



Visit us on the web at
conewagoinitiative.net

The Conewago Creek Initiative is a locally-led, collaborative partnership effort in the Conewago Creek watershed in Dauphin, Lancaster, and Lebanon Counties. We seek to work with local residents and stakeholders to increase awareness and adoption of land management practices that will improve water quality of local streams and ensure healthy farms and communities, implementing the vision of the Conewago Creek Watershed Community: *a restored Conewago as a centerpiece of pride and a treasured asset in a rural landscape.*

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Conewago Currents

Volume 2, Issue 2

Spring 2012

The Coordinator's Report

Spring is always a busy time in the Conewago Creek watershed, and this year was no exception. Aberdeen Mills' annual Earth Day Celebration drew a record crowd this year. Over one hundred people attended to learn about the Conewago Initiative and take home a free native tree, complements of Tri-County Conewago Creek Association. The week before, over fifty volunteers helped plant 600 trees to enhance wildlife habitat. And work continues throughout the watershed implementing agricultural best management practices to improve water quality.

As the calendar turns toward summer, be sure to take advantage of the many programs the Initiative has to offer. If you have not yet developed your Manure Management Plan, now is the time to do it. Manure management planning workshops are being offered by the County Conservation Districts throughout the

summer. You can develop your entire plan at one of these workshops.

Horse owners also take note—Penn State Extension is offering an environmental stewardship course this summer. Learn valuable information on manure management, pasture management, and noxious weed identification and control.

If you are a residential or commercial landowner in the watershed, consider a Conewago "Green Masterplan." We are partnering with LandStudies, Inc. of Litzitz to offer free "Green Masterplans" for landowners interested in assessing stormwater runoff on their properties and developing a plan to address it. Funding for practices identified in the plans is also available.

Finally, a new offering for streamside landowners: We are partnering with Wild Resources,



Conewago Creek framed in snow has been a rare sight this winter.

Inc. to provide full service buffer maintenance on new or recently planted forest riparian buffers.

Details on all of these programs and more can be found below. Read on to learn more!

Manure Management Planning Workshops

This summer there are several Manure Management Planning Workshops being led by the Dauphin County Conservation District. These workshops will briefly describe the different sections of the Manure Management Plan (MMP) and then assist farmers in actually completing their MMP for their farm. It is required that every farm that is generating or land

applying manure has a Manure Management Plan. These plans are a part of the strategy to reduce nutrient runoff entering your local streams and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. The goal of the Manure Management Plan is to limit the amount of manure being applied to the land to the amount that crops need. Farmers can complete their plans on their

own with the workbook at the end of the Manure Management Manual but the workshops can be very helpful at getting this task accomplished efficiently and correctly.

At minimum plans must include: (1) general information about the farm; (2) information on manure application rates and
See Planning Workshops page 2

Manure Management Planning Workshops (cont.)



timing; (3) a farm map showing locations of fields, structures, environmentally sensitive areas, and setbacks; and (4) recordkeeping requirements and forms. Other descriptions might be necessary depending on the farm size and usage.

Current soil tests make the planning process more efficient and specific to each farm. By committing to come to one of the planning sessions, the Dauphin County Conservation district will provide up to 5 free soil tests. Soil test probes are also available for loan. The soil tests will be given out on a first come first serve basis so, if you are interested, stop by the District office on 1451 Peters Mountain Road, Dauphin.

Please register for these events at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the desired workshop by calling the District office at **(717) 921-8100**.

Single Day Session

THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 2012 9am-4pm (Lunch provided)

Gratz Community Building
On right heading north out of Gratz on N Center Street

Two-Day Sessions**

MONDAY, JULY 9, 2012

6pm-9pm

MONDAY, JULY 16, 2012

6pm-9pm

Dauphin County Agriculture and Natural Resources Center
1451 Peters Mountain Road, Dauphin

Horse and Small Farm/ Specialty Species Farm Two Day Sessions**

SATURDAY, JULY 14, 2012

1pm-4pm

SATURDAY, JULY 21, 2012

1pm-4pm

Dauphin County Agriculture and Natural Resources Center
1451 Peters Mountain Road
Dauphin

****Please plan on attending both sessions**

Coming to the workshops prepared with your farm map will maximize your benefit. Check out the article on page 5 about how to create your PAOneStop farm map created.

The Conewago Initiative is excited to announce the addition of two USGS stream gauge stations! Check out these two links to track the conditions of the Conewago in real-time!

Upstream

[Bellaire Gauge Station](#)

Downstream

[Falmouth Gauge Station](#)

Increased imperious services in the watershed leads to Stormwater runoff. This increases the sediment pollution in local waterways.

