



MIFFLIN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2025 Annual Report

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The Mifflin County Conservation District (MCCD) was organized in 1956 as a legal subdivision of state and local government, under the authority of Act 217, to assist the county's landowners with natural resource related concerns, and to provide technical and financial assistance for the implementation of conservation practices. There are 66 conservation districts in Pennsylvania, and nearly 3,000 nationwide, dedicated to conserving our soil and water resources.

The MCCD continues to administer state and regional programs for local natural resource conservation and leverages funding for technical assistance and restoration projects to protect and improve local waterways. See all of the accomplishments and activities of the District in the next few pages of our 2025 Annual Report.

- Trevor Weaver, District Manager



Conservation District Mission Statement

The mission of the Mifflin County Conservation District is to conserve the county's natural resources through coordinated and professional guidance, technical assistance, and education to the landowners, public agencies, and residents of Mifflin County.

Countywide Action Plan

The Mifflin County Conservation District continued progress to achieve nutrient and sediment reductions in Mifflin County by implementing the Mifflin Countywide Action Plan (CAP). Herbert Roland Grubic (HRG) continued as the CAP Coordinator with grants managed by the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission (TCRPC).

CAP Implementation

The MCCD proposed completing three stream restoration projects in 2025 with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. The MCCD also proposed continuing a turf conversion program aimed at planting native meadows in replacement of traditional lawns on residential and commercial properties. The MCCD planned to implement 8 acres of meadow plantings in 2025.

During 2025, the District installed the following BMPs through the 2025 CAP implementation grant:

- Project #1: 550 linear feet of stream restored on Hungry Run at the Burnham Borough Park. Rock and log structures were installed and vertical banks were re-graded to direct flow, mitigate streambank erosion, and help with floodplain connectivity while providing habitat for aquatic organisms. The project has also proposed the installation of a riparian buffer with an emphasis on native flowering species of trees and shrubs.

- Project #2: 1350 linear feet of stream restored on Spring Run in McVeytown. Rock and log structures were installed and vertical banks were re-graded to direct flow, mitigate streambank erosion and help with

floodplain connectivity while providing habitat for aquatic organisms. Several flowering native tree and shrub species were also planted on site.



- Project #3: 2100 linear feet of stream restored on Kishacoquillas Creek in Belleville. Rock and log structures were installed and vertical banks were re-graded to direct flow, mitigate streambank erosion and help with floodplain connectivity while providing habitat for aquatic organisms.

- Project #4: 8 Acres of turf conversion/native meadow planted at the Lewistown Country Club (LCC). Several acres of invasive species also removed/treated to prepare for stream restoration and native tree/shrub planting.



Additional site assessments and evaluations for future projects were completed with hopes of future CAP implementation funding. Major planning was completed at the Lewistown Country Club in

partnership with HRG for stormwater infrastructure (bio-swales, rain gardens, wet meadows, etc.).

Dirt & Gravel Roads Program

The Dirt and Gravel Road (D&GR) Program was created in 1997. The purpose of the program is to provide training and funding to local road owning entities to mitigate stream pollution from dirt roads. To date, the District has received and administered grants totaling over \$1.6 million for funding, administering, and educational events related to dirt and gravel road improvement projects in Mifflin County. The District has completed 47 projects involving 7 different townships, with an additional \$95,000 committed to pending projects. Through the District's Dirt and Gravel Roads Program, more than 47 miles of Mifflin County's dirt roads have been improved to demonstrate the use of environmentally sensitive road maintenance practices.

In 2015 the traditional D&GR Program was expanded to include some low volume, paved and/or tarp-chip roads under the Low Volume Roads (LVR) portion of the program. The purpose and mission of the Dirt, Gravel, Low Volume Roads (DGLVR) Program remains the same: provide training and funding to local road owning entities to mitigate stream pollution from dirt and low volume roads. To date, the District has received approximately \$675,000 for low volume road improvements. The District has completed a total of 30 projects and has committed over \$40,000 toward future projects. Projects have been or are being completed in 7 different municipalities totaling over 6 miles of road length.

