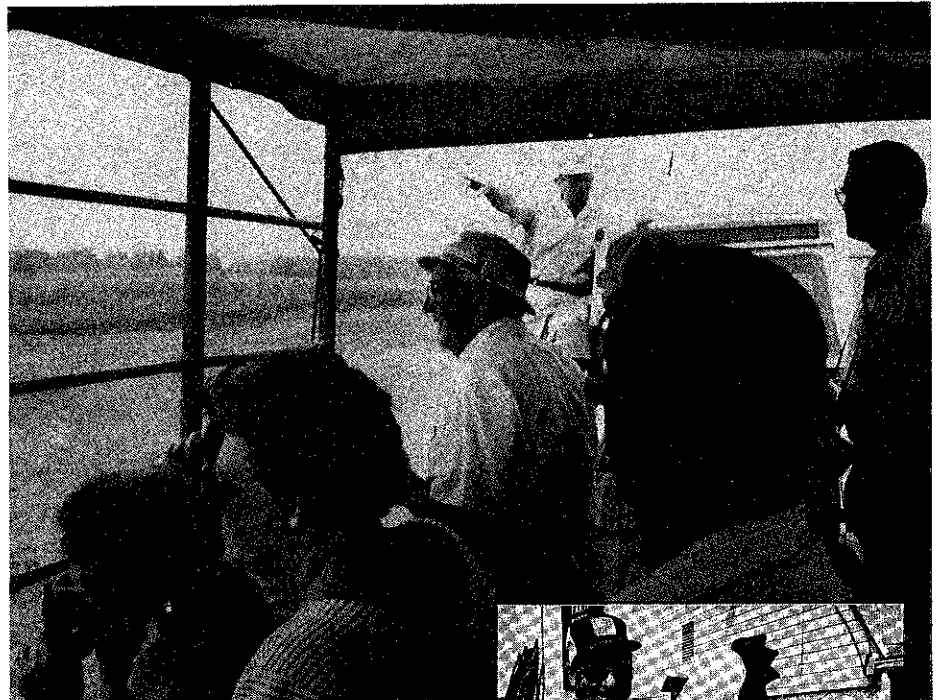
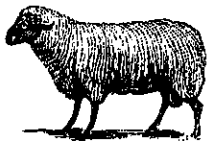
by Lincoln Stefl

This spring Kathy Posey, Administrative Secretary, Preble County Ohio Soil and Water Conservation District, contacted the PA State Office of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) to inquire about an interesting county to visit in Pennsylvania. SCS personnel suggested Westmoreland County.

For two days in August, the Westmoreland Conservation District hosted our counterparts from Eaton, Ohio. The group of 48 people consisted of District Staff, Supervisors, Cooperators, and Fritz the bus driver. They arrived on August 17 and were met at the Madison exit of Interstate 70 by District staff members Greg Phillips, Lincoln Stefl, and Kathy Fritz.

A guided tour of the Greenawalt Poultry Farm near Madison was first on the agenda. Ina Greenawalt explained the egg production operation while her husband John Greenawalt took the group for a hayride to view the conservation practices that have been incorporated into the farming operation. The route to their motel provided the group with an opportunity to view some urban conservation and storm-water management practices. Dinner at Sleepy Hollow and a play at St. Vincent's College topped off the evening.

The next day the Preble County farmers visited the Jamisons' Sheep Farm near



Crabtree. John and Sukey Jamison explained how the intensive rotational grazing system has helped their operation. The next stop was the Kemerer Dairy Farm in Pleasant Unity where Roy Kemerer and his family discussed the manure management system and their dairy operation. A special thanks to Wes Gordon, SCS, who accompanied the group on this tour.

Our friends from Ohio concluded their visit to Westmoreland County with lunch at the Mountain View Inn and a trip to Fort Ligonier for a taste of local history. It was an enjoyable event for all.



Photos - Lincoln Stefl
Greg Phillips

Local Woodland Owners Organize



by A. P. Quadro, Jr.

Forty-four fans of forestland ranging in age from sixteen to eighty-six turned out for an organizational meeting of a new group — the Westmoreland County Woodland Owners Association. The meeting and buffet-style luncheon were held on Saturday, October 15, at the Lord Ligonier Inn.

