



Beaver Tales

Spring 2020

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.

Hemp...A new cash crop or a puff of smoke?

There has been great interest in hemp since it was legalized as a crop a few years ago. Hemp (*Cannabis sativa* L.) has been cultivated for centuries for fiber, leaves, oil and seed. More recently, a particular variety grown for a special purpose; marijuana; has given hemp a bad name.

Hemp was a common crop in Pennsylvania for many years. Ever wonder why so many geographic place names include Hempfield? This is because there were so many hemp fields in the state. By the 1930's, hemp had been given a bad name due to its chemically active variety and was outlawed across the county.

Hemp is now legal to grow in Pennsylvania if you have the required permit. In 2019 Beaver County had one permit. There is however, interest in expanding the acreage of hemp in Beaver County and across the state. There is now significant university and industry research to answer basic agronomic questions. Most current varieties of hemp prefer well drained soils and a pH between 6 and 7. Basic soil nutrient recommendations have been established. The agricultural economics of hemp production are very hazy.

In a few years you may be able to go to the hardware store and buy some hemp fiber rope or perhaps you can feed the birds some hemp seed. This versatile plant has many uses.

The district is available to help farmers improve soil and water quality as well as increase farm productivity no matter what the crop.....as long as it is legal!



Beaver County Conservation District Board of Directors

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Richard Smith, Vice Chairman
Robert Guidice, Farmer Director
Jeff Lyons, Farmer Director
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Ron Markel, Public Director
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Hannah Schrauder, Watershed Specialist
Doug Tedrow, Resource Conservationist
Heather Humbert, Environmental Educator
Richard Voytko, Agricultural Conservationist
Heidi Krigar, West Nile Technician/DGLVR
Technician

Contact Us

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Office hours: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Monday - Friday

Send inquiries to:
beavercounty.conservationsdistrict@bccdpa.us



Like us on Facebook!
@BeaverCountyConservationDistrict

Annual Spring Tree Sale

The Beaver County Conservation District is pleased to announce its 2020 Tree Seedling and Plant Sale. As always, we will offer extra stock, so come early for the best selection. The sale will be held on Saturday, April 18, 2020 from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the BCCD Environmental Center in Independence Township, 156 Cowpath Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001. Proceeds from the sale fund environmental education programs.

This year we are selling: Eastern White Pine, Colorado Blue Spruce, Eastern Hemlock, Scotch Pine, White Spruce, White Flowering Dogwood, Red Oak, American Redbud, Sugar Maple, Shagbark Hickory, Myrtle, Hardy Evergreen Azalea, Wildflower Seed Mix, and Compost.

On the day of the sale we will have extra stock. Including but not limited to, berries, flowering shrubs, perennials, and hanging baskets.

Order forms are due by Monday, March 30, 2020.

Tree sale order forms are posted on the Beaver County Conservation District website and Facebook. They are also mailed out annually. If you would like to be added to our mailing list please email: hannah.schrauder@bccdpa.us please include your name and mailing address or call (724) 378-1701.



Welcome our Newest Employee!



Hello! My name is Doug Tedrow. I am excited to share that I have joined the Beaver County Conservation District as the new Resource Conservationist. As the Resource Conservationist, I will be conducting field assessments and reviewing construction related permits. My goals are to confirm everything is complying with Environmental regulations and to protect Beaver County's land and water resources.

I am a Beaver County native and grew up in Franklin Township on a dairy farm. I graduated from Slippery Rock University with my Bachelors in Parks and Resource Management. For my internship I worked as an Allegheny County Park Ranger where I deepened my interest and connection with nature found both on land and in the water.

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.

Benefits of Sugar Maples

Environmental Education

Although the Conservation District is not making maple syrup at Bradys Run Park this year, we are still conducting maple sugaring education. Our annual public Maple Sugaring tour is scheduled for Saturday, March 7th, but we also have several college classes receiving tours and forestry lessons centered on sugar maples and their economic uses.

Sugar maples are an important native species which benefits both people and wildlife. In the lumber industry, sugar maples often are used in the manufacturing of furniture, tool handles, wood paneling & flooring, musical instruments, and bowling pins along with other display pieces. It grows in various soil types and tolerates varying climates across its range which runs from the southern parts of eastern Canada into New England and down to the border of North Carolina and eastern Kansas. Sugar maples grow best in cooler portions of its range, however, as its seeds germinate best at 34°F, one of the lowest germination temperatures of any of the hardwood species sharing its range. A sugar maple's roots will also continue to grow throughout the cooler months as long as the ground is not frozen.

Wildlife utilize sugar maples as a food source. Squirrels eat the seeds, called maple keys, directly from the twigs when they mature in the fall. Other animals must wait for the keys to twirl to the ground. Deer and rabbits eat the seedlings when their leaves and twigs are still tender. Porcupines consume the bark of older trees. Sapsuckers will peck tiny holes to get to the sap, but rarely do they cause enough damage to kill a sugar maple. Other woodpeckers will hunt for insects hiding under bark or in the soft wood of dead branches.



For humans looking to make maple syrup, work starts in early winter when the trees are dormant. Maple trees are first tapped when they reach ten inches in diameter. Use of two taps at the same time starts when the trees reach eighteen inches in diameter. Sap, also called sugar water, runs when daytime temperatures are above freezing but nighttime temperatures dip below freezing. This causes the maples to pump the sugar water up to the crown of the tree and then back down to the roots again as it prepares for spring budding. When it comes out of the tree, the sap has a sugar content between one and a half and three percent sugar. To qualify as maple syrup by FDA standards, the excess water must be boiled out until the sugar water reaches sixty-six percent sugar content. It takes between thirty and fifty gallons of sugar water to make one gallon of syrup.

