



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.*

Inside this issue:

10th Annual Watershed Forum	2
Conewago Initiative on Facebook	2
Equine Workshop	3
Partner and Practice Spotlights	3
Photo Gallery	4
Bank Pin Monitoring	5
Riparian Buffer Planting	5
Newsletter Challenge	5
Calendar	6

Conewago Currents

Volume 2, Issue 4

Fall 2012

The Coordinator's Report

Fall is a busy time for everyone, and the Conewago Creek Initiative is no exception. If you are looking for an opportunity to get out on the creek (or even in it), join us this month for one of the activities highlighted below.

On Sunday afternoon, October 21, you can your hands wet: we'll be sampling fish at two locations on the Conewago—one near the headwaters, and one near this mouth. This family friendly activity is a good way to see what kinds of fish are living in your local stream. You might be surprised at what we will find!

If getting your hands dirty is more your style, join us on Saturday morning, October 27, as a group of scouts will plant several hundred trees along the Conewago to improve a riparian buffer. It might inspire you to do your own tree planting on your own property—fall is the perfect time for planting!



If you are a horse owner, you will want to mark your calendar now for the one day Penn State Extension workshop being held on Saturday, February 9 at the Londonderry Township Municipal Building, and the evening manure management planning session being held on February 12. You will learn how to give your horses healthier pastures, reduce your weeds, and meet environmental regulations.

Read about these and other events and offerings below. Enjoy this issue of *Conewago Currents*, and take some time to enjoy the beauty of the Conewago watershed outdoors this fall!

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Fall Fish Survey on October 21

You are invited!

The Conewago Creek Initiative, with Lancaster County Conservation District and the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, will be conducting a fall fish survey on Sunday October 21, 2012.

Two sites will be sampled on this afternoon, one in

the headwaters near Colebrook and one near the mouth at Covered Bridge Road. The results of these surveys, along with the survey completed at Hershey Meadows during the summer, will paint a picture of the types of fish living in the Conewago Creek from headwaters to mouth and what that means for water quality.

This event is open and free to the public! It will give everyone who comes an opportunity to learn about the types of fish in the creek and about common methods of sampling fish populations. Those who are interested will have an opportunity to get in the stream and help with the catching of

(Continued on page 2)

Fall Fish Survey (continued from page 1)



fish. There will be other ways to help as well.

Please bring boots or hip waders if you have them. Extras will be provided but supplies are limited. For this reason, if you are planning to attend please let us know so we can have a better idea about the supplies needed. You can call the Initiative at

717-948-6609 or email conewagocreekinitiative@gmail.com.

We will meet in the Mill Road Elementary School parking lot and split into two groups to carpool to the sampling locations.

Fall Fish Survey

Sunday October 21, 2012

1:00 PM

Mill Road Elementary School
35 Elm Avenue

Elizabethtown, PA 17022

No RSVP needed but greatly appreciated!

Register now for the 10th Annual Lebanon/Lancaster Watershed Forum

The Lebanon and Lancaster County Conservation Districts are partnering up for the 10th Annual Lebanon/Lancaster County Watershed Forum to take place on Saturday October 27, 2012. The forum will begin with a free breakfast followed by several interesting presentation. It is being held at:

Acorn Farms Banquet & Reception Hall

Saturday, October 27, 2012

8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

RT 283, Mount Joy
Lancaster, PA

Presentations Include:

A Perspective From The Bay

Mayor Eskridge, Mayor of Tangier Island, Virginia & former Chesapeake Bay waterman will discuss how

our actions here in Pennsylvania affect the livelihood of those who depend on the waters of the Bay. His discussion will include aspects of his life on the Bay and the impacts of changing water quality conditions.

The Bay from PA: Where we are 10 years later

Lamonte Garber, Agriculture Program Manager Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems(MS4): What are MS4's & How do they affect me?

Michael T. LaSala, Executive Director Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee (LIMC)

This event is open to anyone who wants to attend. It will be a great opportunity to

learn about local water quality and organizations working to improve our streams. It will also provide opportunities for networking with individuals who care about clean water.

There is no fee to attend, however registration is required. Please register by October 22 by contacting;

Lancaster County
Conservation District
717-299-5361 ext. 124
or email:

matkkofoth@lancasterconservation.org

Or

Lebanon County
Conservation District
717-272-3908 ext. 4
or email:

stephanie.harmon@lccd.org

Are You In Compliance?

A new brochure on manure management and erosion and sediment control on agricultural lands was developed by Lancaster Ag Ombudsman. Funded by DEP and EPA, the brochure educates farmers about environmental regulations.

