



Saxe Crest Farm Receives Clean Water Award

Michael B. Saxe, owner of Saxe Farms in Dushore, PA was recently named one of the 2009 Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Farm Award recipients. Mr. Saxe, along with Fountain Farm in Cumberland County and Mountain Top Enterprise in Potter County were recognized on July 21, 2009, during the Annual Conservation Awards program of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD). In recognition of their conservation achievements, award recipients received framed certificates and large "Clean Water Farm Award" signs to erect on their farms.

The Clean Water Farm Award, initiated in 1986, recognizes farmers within Pennsylvania's portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, who manage their daily farm operation while keeping a watchful eye on water quality. The farms' conservation plans address issues that help control potential pollutants such as eroded soil, pesticides, and fertilizers from entering streams or groundwater supplies.



The Saxes receive the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Farm Award from PACD President Larry Kehl (left) during the PACD/SCC Awards Luncheon on July 21, 2009.

The Sullivan County Conservation District nominated Mr. Saxe of Saxe Farms because he implements a diversity of conservation practices that are effective and practical in reducing pollution. He participates in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and planted over 10 acres of riparian forested buffers, installed fencing and an animal stream crossing. Saxe Farms also uses other Best Management Practices (BMP's) such as contour farming, contour strip-cropping and conservation crop rotation. In addition to these practices, Mr. Saxe also completed several structural

BMP's including a waste storage facility and a manure transfer system.

"Saxe Farms has seen five generations practice good environmental stewardship and has long been a model farm for those in the surrounding areas of Sullivan and Bradford Counties", said Sullivan County Conservation District Manager, Jacquelyn Rouse.

The Clean Water Farm Awards program is coordinated by the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Education Office (administered by PACD, a private, nonprofit organization representing Pennsylvania's sixty-six county conservation districts). The awards are sponsored jointly the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Chesapeake Bay Program and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture to recognize farmers who implement Best Management Practices. The Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Education Office conducts numerous activities promoting the theme, "We All Live Downstream". For more information, visit www.pacd.org.

The Sullivan County Conservation District also received an award at the awards program. The district received a certificate from the State Conservation Commission, tied for first place with Cameron County Conservation District, for director attendance for the calendar year of 2008 – 89.61%. District Manager, Jacquelyn Rouse, accepted this award on behalf of the Sullivan County Conservation District.

Chesapeake Bay Program Special Projects Funded for County

The Conservation District has been awarded three special project grants through the PA Chesapeake Bay Program. The two year grants are aimed at nutrient and sediment reduction on agricultural lands in the county.

The first project is for the beneficial use of cover crops. Priority will be given to new users of cover crops and various crop land criteria will also be followed. The program will allow for up to two years of funding at a rate of \$25 per acre. The operator will then be responsible to continue utilizing the practice for the same number of years of payment. More information on this project can be found in this issue.

A no-till program has also been funded through the Special Projects pro-

gram. This program will provide an incentive payment of \$30 per acre to cropland that is seeded using no-till practices. A priority has been set for new cropland and cropland that borders streams and waterways. A sign-up period for this program will begin in January of 2010.

The last funded project is for establishing test sites for advanced nitrogen management of corn. The project will solicit for three operations in various locations of crop production for the purpose of collecting nitrogen information through chlorophyll meter testing and lab analysis. The participating operations will receive results of the studies and gain a more in-depth look at how nitrogen levels compare to management practices. The results of the study will also be pro-

vided to other agricultural operations to demonstrate the benefits of tracking nitrogen and the nutrient and monetary savings that can be achieved due to testing.

For more information on these projects, contact the Conservation District Office at 570-928-7057.



Changes in Chesapeake Bay Program for the County

As of July 1st, the conservation district resumed sole responsibility for the duties of the Chesapeake Bay Program for the county.

The district will make use of its Agricultural Conservation Technician, Lynn Ottaviani, and Watershed Specialist, Corey Richmond. Lynn and Corey will share in the responsibilities of administering all aspects of the program.

Responsibilities of the Chesapeake Bay Program include working to

implement the county's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Plan, preparing grant funding of agricultural projects, educational programs, construction inspection, and one-on-one landowner consultations.

The implementation of special CBP projects will also be a significant part of the technical workload. The special projects, as identified in the article above, are key projects tailored to the county for its responsibility in addressing the needs of the Tributary Strategy Plan.

If you are interested in the Chesapeake Bay Program, or would like to have a farm visit or meeting with Lynn or Corey to discuss program opportunities, call the district office at 570-928-7057.

District Holds Summer Picnic Meeting

The Sullivan County Conservation District held its July 14th board meeting at the new Bureau of Forestry's Loyalsock State Forest Resource Management Center on Route 220.