Photo from LandStudies.com



Stormwater Incentives Program: Green Masterplans

A new exciting initiative within the watershed is targeting stormwater, a pollution source, through the Stormwater Incentives Program. The Conewago initiative is partnering with LandStudies, of Lititz, Pa, to create Green Masterplans for property owners, which will assess Stormwater runoff on the property and develop a plan to manage it. Residential, commercial, or public lands are all eligible for this fantastic opportunity. These plans will identify ways for landowners to manage their properties to improve water quality.

The practices identified

in these plans will then be eligible for funding, through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, at 80% overall funding, and 100% funding for riparian forest buffers. This cost-share program will offset the planning and construction costs of implementing the Stormwater BMPs designed in the Green Masterplans within the watershed.

Some examples of BMPs to control stormwater include rain gardens, riparian buffers, and bioswales, which allow rainwater to infiltrate into the ground. These can also

create aesthetic gardens and opportunities for pollinators and wildlife.

LandStudies will work with property owners to schedule an initial site visit to gather information and field verify aerial data. A Green Masterplan and a maintenance guide will be provided.

For more information, or to schedule your site visit, contact Matt Royer at mroyer@psu.edu.

Riparian Buffer Maintenance Program

Riparian buffer programs such as CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) provide funding for the planting of trees along streams on interested landowners' property. The maintaining of these trees, which is crucial in the first three years after planting, has been the obligation of the landowner. To assist landowners, the Conewago Initiative is now offering additional funding that will cover the full cost of necessary buffer maintenance.

The Initiative is partnering with Wild Resources Inc., a fully licensed and insured buffer restoration and maintenance specialist, to provide full service buffer maintenance.

Maintenance is an integral part of establishing a riparian buffer and includes mowing, spraying for weeds and invasive species, straightening and securing tree stakes and tubes, and generally making sure that the trees have the greatest chance for survival. A buffer is most successful when properly maintained!

For more information on this program contact: Matt Royer at (717) 948-6459 or mroyer@psu.edu



Conewago Partner Spotlight: Summer Interns

The Conewago Initiative is excited to bring three talented interns on board for the summer: Kristen Kyler, Jessica Moldofsky, and Jayne Ulrich.

Kristen graduated this May from Penn State with a degree in Environmental Resource Management (ERM). She previously worked with both Riparia (the Penn State Cooperative Wetlands Center) and the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control.

Jessica will be entering her final semester at Penn State this fall. Also an ERM major, Jessica is a Penn State Ag Advocate, serving to promote the College of Agricultural Sciences to prospective students. She also previously interned with Montgomery County Extension.

Jayne will be a senior at Penn State, majoring in ERM. She is active in many volunteer pursuits at Penn State, including THON. This past year, Jayne

studied abroad in New Zealand, focusing her studies on environmental physics, hydrology, and sustainability.

All three will make a significant contribution to the Initiative this summer.

Welcome aboard!



Conewago Initiative interns Kristen Kyler and Jessica Moldofsky.

Practice Spotlights

On The Farm: Maintaining Your Buffer

Planting a riparian buffer is the first step, but ongoing maintenance is also a key element of a healthy buffer! The first three years are the most crucial for buffer maintenance. It is important to remove invasive species such as Multiflora Rose and Mile-a-Minute weed, which can impair the growth of desired species. Mowing and herbicide application can help

to control unwanted vegetation. Services for buffer maintenance are now available to residents of the watershed! For more information contact Matt Royer at mroyer@psu.edu



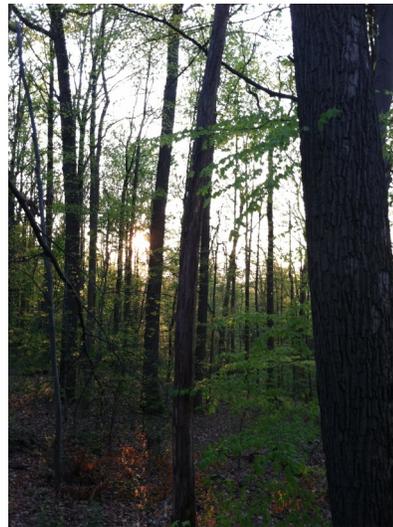
Around The Home: Mulching

Mulching is a valuable practice that will benefit your gardens as well as the environment. Mulching around trees and garden beds will prevent weed growth, provide nutrients and organics, prevent erosion and compaction

of the planted areas by covering bare soil, and hold in water and prevent runoff which will keep your plants happier



Conewago Photo Gallery



This issue's gallery features spring scenery and photos from our Earth Day 2012 Event and tree planting.

Volunteer Tree Planting, Earth Day Celebration Highlight Spring Activities

On Saturday, April 14, over 50 volunteers planted 600 trees at the Hertzler farm as part of an NRCS Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program project. The volunteer planting was organized by Conewago Initiative intern Nate Straw and Dauphin County Extension 4-H intern Lia Schmittel, both Lower Dauphin High School seniors. They did a tremendous job getting the word out and recruiting volunteers.