If you are interested in having a copy of this brochure contact the Initiative(717-948-6609 or conewagocreekinitiative@gmail.com) and we will make sure to send you a copy.



Visit us on
Facebook

The Conewago Initiative is Now on Facebook!

The Conewago Creek Initiative recently joined Facebook as another way to reach out and spread the word about events and activities in the watershed.

The Facebook page will be the primary location for photos and videos to be viewed as well as a place to post interesting articles and

updates about the work being completed. This is also another way for people to contact us about getting involved. Feel free to post on the page and send us messages!

Links to our Facebook page will be on the website or you can just search Conewago Creek Initiative on Facebook.

Make sure to "like" our page so you can see all our updates and photos as we post them!

Course for Horse Owners Offered this Winter

Are you a horse owner interested in learning how to give your horses healthier pastures, reduce the amount of weeds in your fields, and be in environmental compliance, all at the same time? Then mark February 9, 2013 on your calendar today!

The Conewago Initiative will be partnering with Penn State Extension to provide a one day (9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) workshop designed specifically for horse owners on how to better manage pastures and manure.

A second workshop will be held in the evening from 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m. on February 12th that will give guidance on how to write a manure management plan for your horse farm.

The workshops will be held at the Londonderry Township Building, 783 S. Geyers Church Road, Middletown, PA 17057. The daylong workshop will cost \$45 and provides you with a soil test kit and all the educational materials you need. The second evening is free.

If you are interested in attending these workshops or would like to find out more information, please contact the Initiative at (717) 948-6609 or conewagocreekinitiative@gmail.com

Residents of the Conewago Watershed, after attending both sessions, will be reimbursed for the cost of the classes!

Funding is available to horse owners interested in improving their farms and water quality!



Conewago Partner Spotlight: DEP

Many of the projects that have been completed so far in the Conewago Watershed would not have been possible without the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Various conservation practices installed on farms and stream restoration projects (such as the Hershey Meadows Project) were funded by DEP.

The funds that DEP provides through their 319 program is major source of

funding for the Conewago Creek Initiative and the projects that are being installed. This funding has helped to install agricultural best management practices as well as riparian buffers and stream restoration projects.

While monetary support is important, DEP also bring ideas and expertise to the Initiative. DEP, represented by Carl Rohr, is an active and key partner, attending and participating in regular

meetings for the Project Advisory team and work teams, and participating in many watershed events and activities.

We look forward to continuing to implement new and exciting projects with the help of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection!



Practice Spotlights

On The Farm: Terraces

Many farmers are limited by the topography of their land. Field terracing, leveling sections of a hill slope that can be used for farming, can help.

There are many benefits to terracing your land, including decreased erosion and surface runoff, and increased moisture content of the soil. It is important to consider the ridge height and outlet elevation, as height can limit

the type of machinery used. Your conservation district can help you plan and install terraces on your farm.



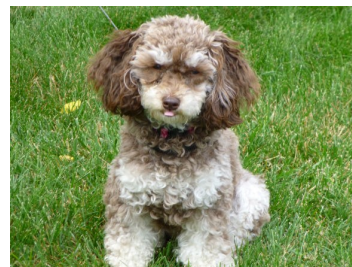
Photo from NRCS

Around The Home: Disposing of Pet Waste

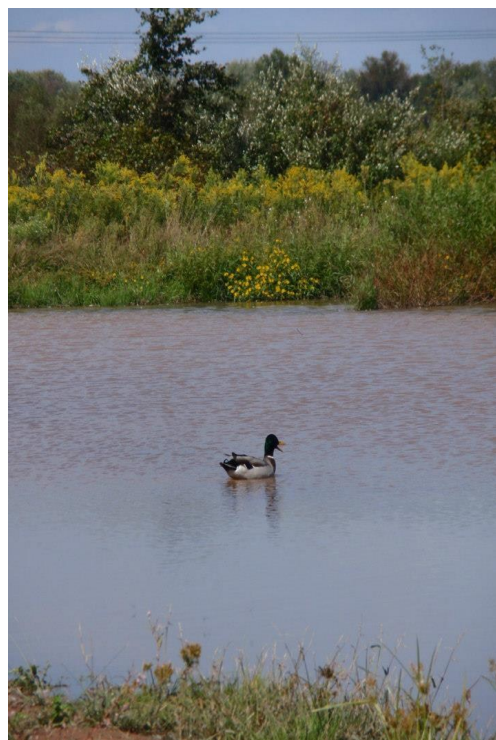
It is common to hear about livestock and the manure they create being harmful to water quality, but pet waste from dogs can also have an impact.