Some of the purposes of the new group will be the promotion of conservation-oriented woodlot management, increased utilization of local timber resources, promotion of forestry education programs, and exploration of solutions to various forest management problems.

The new group will be administered by the woodland owners themselves. A steering committee of several interested landowners was formed to propose a slate of officers, develop bylaws, and recommend a dues structure.

State Representative Jess Stairs addressed the woodland owners regarding Act 319, the "Clean and Green Law." The law enables landowners to petition to have their land assessed according to its present use rather than its value for developmental purposes. Stairs handed out detailed information about the law and also talked about tax reform initiatives now being discussed in



1 CORD OF WOOD YIELDS

- 7,500 toothpicks, or,
- 1,000 to 2,000 pounds of paper; or,
- 942 one-pound books; or,
- 61,370 No. 10 envelopes (standard); or,
- 460,000 personal checks; or,
- 89,870 sheets of letterhead bond paper (8-1/2 x 11 inches); or,
- 1,200 copies of the National Geographic; or,
- 30 Boston rockers; or,
- 12 dining room tables (each table seats eight).



Photo - A. P. Quadro

Harrisburg. "It behooves you to organize," he told the group, "If only to make your voice heard in Harrisburg."

Tom Fitzgerald, Bureau of Forestry, presented a slide program on the gypsy moth. He noted that the gypsy moth has been slowly edging westward, against the prevailing winds since it was accidentally released in Massachusetts in 1869. The State's present plan of attack is to encourage the natural enemies of the pest, closely monitor the population, and take "acceptable action" to contain them before numbers increase substantially.

Those attending the meeting also heard

a presentation on the federal timber tax law by Jim Findley, Penn State. Following lunch, the group toured the Tree Farm of Neil Kinneer, of Acme. Kinneer was chosen as Westmoreland County's Outstanding Woodland Manager in 1988. The Kinneer Tree Farm provided an excellent example of forestland managed for timber, wildlife, and recreation. The meeting ended with a question and answer session during which everyone enjoyed cookies and refreshments provided by the Kinneers. The next meeting will likely be in February.

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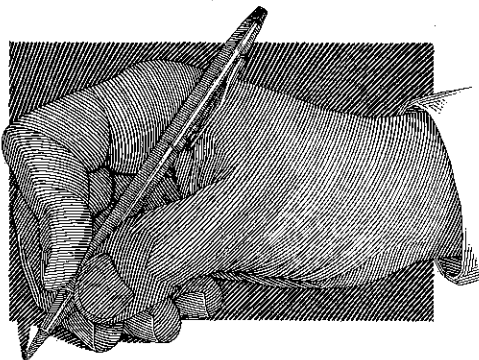
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Secretary Davis Outlines Environmental

Agenda

by Greg Phillips



Arthur A. Davis, Secretary, PA Department of Environmental Resources (DER), was one of the featured speakers at the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District Directors Annual Conference in Sayre, Bradford County. Secretary Davis discussed the key environmental objectives that have been identified by the DER for special emphasis during the next four years. Secretary Davis stated, "None is more important than the others; however, the areas of waste management, water quality and management and resources conservation, especially state forests and parks, are the three major areas of concern."

A look at DER's environmental objectives:

Clean Up Hazardous Waste Sites

Pennsylvania currently lacks ability to clean up as many as 2,000 sites not eligible for federal funds or which may require quicker response than is available under the Superfund program. Some of these have not been evaluated for potential hazard.

Action: Completed assessments to identify scope of cleanup problem. Establish a state hazardous waste cleanup program.

Increase Waste Management Capacity

Pennsylvania faces a serious shortage of capacity to dispose safely of its municipal, hazardous and radioactive wastes. We have no commercial hazardous waste or low-level waste facilities and only about four years of municipal waste disposal capacity.

Action: Implemented new municipal waste regulations. Enact legislation to enhance recycling and planning. Permit two hazardous waste facilities. Enacted legislation to site the low level radioactive waste facility required by federal law.

Improve Clean Water Infrastructure

Pennsylvania needs to improve about 3000 municipal sewer systems in order to meet its environmental and economic development goals. Many communities will also need technical assistance to comply.