A week later, on April 22, well over 100 Conewago community mem-

bers and partners attended the fourth annual Conewago Creek Earth Day Celebration at Aberdeen Mills.

Sponsored by Tri-County Conewago Creek Association and hosted by Merritt and Katcha Neale and family, the morning event featured a wildflower walk lead by Ron Laughlin of TCCCA, and a volunteer meadow planting under the direction of Dick Brown of the South Londonderry Township EAC. Megan Blackmon of Dauphin County Conservation District and Jen-

nifer Fetter of Penn State Extension led stream sampling for macroinvertebrates, a popular activity for the kids. The Neale's farm animals were on display as were old mill artifacts. Initiative partners were on hand to talk with Conewago residents and answer questions about the many programs available to improve water quality in the watershed. TCCCA volunteers potted bare root seedlings and offered a native tree or shrub for each family in attendance.



Photo by Jennifer Fetter

Equine Environmental Stewardship Workshop

The Conewago Initiative is teaming up with Penn State Extension to offer an Equine Environmental Stewardship Workshop this summer. This workshop is aimed at equine landowners, from one-horse farms to large equine operations. The workshop will provide information on topics such as pasture management, weed control, manure composting, as well as soil fertility to increase forage health

and nutrition for your animals. The workshop will provide attendees with all the information and tools needed to create their own manure management plan, a regulatory requirement for all livestock owners! The workshop will be comprised of 4 consecutive Thursday evenings: **July 19, July 26, August 2 and August 9. 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm.** Please plan to attend all 4 nights. The entry fee of \$45 will be reimbursed to any resident

of the Conewago watershed who attends all sessions. The workshop will be held at the Londonderry Township Municipal Building. (7835 South Geyers Church Road, Middletown). For more information or to register, contact Donna Foulk at dlf5@psu.edu.



PAOneStop Farm Mapping Workshop

A farm map is an essential part of your Manure Management Plan. PAOneStop, an online tool created by Penn State Extension, can easily create a detailed, accurate, and professional map of any farm. This easy to use program will help you create a map that includes features such as field boundaries, acreages, stream and water features, wells, sinkholes, application setbacks and

buffers, soils, and aerial images. A workshop is being hosted by the Conewago Initiative that can teach you and help you complete the map of your farm using PAOneStop. Please register for this event at least 2 weeks prior to the workshop.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2012
5:30 pm - 8:30 pm
15C Olmstead Building**

Penn State, Harrisburg

To register for this event call the District office at: **(717)921-8100**



**CONEWAGO CREEK
INITIATIVE**

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Dauphin County Conservation District • Lancaster County Conservation District • Lebanon County Conservation District • Tri-County Conewago Creek Association • South Londonderry Township • Elizabethtown College • Penn State University • PA Department of Environmental Protection • PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources • PA Fish and Boat Commission • PA Department of Agriculture • USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service • USDA Agriculture Research Service • U.S. Geologic Service • U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service • U.S. Environmental Protection Agency • Chesapeake Bay Foundation • ZedX, Inc. • American Farmland Trust • Capital Area RC&D

The Conewago Creek Initiative is a project of Penn State Cooperative Extension made possible through funding by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds



Community working together for a restored Conewago.

The Conewago Watershed Community has envisioned a future that establishes the restored Conewago and its tributaries as a centerpiece of pride and a treasured asset in a rural landscape.

This vision includes a strong agricultural community and productive farmland, community recreation areas and vibrant, well planned communities. Pristine landscapes will be protected while providing sustainable uses of natural resources, clean water and streams, and educational opportunities for generations to come.



Calendar of Events

PAOneStop Farm Mapping Workshop

June 21, 2012
5:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Penn State Harrisburg
15C Olmstead Building
Pre-registration required

Dauphin, PA

Tri-County Conewago Creek Association Monthly Meetings

June 27, 2012
July 25, 2012
August 9, 2012
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Conewago Township Bldg
3279 Old Hershey Rd,
Etown (717) 948-6459

Equine Environmental Stewardship Workshop

Four-part series. Attendance to all 4 sessions is highly recommended.

July 19, 2012
July 26, 2012
August 2, 2012
August 9, 2012
7:00 pm - 9:30 pm

DCCC Manure Management Workshops

Pre-registration required

June 28, 2012
9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Gratz Community Building

Londonderry Township
Municipal Building
7835 South Geyers Church Road
Middletown, PA
Registration required.

July 9 & July 16 (*Please attend both sessions)
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
1451 Peters Mountain Road
Dauphin, PA

Conewago Initiative Project Advisory Team meeting

June 12, 2012
12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Penn State Harrisburg
Room 203, Ed Activities Bldg
(717) 948-6459

Tailored to Horse/Small Farm:
July 14 & July 21 (*Please attend both sessions)
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
1451 Peters Mountain Road