



Beaver Tales

Fall 2019

Beaver County Conservation District

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Our Mission

The Beaver County Conservation Districts mission is to preserve natural resources and to protect/promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of Beaver County. Also to provide technical services to improve resource management for the benefit of farmers and urban residents.

Cooney Hollow Stream Cleanup

Hannah Schrauder: Watershed Specialist, Beaver County Conservation District

On September 7th, 2019, the Beaver County Conservation District hosted a stream cleanup on a tributary to Big Sewickley Creek. Big Sewickley Creek is an important creek that people use for fishing, swimming, bird watching, and many other outdoor activities.

The tributary runs along Cooney Hollow Road which is a problem area for people dumping trash.



Twenty-two volunteers attended. Together they cleaned up an estimated 30 tires, 20 TV's, and other miscellaneous objects which were discarded in the stream and in surrounding areas.

Everyone at the stream cleanup had fun spending time outdoors doing their part to clean the stream. We are very thankful for everyone's help!

This project is generously supported by the Henry L. Hillman Foundation in conjunction with RiverWise.



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Watershed Updates

What is a watershed? It is the area of land that drains to a common waterway, such as a stream or lake. Small watersheds make up larger watersheds, which in turn form larger river basins which may drain to the largest water body of all...the ocean.

Managing Stormwater at Your Home

Twenty-one participants attended a workshop at the district office on September 5th, 2019. The participants learned about watersheds, nonpoint source pollution, and stormwater BMPs



from Penn State Extensions Water Resources Educator, Susan Boser. Hannah, Watershed Specialist at the district, demonstrated how to build a rain barrel. Participants left the workshop with information, a barrel, a

rain barrel kit, and a copy of "Southwestern Pennsylvania's Homeowners Guide to Stormwater." Thank you to everyone who attended!

If you would like to learn about future workshop opportunities please contact the district or check our Facebook page.



District Hosts Scouts BSA Hornady Merit Badge Weekend



On Saturday, October 12th, 2019, the Beaver County Conservation District hosted Scouts BSA (Boy Scouts of America), Beaver Valley District, for a Hornady merit badge weekend. This event focused on environmental merit badges. The 17 scouts who attended had the opportunity to study one of four merit badges offered. The badges included: Soil and Water Conservation, Geology, Bird Study, and Reptile and Amphibian Study. The scouts were exposed to a conservation field of study and learned about the science and practical application of the various merit badges. These merit badges enable scouts to gain some of the requirements toward the Hornaday Conservation Awards.

Trot to the Trout Waters

Fall is the perfect time of year to go fishing and explore the less urban corners of Beaver County streams. Decreasing water temperatures and increased stream levels improve catching opportunities beginning in mid-October. Referred to as 'hold overs', trout stocked in spring will be aggressive, fight better, and be more brilliantly colored than their spring hatchery counterparts.

An abundance of fish can be located if you know where to look. High up in the watershed of cold, clean streams typically yield premier catching experiences. Look to the PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) stocking schedule for trout stocked fisheries (TSF).

Spinners are used to effectively elicit strikes from hungry browns that have weathered the summer heat. Try silver spinners in clear or gold spinners in turbid sections of overlooked and isolated streams.

Trout serve as an indicator of great water quality. Take time this fall to implement a rod and reel sample of your local stream to gauge its health. To request opportunities for stream quality improvement on your property contact the Beaver County Conservation District to discuss potential future projects.



Figure 1: Non-native Brown Trout are a staple of Pennsylvania sport fishing. These fish pose little threat to native Brook Trout (Char) and have slightly higher tolerances to heat and degraded water quality than the previously mentioned char.

Environmental Education

To better serve the needs of Beaver County's educators, the Conservation District is putting together a survey for teachers regarding choosing environmental education opportunities for their students. Below is some brief information on our educational facilities and the standard classes we offer.

The Beaver County Conservation District offers fieldtrip opportunities to students groups for free. Teachers and youth leaders can choose a class from our standard offerings or request specialized curriculum to compliment specific topics they wish their students to explore.

Our 80-acre property and facilities include an indoor classroom, picnic pavilion, restrooms, hiking trails, wetlands, meadow, woodlands, and access to Raccoon Creek. Our indoor classroom can hold up to 49 people, students and adults, but larger groups can make use of our picnic pavilion.

Below is a list of our standard classes, but additional topics can be covered upon request to suit curriculum needs, merit badge requirements, or other parameters.

Wetland Eatery (K-3rd Grade):

Introduction to wetland plants and animals, food chains, and food webs.

What is Habitat? (3rd Grade & Up):

Learn about what an animal needs in order to call a place home and how people can help make habitat better for different species.

Wetland Benefits (4th-8th Grade):

Learn about how wetlands help wildlife, people, and the environment.

Pond or Stream Studies (3rd Grade & Up):

Catch and identify different creatures that call PA streams and ponds their home. (At least one adult with the group should have a current fishing license.)

Plant & Tree Identification (3rd Grade & Up):

Learn to identify common wetland plants at the environmental center or common PA trees along the arboretum trail at Bradys Run Park.

Stream Flow Calculations (6th Grade & Up):

Learn how to measure and calculate how much water is flowing through a cross-section of a stream in a given second (cubic feet per second). Expect to get wet!

Protecting Our Resources (High School and College):

Learn about delineating wetlands, why they are important, and how state and federal regulations protect them. This program can help students learn more about potential careers in environmental science or engineering fields.

We will be mailing out our education survey to school districts in Beaver County in early November. If you are an informal educator (e.g. leaders for Scouts, 4-H, youth groups, etc.) and would like to participate in our education survey, please email Heather Humbert at heather.humbert@bccdpa.us . Surveys should be returned by December 6th to help us plan for the spring fieldtrip season.

Thanks!

Recent Photos at the BCCD



BCCD Wetlands



Autumn at BCCD

No-till Drill For Rent

The Beaver County Conservation District owns an 8' Truax FLEXII 812RD No-Till drill that is available for rent to interested farmers in Beaver County. The purpose of the drill rental program is to encourage and assist farmers in implementing no-till crop production systems, including cover crops, as well as promote good pasture management. Reducing tillage can improve soil health and improve farm economics. Renting this drill provides farmers with a low cost opportunity to try no-till planting and determine if it can be an asset to farm management. More information is available on our website or you can contact the district's agricultural technician.

Dates to Remember

Office Closed

November 28th & 29th — Thanksgiving

December 24th & 25th — Christmas

January 1st — New Years Day