Action: Instituted unique financing program (PENNVEST) to meet these needs. Accelerate water system permitting. Pass legislation to ban lead in drinking water. Provide technical assistance.

Revitalize State Parks and Forests

Pennsylvania's 114 state parks and two million acres of state forests have been too long neglected, and need revitalized management to regain their roles in tourism and forest product development.

Action: A park-by-park current needs assessment to identify staffing needs and priorities. Develop plans to enhance parks and forests.

Speed Abandoned Mine Reclamation

More than 250,000 acres of severe hazard sites scar Pennsylvania's countryside, requiring as much as \$1.9 billion to reclaim.

Action: Encourage private industry reclamation. Work to ensure continuation. Work to ensure continuation of federal funds.

Improve Water Resources Management

Recent population growth has severely strained smaller water supplies in suburban areas, a particular problem during droughts.

Action: Develop comprehensive legislation to coordinate management of both ground and surface water. Update 10 year-old State Water Plan.

Improve Groundwater Quality Management

With half of all drinking water coming from groundwater, there is a pressing need to develop a comprehensive protection strategy as well as regulate major sources of contamination.

Action: Develop protection strategy. Develop state program to implement federal underground storage tank rules.

Preserve Natural Heritage

Protection of natural and wild areas, scenic rivers and high quality streams are essential to Pennsylvania's heritage.

Action: Identify new natural and wild areas. Use the Natural Diversity Inventory in DER's regulatory activities. Developed wetlands protection policy.

Abate Radon Exposure

All counties in the Commonwealth may contain areas of radon contamination, a naturally occurring gas that contributes to cancer risk.

Action: Operate a certification program for detection and remediation firms to protect homeowners. Develop plan for further initiatives.

Improve Dam Safety

There are more than 60 unsafe dams which have the potential to fail unless drained or repaired. There are also almost 800 high hazard dams which must be inspected annually.

Action: Increase inspection frequency. Remove or repair all unsafe dams.

Abate Acid Rain

Acid precipitation has possible adverse effects on vulnerable lakes, forests and other resources, but the costs to consumers and industry must be considered in assessing control strategies.

Action: Work toward solution at national level. Update assessment of benefits and costs of various alternatives.

Control Nonpoint Source Water Pollution

Water quality assessments have shown that nonpoint water pollution is the most significant threat to Pennsylvania's water quality and a major contributor to the degradation of the Chesapeake Bay.

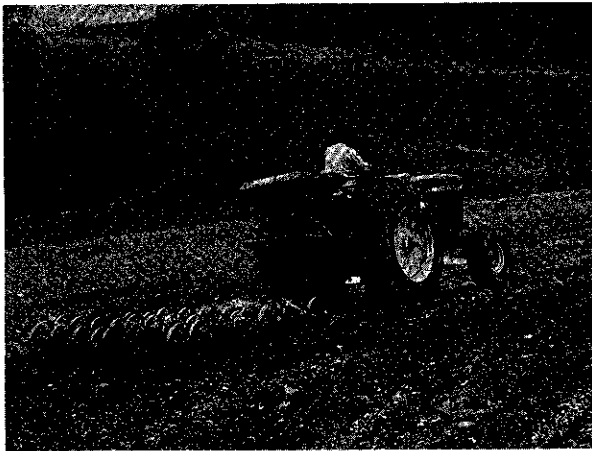
Action: Identify streams most affected and develop abatement plans. Improve erosion and sediment control rules. Implement 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement.

Integrate Toxics Management

DER is a highly technical agency that must deal with a complex array of toxic chemicals in assessing dangers to human health. A coordinated approach involving programs in air, water, solid waste and radiation protection would be the most effective in reducing risk of exposure.

Action: Coordinate programs in Deputate of Environmental Protection. Established Toxics Management Unit.

Local Sportsmen Participate in Reclamation Program



Photos - Joe Obanski

by Greg Phillips

Chuck Waugaman, President of the Greensburg Sportsmen's Association, walked the abandoned surface mine site and commented, "This is really a nice job, I'm glad we could reclaim this site and improve wildlife habitat at the same time." Waugaman was referring to the excellent progress which has been made at the Greensburg Sportsmen's Landowner Reclamation Program (LRP) site near Mutual. The project is being coordinated by the Westmoreland Conservation District.