Heather Humbert

- Environmental Educator

Chapter 105 General Permit Applications: What is a PNDI Search?

PNDI stands for **Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index**, and it is a required component of any Chapter 105 General Permit Application. To conduct a PNDI search, applicants will need to set up an account on the **Pennsylvania Conservation Explorer** portion of the **Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program** website, <https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/> . The Conservation Explorer allows users to survey GIS



data for endangered and threatened species within their proposed project area. Data coordination is run through four different agencies:

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, PA Game Commission, PA Fish & Boat Commission, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

We recommend that you put together the other parts of your General Permit application before conducting a PNDI search. Search results may prompt you to upload additional permit information into the system to finalize the search response. Responses typically range from “No Known Impact” to “Potential Impact” to “Avoidance Measures.” A

response of “Potential Impact” will prompt you for more information about your project to determine if any listed species will be impacted by your work. (For Beaver County, most projects conducted will either require avoidance measures or have no impacts on species found in search results due to the nature of the project.)

Final drafts of a PNDI search receipt currently cost \$40.00 and the fees go to the upkeep of the conservation explorer service. For your PNDI search receipt to be valid for permit reviews of a General Permit application, it must read “Final” in the header information at the top of the page. In order to receive a final search receipt, you will have to select your project in your Conservation Explorer account and confirm that you want to finalize the project. Up until that point, you can go into the project and edit information.

If you need to send information to one or more of the jurisdictional agencies listed above, you will need to include their responses with your PNDI search receipt as part of your permit application. Although review of a permit application can start prior to receiving all necessary responses from these agencies, if review timelines run out before the missing information is received by the Conservation District, the permit application may be declared “withdrawn” and you will have to resubmit the entire application package again once the missing information is available to you.

For more information on General Permit applications, visit the Beaver County Conservation District website and look for the **Chapter 102 and 105 Permitting** link under the **Programs** heading.

Heather Humbert

- Resource Conservationist – Interim
- Environmental Educator



INDEPENDENCE CONSERVANCY

CONNECTING THROUGH CONSERVATION

The Independence Conservancy is a watershed-based land trust founded in 1999 in Aliquippa, PA. We are an all-volunteer group of environmental enthusiasts who share a vision of clean water, beautiful vistas and special places in the Raccoon Creek Region preserved forever.

We are a 501(c)3 Pennsylvania nonprofit watershed organization that has gone the extra mile toward long-term protection of our local natural resources by adopting land trust Standards and Practices. Land trusts are private, nonprofit organizations that work cooperatively with landowners to protect and conserve land for its natural, recreational, scenic, historic, or productive value – values that sustain life on earth.

Independence Conservancy works with local governments and other nonprofits to protect clean water and green space in the Raccoon Creek Region.

OUR MISSION

Stewardship of the Raccoon Creek Watershed through environmental education, restoration and community partnerships; Conserving land to protect water quality, wildlife habitat, natural & cultural resources, scenic views & quality of life; Educating people about the function and values of wetlands.



Left to Right: Michael Harcher, Kim Kaal, Lexa Taylor, Marisa Logan, Peg Schweinsberg, Wayne Cumer, Jenny Fiscus, Vicky Michaels, Kevin Kisow, Jim Sewell: Board and Staff of Independence Conservancy

Building Beaver County's Newest Park: Rocky Bend Nature Preserve



Volunteers from Shell plant live willow stakes

Cleaning up our Abandoned Mine Lands



Range Resources, WCCD, and Independence Conservancy round up tires and trash at Betha Mine

Connecting through Conservation



Happy hikers wave their sassafras tree cookies at Rocky Bend to celebrate their "Walk in Penn's Woods"

COMMUNITY TIRE COLLECTIONS

Need to get rid of tires or wheels from your car or light truck?



- 4-18-20** Independence Twp. Municipal Bldg., 104 School Rd., Aliquippa PA 15001
- 4-25-20** Findlay Twp. Road Department, 1058 Clinton Rd., Clinton PA 15026
- 5-2-20** Ohioville Borough Mun. Bldg., 6268 Tuscarawas Rd., Industry PA 15052
- 5-9-20** New Sewickley Twp. Municipal Bldg., 233 Miller Rd., Rochester PA 15074
- 5-16-20** Big Beaver Borough Building, 114 Forest Drive, Darlington PA 16115

All events 9 AM to 12 Noon - rain or shine - NO EARLY BIRDS

*Proof of residency not required.
Individuals and small businesses welcome.
No limit to the number of tires you may bring.
Checks accepted with ID.*

Size:

Up to 18" off rim	\$3 each
Up to 18" on rim	\$5 each
Over 18" off rim (SUV & light truck)	\$5 each
Tractor trailer up to 22.5" (no rims accepted)	\$25 each
Farm tractor rear up to 75 lbs.	\$25 each
Farm tractor rear 75 to 150 lbs.	\$40 each
Farm tractor rear over 150 lbs.	\$75 each

Your cost to dispose:

www.independenceconservancy.org

Dates to Remember

Maple Syrup Festival - April 4th & 5th, 2020

Annual Spring Tree Sale - April 18, 2020