Rich Glinski, District Forester, gave the group of 25 attendees a 45 minute tour of the facility which not only uses environmentally friendly products, but won a national award for the "green" building. The building is heated and cooled with geothermal technology, the lights turn off if no movement takes place within a certain amount of time, and the drywall and carpets are made of recycled products. The wood for the wainscoting and trim came from Sullivan County.

The Loyalsock State Forest is also Green Forest Certified for the stew-

ardship practices performed with the forest.

In addition to the staff, directors, spouses, and guests in attendance, legislative aides Curtis Faye, Jason Krise, and Susan Mathias came from the offices of Senator Gene Yaw, Representative Tina Pickett, and Congressman Chris Carney respectively.

If you haven't been to the facility yet, take the time to call the center at 946-4049 to get a peek at the beautiful facility that's housed in Sullivan County.

Mine Land Reclamation Continues

The mining activities of the past have left their scars on the landscape, however, those scars are becoming less noticeable in the Mildred and Lopez area of the county.

District Director, Bruno Najaka, has had a goal of working to reclaim the abandoned mine land and make for a better and safer landscape. A large part of that goal will be realized as the final large open strip mining pit has been contracted to be filled and graded. The pit, located on White Ash Land Association property, will be backfilled with overburden material remaining from the mining process. The land will be brought to a more natural, safer terrain. Once this process is complete, biosolids applications and seeding will finish the project.

The Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association (LCWA) has been helpful in assisting with acid mine drainage treatment in the upper Loyalsock Creek



and has recently provided the funds to install covers at intakes for two of the three treatment systems. The covers are intended to decrease algae growth that

occurs in the winter months and clogs intake pipes. The covers will also lessen the leaves entering the intakes in the fall. The leaves are also a problem with clogging the system. LCWA volunteers also assisted district staff with site preparations for the covers.



Rain Barrel Workshops

The Conservation District recently completed two workshops dealing with Backyard Stormwater Management. Participants were made aware of the amount of precipitation that becomes stormwater on their own properties and ways to address it before it becomes a pollution source to streams and water bodies.

The workshops included information on various low impact practices

for handling stormwater including rain gardens, terracing, backyard habitat enhancement, riparian buffers, and rain barrel usage.

Participants concluded the workshops by constructing their own rain barrels to serve as their first tool in addressing stormwater on their own properties.

The workshops were presented

by Corey Richmond, Watershed Specialist, and funded through a grant provided by the PA Association of Conservation Districts and the PA Department of Environmental Protection's Chesapeake Bay Program.

If you are interested in information on dealing with backyard stormwater management, contact the district's watershed specialist at 570-928-7057.

Calendar of Events

Sept. 18-20	PA Bow Hunter's Festival Fairgrounds, Forksville	Oct 10-11	Sonestown Heritage Days Sonestown	Nov. 10	District Board Meeting 7:00 PM Ag Resources Center, Dushore
Sept. 28	Marcellus Shale Information Meeting, 7-9 PM Community Baptist Church Rte. 87, Farragut	Oct. 12	OFFICE CLOSED for Columbus Day	Nov. 11	OFFICE CLOSED for Veterans Day
Oct. 3-4	Flaming Foliage Festival Fairgrounds, Forksville	Oct. 13	District Board Meeting 7:00 PM Ag Resource Center, Dushore	Nov 26-27:	OFFICE CLOSED for Thanksgiving Holiday
Oct. 10-11	Sullivan County Fall Festival Fairgrounds, Forksville	Nov. 12	Annual Ag Agencies Banquet		

LCWA/DCNR Complete Wallis Run Project

The Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association combined efforts with the DCNR Bureau of Forestry's Loyalsock State Forest to address stream bank erosion at a site located on Wallis Run, in Lycoming County.

The 375 foot project serves to stabilize the bank from continual loss of legacy sediment from an old dam site through the use of PA Fish and Boat Commission stream habitat improvement structures.

The PA Fish and Boat Commission in conjunction with the North Central PA Conservancy, obtained funding for such projects through the PA Growing Greener Program.

The project, designed by

Fish and Boat staff, was coordinated and completed by both agencies involved and LCWA volunteers.



The project included the installation of five root wads, four multi-log deflectors, and a 130 foot modified mud sill. All of the devices create improved stream habitat while also protecting the bank from further erosion.

If you are interested in seeing this site, it is located on Wallis Run Road across from the Jacoby Falls parking area in the Loyalsock State Forest.

District Receives \$870,000.00 ARRA Grant

The conservation district was awarded \$870,642.00 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) after applying for grant monies from the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) grants program.

The district's Dirt and Gravel Roads Administrator, Randy Reibson, worked with local municipalities to identify

projects that fit the requirements for the funding and developed the grant proposal for funding.

As a result of the grant, seven projects in 5 municipalities will receive funding. The projects are located on municipal dirt and gravel roads that directly impact waters of the commonwealth.