The successful low-bidder on the job, Dick Kepple, New Alexandria, completed

repair work to an existing pond, constructed 3,000 feet of diversion and 600 feet of waterway, and seeded about six acres. Soil erosion and sedimentation problems on the site have been minimized as a result of the newly constructed surface water controls. In addition, the diversions are delivering water to several low areas on the site creating beneficial wetlands for wildlife. Next spring, the Sportsmen will frost-seed approximately 13 acres with red clover and tall fescue. Hedgerow plantings of autumn olive, silky dogwood, honeysuckle, winterberry, and cranberry along with random clusters of red pine will also be added to the site.

Two or three plots of rye grain will be established as well.

The LRP is the result of a formal agreement between DER and the State Conservation Commission and is a new and different approach to address the reclamation of Pennsylvania's abandoned surface mine land. In essence, the program utilizes the statutory authority of the Conservation District Law to convey forfeited bond money from the Department of Environmental Resources through the State Conservation Commission and local conservation districts to individual landowners.

District Publicizes New Landowner Reclamation Program Brochure

by Greg Phillips

There is a new brochure for Pennsylvania's newest reclamation program. The Westmoreland Conservation District recently completed a State Conservation Commission funded Special Project that involved the production and distribution of 2,000 Landowner Reclamation Program (LRP) Brochures.

The District contracted with Jackson Graphics of Greensburg to design and prepare the artwork for the brochure. Merle Harr volunteered to assist by serving as a subject for several action photographs at his farm near Lycippus.

The brochure will be used by conservation districts and the Department of Environmental Resources to promote the LRP. The LRP allows interested landowners to utilize bond forfeiture funds to reclaim abandoned surface mines on their properties. For a copy of the LRP brochure please contact Greg Phillips at the District office.

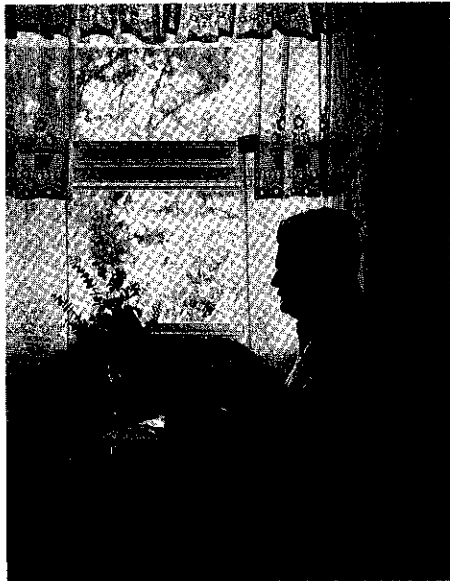



Photo - Mark Jackson



Naturally
DELICIOUS

Spanikopita by Lincoln Stefl
(Greek Spinach Cheese Pie) 6 servings

2 lb. Fresh Spinach or 2 pkg. of Frozen Spinach
1 lb. Tofu
2 Eggs, lightly beaten
2½ Cups Cottage Cheese (dried or uncreamed)
2 tsp. Sea Salt
½ Cup Shredded Cheddar Cheese
2 tsp. Dried Parsley
2 Green Onions, sliced
2 tsp. Dill Weed
1 tsp. Pepper

Steam fresh spinach or cook frozen spinach in small amount of water. Drain.
Mash tofu with fork & mix together all ingredients.
Pour into 10-inch square casserole that has been lightly oiled. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350°.