It is important to pick up after your dog to reduce the bacteria and nutrients that enter your local stream after a rain event. Flushing pet waste down the toilet is actually the best way to protect the

environment because it will then be treated by a waste water treatment plant.



Conewago Photo Gallery



This issue's gallery features pictures from the Hershey Meadows Restoration Site. The wetlands are working to store floodwaters and the trees in riparian buffer are continuing to grow. Ducks, herons, and egrets are all using the wetlands while butterflies and bees are pollinating the native meadows.

Bank Pin Monitoring at Hoffer Creek Underway

The Hershey Meadows Restoration Project has been so successful that the Initiative is working to create another project just upstream along Hoffer Creek. The stream banks of Hoffer Creek are very steep and the erosion of the banks has created a very "mucky" stream bottom. It is a very unhealthy section of stream.

In order to create the best possible restoration plan, US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) provided the Initiative with bank pins to install along the stream bank. Bank pins are simply pieces of rebar pounded into the bottom and sides of the stream. Once base measurements are taken, the length of rebar sticking out from the bank can be measured to see how much erosion has occurred and how the shape of the bank has changed

after each large rain event.

These banks pins were installed recently and monitoring is underway. Measurements will be taken for about a year and will provide the FWS with the data necessary to know where to install bank stabilization structures. This monitoring will help create the best possible plan for this stream, which will result in a significant decrease in the amount of sediment that washes downstream.

Since new measurements need to be taken after every bankfull event (after every time that the water entirely fills the stream channel up to the top of the stream bank), let us know if you see Hoffer Creek running entirely full. If you drive past on Valley Road and notice the stream is really high, send us a quick email at conewagocreekinitiative@gmail.com.

This will help make sure we take all the measurements FWS needs!



Larry Brannaka, FWS, and Jayne Ulrich, Conewago Initiative intern, taking bank pin measurements.

Boy Scout Riparian Buffer Planting Slated for October 27



A riparian buffer planting will occur on the morning of Saturday October 27, 2012 by a

local Elizabethtown Boy Scout troop. Derek Flick, one of the troop members, has been growing seedlings for Tri-County Conewago Creek Association and will be using these trees to plant the buffer. Growing the trees in combination with the buffer planting will serve as his Eagle Scout Project.

The buffer will be planted along the Conewago Creek on a farm property alongside of the rail-to-trail. This location currently has a thriving buffer but a section experienced higher

than usual tree mortality due to the extreme flooding last summer. This buffer planting will replace those trees and create a more complete buffer along this stretch of stream.

If you are interested in helping with this buffer planting contact Conewago Initiative Project Assistant, Kristen Kyler at (717) 948-6609 or klk343@psu.edu to find out more details!



Newsletter Challenge: Win a Free Tree!!

*This is your opportunity to win a **free tree!***

You can feel good knowing that when you plant this tree you will be helping create a healthier watershed!

Are you ready to win a free tree? All you have to do is answer the seasonal question (**hint: the answer is in the newsletter**) and email conewagocreekinitiative@gmail.com with your name and answer. You will have one week from the day the newsletter is sent to get your answer to us. A random drawing will determine the winner (or winners) of the

season's prize. So don't wait, start searching for the answer to the following question:

What is the best way to dispose of dog waste? And why?

Congratulations to Diane and Bob for winning the Summer Contest!



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 • LandStudies, Inc. • Wild Resources, Inc. • Tetra Tech, Inc. • Aquatic Resources Restoration Co. • RGS Associates, Inc.

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

Fish Survey

October 21, 2012
1:00 PM

Mill Road Elementary School
35 Elm Avenue
Elizabethtown, PA 17022

10th Annual Lebanon/ Lancaster Watershed

Forum

October 27, 2012
9:00 am-12:00pm

Acorn Farms & Reception Hall
3141 Mount Joy Road Mount
Joy, PA 17552

Clean Water Seminars

October 11, & November 8
The Farm and Home Center
1383 Arcadia Rd, Lancaster
9:00 am-12:00 pm

Tri-County Conewago Creek Association Monthly Meetings

October 31, 2012
November 28, 2012

7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Conewago Township Bldg
3279 Old Hershey Rd, Etown
(717) 948-6459

Conewago Initiative Project Advisory Team meeting

October 16, 2012
12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Penn State Harrisburg
Church Hall
(717) 948-6459

Riparian Buffer Planting

October 27, 2012
Contact 717-948-6609 for more
information

Equine Workshop

February 9, 2013
9:00 am-3:30 pm
&
February 12, 2013
7:00 pm– 9:30 pm
Londonderry Township Building
783 S. Geyers Church Road,
Middletown, PA 17057