The projects will be comprised of under surface drainage, cross pipes, road profile adjustment and driving surface aggregate.

Funding is still dependent upon on PENNVEST approval of the bidding procedure and contractor.

The project work is to start prior to October 31st, 2009 and be completed by the end of June 2010.

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

This is the final notice for changes to addresses in Sullivan County. Due to the 911 readdressing, most addresses were changed and we need the updated address to ensure that our newsletter and other mailing make it to our customers.

Please phone or email your new address to the conservation district as soon as possible to avoid being removed from our mailing lists.

Beginning in October, we will be deleting invalid addresses.

When we send mail to an invalid or incomplete addresses, the effort is wasted as these go undelivered and still cost the district money.

To update your mailing address, please call the district office at 928-7057 or drop us an email at : district@sullcon.com



West Nile Virus

It has been a busy season of surveillance. With the wet, hot, and humid conditions the mosquitoes seemed to be out in force. Trapping and larval sampling efforts occurred throughout the county as the wet weather continued to provide optimum conditions. As of this newsletter, no WNV positive samples have been documented for the county.

Just because there has not been any positive samples does not mean we should let down our guard. Where there is standing, stagnant water, mosquitoes have a breeding ground. So, remember to keep yourself safe by routinely emptying any containers left outside such as buckets, barrels, garbage cans, and toys. Also be aware that standing water can accumulate in roof gutters, so they too should be

cleaned on a regular basis. Any standing water should be drained and emptied every other day to ensure that it does not become a breeding site.



If you have an ornamental pond or water garden, the use of mosquito dunks is recommended to keep mosquitoes from laying their eggs. These “dunks” can be purchased at most hardware and big name stores and do not cause harm to aquatic plants.

When outside, try to wear long sleeved shirts and pants, especially at dusk, when mosquitoes become more active. For other times, consider using a bug spray that contains DEET or make use of other products to avoid bites.

WNV Program Falls Victim to Lack of State Budget

Due to a state budget being nearly three months overdue, the effects are being felt by schools, and county governments. The state officially closed the West Nile Virus surveillance program in 36 counties across the Commonwealth on August 31.

All 7th and 8th class counties no longer have the ability to sample and collect mosquito populations for the vi-

rus. Some of these counties have had positive samples this year and yet the continued surveillance has been terminated.

If you have concerns regarding mosquito populations or find dead birds that you suspect may have been infected with the virus, you are advised to contact the North Central Regional Office of the Department of Environmental Resources

at 570-327-3636.

The district urges landowners to be mindful of any standing water that collects on properties and to make use of long sleeve shirts and pants when mosquitoes are most active in the early morning and evening hours. Repellant containing DEET is also effective in preventing bites.

Apple Fritter Recipe

As we get nearer and nearer to the fall season, the district offers a recipe for making use of some locally grown crops in the county.

Apple Fritters

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of sifted all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup of sugar
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons of baking powder
- 1/3 cup of milk
- 1 egg

- 1 cup finely chopped apple
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar. Sifted

Preparation:

Sift together the flour, sugar, salt, and baking powder. Add milk and egg; beat until batter is smooth. Fold in chopped apple. Drop by teaspoons into deep hot oil - about 370 degrees and at least 2 1/2 to 3 inches deep - and fry for about 2 to 3 minutes, until nicely browned.

Drain well on paper towels, then roll in

confectioners' sugar while still warm. Serve as is or warm, with syrup, if desired.



Ag Operations encouraged to Sign-Up for Cover Crops



The conservation district Chesapeake Bay Program Cover Crops Project is now taking sign ups for the upcoming season.

The project is meant to encourage local agricultural operations to implement the use of cover crops on crop land throughout the Loyalsock Creek watershed. The use of cover crops will capture nutrients remaining in the soil following the removal of crops, nitrate capture, atmospheric nitrogen fixation, organic matter increase, soil structure improvement, water management, and weed control.

Agricultural operations that are interested in utilizing cover crops and take advantage of this incentive program are encouraged to contact the district at the earliest convenience. The district is limited to funding 200 acres of cropland through this project.

The 2009 –2010 program has some updated participation requirements that were not required in previous years.

1. Operators enrolled in the program will be eligible for incentive payments of \$25 per acre for the first year of establishment and would then be responsible to continue the practice for one additional year. If a farmer chooses to participate for 2 years of funding, he/she would then be responsible to provide two years of cover crops at their own expense.
2. A funding priority will be used to encourage operations that have previously not used cover crops to implement use on agricultural fields. The priority does not prohibit exist-

ing cover crops users, it merely encourages new users to the practice. Priority will also be given to fields with slopes greater than 8%, fields with less than 25% residue, fields located near streams or waterways, fields, receiving manure over the fall or winter, and fields that will be no-tilled in the spring of the year.