Share your favorite recipes Send to:
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Greensburg, PA 15601

District Plays Important Part in Stormwater Study

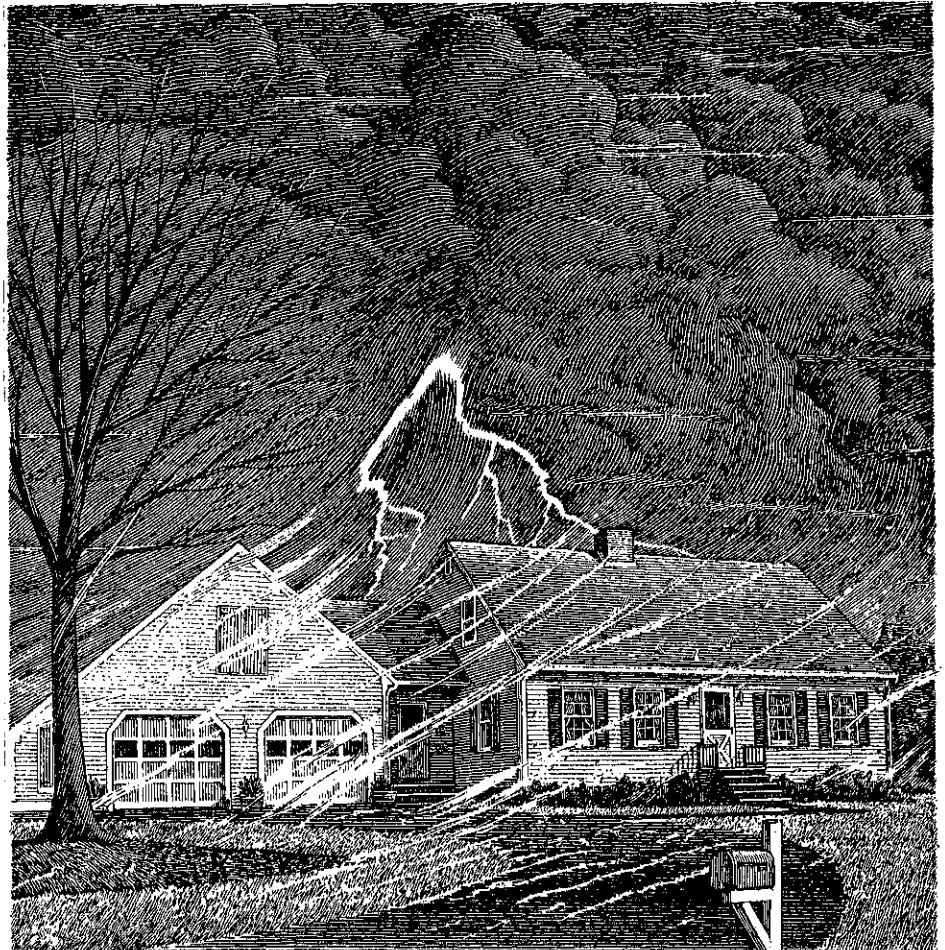
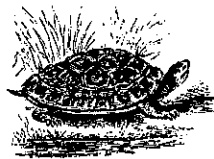
by Jim Pillsbury

The Turtle Creek Stormwater Management Study was undertaken in 1986 by Westmoreland and Allegheny Counties to develop guidelines for stormwater management in the Turtle Creek watershed. The lack of stormwater management within the basin has resulted in uncontrolled runoff, increased flood stages, reduced ground-water recharge, erosion and sedimentation problems and decreased stream quality.

The information-gathering phase of the study is now underway. In order to construct a computer model of the watershed, information such as stream channel dimensions, bridge and culvert sizes, and land use data must be acquired. Also necessary is flood history in the watershed area. All of the municipalities in the watershed were asked to complete a questionnaire to identify flooding problems in their areas. The questionnaire covered known flooding hazards, historical flood levels, and existing and proposed flood control measures such as levees and flood walls.

Jim Pillsbury, District Hydraulic Engineer, visited municipalities in Westmoreland County to assist them in the completion of the questionnaire. Accompanied by engineer John Maslanik, Chester Engineers, and David Cutlip, Turtle Creek Watershed Association, Jim visited Murrysville, North Huntingdon, Irwin, North Irwin, and Jeannette. Using topographical maps, street plans, photographs, and even the memories of long-time residents, the group quickly gathered the necessary information.

The next step in the study is to create the computer model, using all of the collected data. The computer model will identify areas which need stormwater management ordinances and will recommend stormwater runoff limitations in those areas. It will then be up to individual municipalities to enhance ordinances based on the study recommendations.



