

Our Team:

2020 Board of Directors:

Timothy Ference, *Chair*
John J. Wilkes, Jr., *Vice-Chair*
Tracey Stevens, *Secretary-Treasurer*
Leonard J. Burger, Jr.
Walter Griffith, Jr.
John P. Hanish, Jr.
Gary Moyer, Sr.

The Luzerne Conservation District Board of Directors holds monthly meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 PM at the district's office. The public is welcome to attend.

Associate Directors:

Timothy J. Connolly, Jr.
Chris Maylath

2020 Staff:

Hunter Bednarczyk, *E&S Conservation Specialist*
Heather Graham, *E&S Program Coordinator*
Ron Jesse, *Building & Grounds Keeper*
Deborah Josuweit, *Office Administrator*
Jen Lauri, *Agricultural Conservation Specialist*
John Levitsky, *Watershed Specialist*
Joshua Longmore, *Executive Director*
Amber Martin, *MDC Program Conservation Specialist*
Mike Schlauch, *Ag & Roads Conservation Specialist*

Our Programs:

- **Erosion & Sediment Pollution Control** – provides review, permitting, inspections, and voluntary compliance technical services for earth disturbance activities
- **Agricultural Conservation** – provides technical support to plan and implement conservation practices on agricultural lands, including farmland preservation through conservation easements
- **Watershed Stewardship** – provides technical support to plan and implement watershed conservation efforts
- **Dirt, Gravel, & Low-volume Road Environmental Improvement** – provides technical support & grant funding to aid public road owners in implementing environmental improvement projects
- **Mosquito-borne Disease Control** – conducts surveillance and control activities to reduce the threat of mosquito-borne diseases
- **Conservation Education & Outreach** – Each of the district's programs seeks to not only "put conservation on the ground", but they also have a component of education and outreach with the goal of establishing a conservation ethic among the citizens of Luzerne County.

Our Partners:

Cooperating Agencies and Personnel:

Partnerships are an extremely important part of successful natural resource stewardship. The district worked with many individuals and organizations to accomplish our shared conservation goals. The following individuals worked closely with the district staff and board:

Andrew Kears, *District Conservationist, USDA NRCS*
Shane Kleiner, *Watershed Manager, PA DEP*
Peter Tarby, *Chesapeake Bay Field Representative, PA DEP*

We also have numerous partners within the following agencies:

PA Association of Conservation Districts
PA Department of Agriculture
PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
PA Department of Environmental Protection
PA Fish & Boat Commission
PA State Conservation Commission
Penn State Center for Dirt & Gravel Roads Studies
Penn State Cooperative Extension
Pennsylvania Game Commission
Pocono Northeast Resource Conservation & Development Council
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Nominating Organizations:

The following organizations have been approved by the State Conservation Commission to nominate people to serve on the Luzerne Conservation District Board of Directors. Nominations are given to the Luzerne County Council, and council appoints district directors from the names provided:

Anthracite Scenic Trails Association
Bloomingdale Grange #536
Greater Wyoming Valley Audubon Society
League of Women Voters, Luzerne County Chapter
Luzerne County Farm Bureau
Luzerne County Federation of Sportsmen
Northeastern Pennsylvania Herpetological Society
PA Environmental Council, North East Office
Penn State Cooperative Extension, Luzerne County Board
North Branch Land Trust
Western Pocono Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Luzerne County Historical Society
USDA Farm Service Agency, Luzerne County Committee

Photo: Smith's Pond near the district's office in Jackson Township, Luzerne County.
Credit: Josh Longmore.



**LUZERNE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

2020 Annual Report

**Conserving land and water resources in
Luzerne County by promoting public
awareness, providing technical assistance,
and encouraging regulatory compliance.**

325 Smiths Pond Road
Shavertown, PA 18708
570-674-7991
www.luzcd.org

About Us

We are a local agency responsible for soil and water conservation programs within Luzerne County. Our primary types of activities include implementing conservation projects, providing technical assistance, conducting education/outreach, and encouraging voluntary compliance with environmental regulations.

We accomplish our mission through cooperation with landowners and land users and by working with other public and private organizations to increase citizen awareness of the responsibility to be good stewards of our natural resources.

As one of the sixty-six county conservation districts in Pennsylvania, we are involved in developing local programs and implementing on-the-ground practices to protect the soil and water resources of Luzerne County. The district is led by a seven-member board consisting of community volunteers and a member of Luzerne County Council. Currently, the district has nine staff members who carry out the agency's day-to-day operations. It is the goal of the board and staff to implement programs that best serve the specific needs of the natural resources and people of Luzerne County.

Funding delivered within the county for direct conservation efforts in 2020: \$1,133,033

More Work to Do

- Provide ongoing natural resource conservation assistance to state and federal partners and Luzerne County municipalities, landowners, & land users
- Implement ongoing and new conservation projects on farms and along streams, wetlands, and lakes
- Coordinate the preservation of more Luzerne County farms through the Farmland Preservation Program
- Provide multiple educational opportunities to promote the stewardship of our natural resources

2020 Featured Project: Sterling Street Project Fairview Township, Luzerne County



Since its beginning, the district's Roads Program has funded over **\$2.2 million of environmental improvement projects on 38 miles** dirt, gravel, and low-volume paved road sections within Luzerne County.

In 2020, the **Sterling Street Low Volume Paved Road Project** was completed to address cracking/unevenness of surface material, poor road base (water seepage), and excessive sediment entering the high-quality headwaters of Solomon's Creek in Mountain Top.

Road improvements were made including **144 tons** of new base material, **466 square yards** of new paved surface, **43 feet** of new 12" pipe and an inlet connecting to the existing water collection and conveyance system. Disturbed areas were seeded and mulched for stabilization.

The total project value was **\$69,580**, which was funded by a **\$65,721** grant to Fairview Township and the remaining funds provided by the township.

Program Accomplishments

- Authorized **49 NPDES Permits** for construction activities, with **average approval time of 153 business days**
- Responded to **51 complaints** related to soil and water issues
- **288 Erosion & Sediment Control Plan Reviews** and **188 site inspections** for earth disturbance activities in Luzerne County
- Provided over **\$374,000** in municipal grant payments along with technical services **for 14 projects** to reduce sediment pollution from and improve storm water management, drainage, & road base/surfaces on local **dirt, gravel, and low-volume paved roads**
- Preservation of **3 farms** totaling **245 acres** through administration of the Luzerne County Farmland Preservation Program
- Planted **950 trees** within the Susquehanna River Basin through the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's 10,000 Trees initiative
- Assisted Earth Conservancy & EPCAMR with water quality and habitat improvement projects on mine-impacted watersheds in the Wyoming Valley
- Planned & designed water quality improvements for a **mile** of Abraham Creek
- Provided conservation planning and federal Farm Bill Program contract coordination and agricultural conservation projects on more than **1,500 acres** of farmland within Luzerne County, in partnership with USDA NRCS, PA DEP, & PA
- Assisted **6 agricultural producers** with **REAP Tax Credit Applications**