3. Visible growth of the cover crop must be shown by December 1st of the establishment year and a minimum of 50% cover or 6 inches of growth must be achieved prior to cover crop termination.
4. Grazing or harvesting hay, haylage, or silage prior to the cover crop termination is permitted.

To sign up for this program or for more information, contact the district at 570-928-7057.

New USDA Program Encourages Producers to be Conservation Stewards

A new program is available to Pennsylvania agricultural and forestry producers offering financial incentives to adopt additional conservation activities on their land. **The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)** is a voluntary program that encourages producers to maintain existing conservation activities and add new ones.

This program is for those willing to do additional conservation activities over and above their current stewardship levels.

“CSP is one of many state and federal programs that are available to help producers integrate conservation stewardship into their operations to prevent soil erosion, enhance soil quality, prevent water contamination, and improve plant and animal health,” said Secretary Dennis Wolff.

Contracts will cover the entire agricultural operation and be for five years. Payments to an individual or legal entity may not exceed \$40,000 per year and \$200,000 in a five-year period.

Producers interested in applying for CSP are encouraged to review program details online at www.nrcs.usda.gov/new_csp/csp.html before making an appointment with their local NRCS field office or contact Michelle L. Hanley, USDA, NRCS at (570) 265-6969 Ext. 126.

Applications must be submitted by September 30 to be considered for funding in the first ranking period.

Conservation Programs Provided by USDA-NRCS

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has various programs available to landowners as part of the 2009 Farm Bill. Some of the more popular programs available to Sullivan County residents include the CREP, EQIP, and WHIP programs. Each program is highlighted below.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



Have you noticed a large number of little plastic tubes appearing throughout Sullivan County. If you have, you may be interested in the CREP program. The program provides funds to plant trees and shrubs along streams and/or ponds that do not have existing forested buffers. The buffers serve to filter nutrients and other potential pollution sources to waterways. The buffers also enhance wildlife habitat. If you are interested in learning more about the CREP program, please contact Michelle Hanley, Soil Conservationist with USDA, NRCS.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)



The EQIP program can assist operators with practices such as Conversion to No Till, Cover Crop establishment, Barnyards, Manure Storages, Nutrient Management, Grazing, and Forestry are just a few of the practices available through the EQIP program. If you are interested in technical assistance and/or being eligible for financial assistance for best management practices, please contact Michelle Hanley, Soil Conservationist with USDA, NRCS.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

The WHIP program can provide both technical and financial assistance to individuals interested in establishing and improving wildlife habitat on private agricultural lands and non-industrial forestland. The financial assistance can include incentive payments for manage-

ment activities and cost-share for the installation of certain conservation practices. Practices that can be funded through WHIP include native grass and meadow plantings; tree and shrub plantings; succession habitat management; and stream and stream corridor improvement practices such as stream fencing, fish habitat structures, and riparian forest buffers.



The USDA-NRCS has other programs that may better fit your needs. The first step for producers interested in USDA, NRCS programs should be to contact Michelle Hanley, Soil Conservationist at (570) 265-6969 Ext. 126 or the Sullivan County Conservation District at (570) 928-7057.

Also, the application and information about Farm Bill programs for fiscal year 2009 are available on the Pennsylvania NRCS Web site at www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov/programs

NTHA Awards Grants to District

The Northern Tier Hardwood Association (NTHA) is made up of local businesses and organizations interested in improving and promoting the forest industry. Their mission is to encourage long-term economic development in northeast Pennsylvania through intelligent forest management, careful expansion of secondary wood processing, improved manufacturing methods and regional hardwood promotion.

Under the NTHA's educational funding, the Sullivan County Conservation District received more than \$1,100 in grants.

The district received funding to assist in the costs associated with conducting the local Envirothon and provided for the purchase of two computerized bird song identifiers to be used for Envirothon training.

A NTHA grant was also awarded to completely fund the District's 2010 Arbor Day seedling distribution to elementary students.



The NTHA provided additional grants to benefit Sullivan County and its citizens. Two students, Adel Gouda and Nicholas Wilkins, were each awarded a \$500 college scholarship for academic achievement while pursuing forestry/environmental degrees. Lastly, the

Chamber of Commerce received funding for the annual Fall Festival.

The NTHA serves as the regional forum for the promotion of the wood industry and offers a wealth of services such as legislative involvement, job training programs, educational and safety workshops and trade show sponsorship. NTHA also offers assistance in the areas of marketing and promotion, funding, procurement, exporting, technical assistance, informational resource, and referral services.

If you are interested in supporting this forestry based organization, or would like more information, visit its website at <http://www.nthardwoods.org/> or call (570) 265-7753.

The NTHA accepts membership applications throughout the year.



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