The Westmoreland Conservation District Board of Directors has long recognized that stormwater management is a concern in the urban areas of the County. Since the mid-70's, the District has worked to advocate and implement stormwater management practices. Last year, the Westmoreland County Commissioners

increased funding for the District's Stormwater Management Program. With the increased funding the District will be able to provide better services to municipalities, developers, and landowners as well as facilitate the Turtle Creek Study.

Municipal Acreage In Turtle Creek Watershed

	Acres in Watershed	Percent of Total Watershed
Westmoreland County		
Adamsburg Borough	109	.12
Hempfield Township	8,141	9.72
Irwin Borough	512	.55
City of Jeannette	1,536	1.64
Manor Borough	198	.21
North Huntingdon	98.43	10.54
North Irwin Borough	128	.14
Penn Borough	64	.07
Penn Township	20,544	21.99
Trafford Borough	762	.82
Export Borough	192	.21
Murrysville	19,328	20.69
Delmont Borough	512	.55
Subtotal	61,869	66.24

A Word About Logging Roads . . .

By Thomas J. Fitzgerald

Service Forester for Westmoreland County
Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry

The importance of good logging roads cannot be overemphasized. The removal of trees -- even clearcutting -- does not cause erosion in hardwood timber stands, but bad roads do cause erosion, even when no trees are cut.

The most common reason why logging roads are bad is because they are TOO STEEP. Years of experience have shown that "too steep" is everything steeper than eight percent. An eight percent grade climbs eight feet for every hundred feet of horizontal travel. Gentler grades are even better, as long as the roads are not dead level. Level roads usually do not drain well, and tend to remain wet and soft for a longer time after each rainstorm. The best grades are between two and five percent.

The logging roads should be planned and laid out before the timber is sold. The logger should be required to use that road location for his access. If a change in land use is intended, the road should be planned to serve the new use. For example, if the landowner plans to build a house in the logged area, part of the logging road should be laid out on the site of the future driveway.

On the other hand, if the landowner has no reason to build the road in a specific location, it may be desirable to ask the logging crew foreman to help lay out the road. Some locations may fit his skidding and hauling requirements better than others. But even so, the eight percent maximum grade should not be exceeded.

The best way to start planning the road system is to decide where the road should

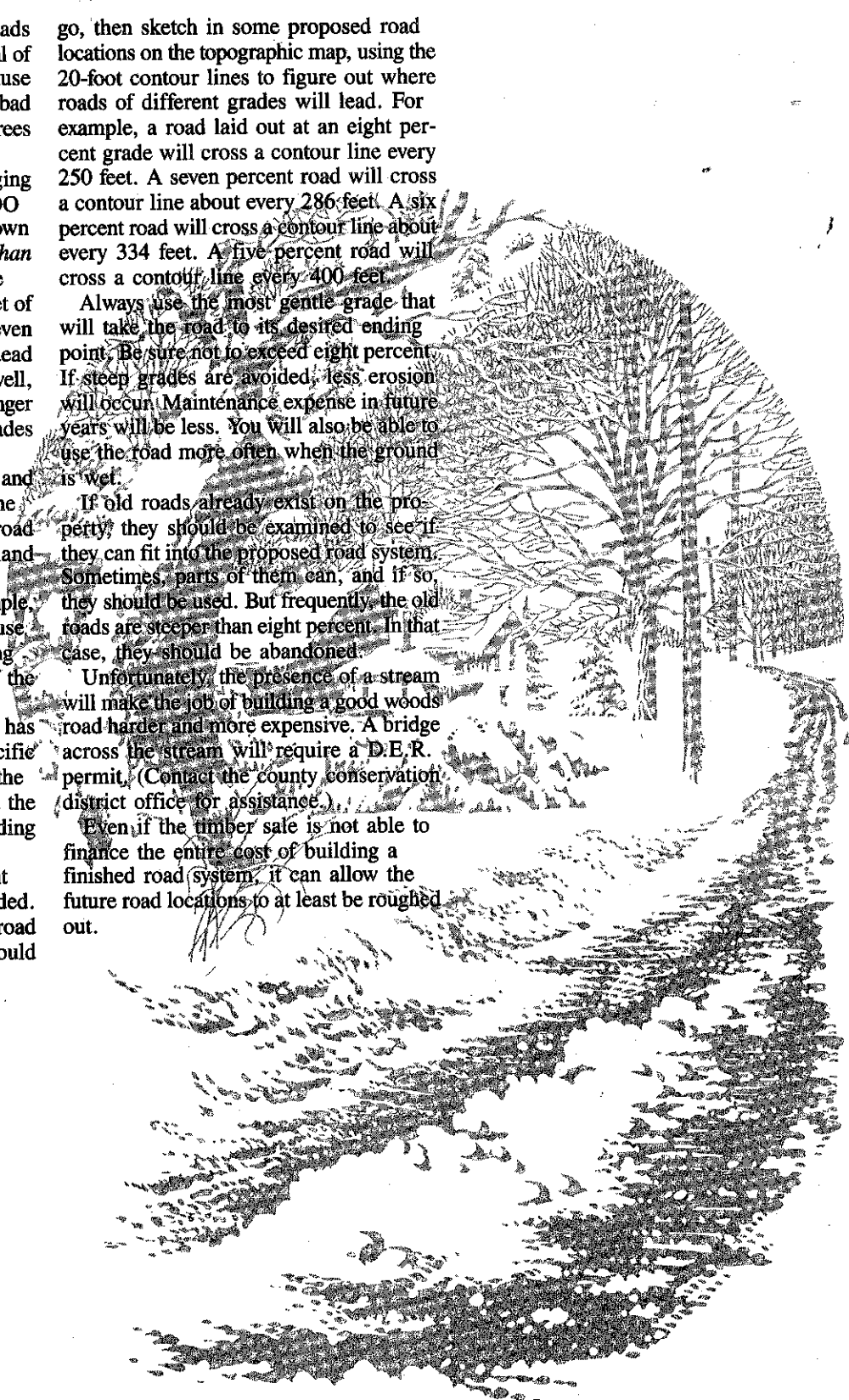
go, then sketch in some proposed road locations on the topographic map, using the 20-foot contour lines to figure out where roads of different grades will lead. For example, a road laid out at an eight percent grade will cross a contour line every 250 feet. A seven percent road will cross a contour line about every 286 feet. A six percent road will cross a contour line about every 334 feet. A five percent road will cross a contour line every 400 feet.

Always use the most gentle grade that will take the road to its desired ending point. Be sure not to exceed eight percent. If steep grades are avoided, less erosion will occur. Maintenance expense in future years will be less. You will also be able to use the road more often when the ground is wet.

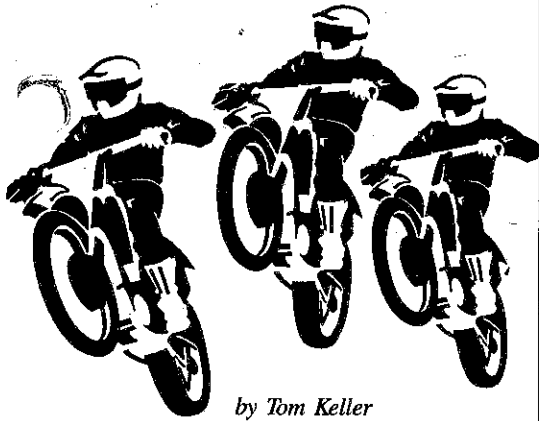
If old roads already exist on the property, they should be examined to see if they can fit into the proposed road system. Sometimes, parts of them can, and if so, they should be used. But frequently, the old roads are steeper than eight percent. In that case, they should be abandoned.

Unfortunately, the presence of a stream will make the job of building a good woods road harder and more expensive. A bridge across the stream will require a D.E.R. permit. (Contact the county conservation district office for assistance.)

Even if the timber sale is not able to finance the entire cost of building a finished road system, it can allow the future road locations to at least be roughed out.



Coping With 4WD/ATV Damage



by Tom Keller

What should a farmer or landowner do in response to 4WD and ATV damage to fields, crops and woodlot trails?

John "Jack" G. Sickenberger, Pennsylvania Game Commission Law Enforcement Supervisor, Ligonier, PA, said, "Damage from 4WD's and ATV's does occur throughout the year. The farmer or landowner must realize that the majority of the damage is not done by hunters, [but] by joy-riders. There are thousands of ATV and 4WD owners out there who would never cause any damage."

If property is damaged by vehicle users, the landowner must take legal action against the individuals involved. According to Sickenberger, legal jurisdiction on the damage depends on whether the farm or land is open to hunting and trapping. He said if the lands are posted, the farmer must file trespass charges with the local or state police.

However, if the land is open to hunting and trapping, "All a landowner has to do is to call a wildlife conservation officer (WCO). The commission will investigate the damage. The amount of fines a violator must pay depends on whether the landowner is a member of the Farm Game or Safety Zone programs." Sickenberger illustrated the difference:

Fines for driving an ATV or 4WD on lands or littering or blocking a driveway on property not in a program is \$50. Property damage is a sum equal to the amount of damage determined by the court. The court can hire an appraiser to determine the amount of damage and add that cost to the fine.

"If landowners or farmers are signed-up with either program, the basic fine is \$100, plus all damage costs as determined by the court. The vehicle can be seized and held. If the damage is severe, there is a possibility

of losing hunting privileges." Sickenberger added that the programs provide more protection "by the word of the Law" with no cost to the landowner or farmer.

The biggest problem faced by landowners and farmers when dealing with ATV/4WD damage is the identification of the individuals responsible. This calls for caution on the part of the landowner or farmer.

"It's best to get a license number when the damage is taking place. If you can identify the driver and secure a license number, arrest and prosecution should follow. The important thing is to get the information and back out—get away—personal safety is of the utmost importance.

Don't threaten or chase these people. Making threats is reckless endangering—which could result in a fine or arrest.

"Don't shoot at the vehicle, place boards with nails protruding to flatten tires or chase the vehicle. Protecting your property by shooting or chasing a vehicle may backfire. You could be arrested for assault and if someone is injured, you may be liable and sued for damages."

Sickenberger said that the commission will arrest and prosecute the violators without farmer or landowner involvement.

For more information on your rights as a farmer or landowner, contact your wildlife conservation officer or the Pennsylvania Game Commission at Ligonier.

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Plan to Prevent Sediment Pollution

Photo - Joe Oberst



by A. P. Quadro, Jr.

Many urban and suburban areas of Westmoreland County are experiencing growth in the form of new housing developments, industrial parks, shopping centers, and restaurants. With each new disturbance, there is a potential for accelerated erosion and sediment pollution. Effective solutions to urban erosion and sediment problems begin with resource planning.

The Westmoreland Conservation District and the Soil Conservation Service can provide technical assistance and information on site capabilities and limitations. This information will help determine the

site-suitability of the proposed development. It will also help in planning and treating the site to greatly reduce erosion and sediment problems during construction.

General conditions influencing site planning include: topography, accessibility, drainage patterns, geology, hydrology, soils, vegetation, and climate. Soil factors include: erodibility, engineering properties, and suitability for buildings, roads, septic tank disposal fields, drainage, ponds, recreational areas, and wildlife development.

After assembly of the various components of site data, a soil erosion and sediment control plan can be developed. A good plan consists of a narrative report and a map and should consider all factors which contribute to erosion and sedimentation. This plan should show the existing topography and how it will be altered. It should also show the control measures that will be used to minimize erosion and sediment pollution, and how they will be implemented and maintained.

Consider the following general factors when planning a site development:

1. Plan the development to fit the site.
2. Know the soil on the site.
3. Hold site grading activities to a minimum.
4. Save existing vegetation, especially trees.
5. Plan to divert upslope water from highly erodible soils.
6. Plan for effective control of erosion and sediment pollution.
7. Plan for permanent stabilization of the site.

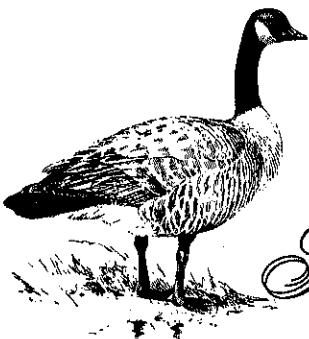
Effective resource planning can keep problems associated with sediment pollution to a minimum. For more information on preparing a soil erosion and sediment control plan, contact the District Office.

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