Erosion and Sediment Control Program

The District, under delegated authority from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the State Conservation Commission, administers the Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program at a Level II authority under the Chapter 102 regulations and the Pennsylvania Clean Streams Law. This involves technical review of erosion control plans for earthmoving activities, project inspections, compliance activities, complaint response, and public education. The purpose of this program is to protect our land and waters from accelerated erosion and resulting sedimentation during any earth disturbance. The scope of projects reviewed by the District can range from single building construction disturbing a minimal area to massive highway projects involving hundreds of acres of disturbance.

In the past year the District performed 21 initial and 49 follow-up E&S plan reviews encompassing 802 project acres and 65 disturbed acres. Our staff performed 92 site inspections, responded to 221 requests for technical assistance and investigated 4 E&S related complaints.

Construction sites involving more than 1 acre of earth disturbance must apply for and receive a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit prior to commencing any earthmoving activities for the discharge of stormwater from those sites. Anyone that expects to begin a project that may involve more than 1 acre of earth disturbance over the life of the project is urged to contact the Conservation District to determine whether NPDES permit coverage is required.

The Conservation District is delegated to administer the NPDES program for construction sites in Mifflin County. This includes processing and technical review of applications and accompanying E&S plans, and regular inspections of permitted sites to ensure compliance with permit conditions. Individual NPDES permits are issued for those sites located in Special Protection watersheds, and General Permit coverage is given to all other sites. The District processed 8 Individual and 6 General NPDES permits in Mifflin County in the last calendar year.

Watershed Assessment and Restoration

Upper Kish, Hungry Run, and Town Run

The District continued to focus on three priority watersheds for water quality improvement in Mifflin County with approved Watershed Implementation Plans and/or Alternative Restoration Plans. Watershed assessments are also completed annually in the Upper Kishacoquillas Creek, Hungry Run, and Town Run watersheds.

The Upper Kishacoquillas (Kish) Creek watershed includes the main stem of Kish Creek from Belleville to Allensville and all of the tributaries in-between. The Hungry Run watershed, a tributary of Kish Creek, flows through the village of Vira and meets the Kish below Burnham. The Town Run watershed originates along the south side of Jacks Mountain and flows through Ferguson Valley to join the Juniata River on the north end of McVeytown. Each watershed contains a majority of streams with an aquatic life use impairment. Sediment and

nutrients are the cause of impairment in both watersheds and the implementation plans address reductions of both agricultural and urban sources of sediment and nutrients.

Grant money is available to projects in impaired watersheds that have EPA approved Watershed Implementation Plans or Alternative Restoration Plans through the Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution program. To date, the District has received more than \$3.2 million in 319 and Growing Greener funds for agricultural BMPs and watershed restoration efforts in the Upper Kish and over \$1.4 million for the Hungry Run Watershed. The MCCD has started work in the Town Run watershed through other focused funding sources.

Surface Water Assessment Program (SWAP) Monitoring

In light of the extensive work completed by the District and its partners in the Upper Kish & Hungry Run watersheds, the possibility of removing these waters from the 303(d) impaired waters list is a key goal and distinct possibility in the future. The District has been sampling water quality in these watersheds since 2014. Surface water assessments are conducted each year during the month of April or May and collect a snapshot of water quality conditions through biological, physical, and chemical data. Samples taken in April of 2024 continued to show water quality improvement across many sites, most notably in the Hungry Run watersheds. Improving waters data was submitted to PA DEP for further consideration and several tributaries in the Hungry Run Watershed were deemed to be meeting their attaining use.

Sampling in 2025 completed a 12-year data set in these watersheds. This information can be viewed on the MCCD website at (www.mifflinccd.com).

Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP)

Created through the Clean Streams Fund, ACAP will fund projects that reduce sediment and nutrient pollution in streams, rivers and waterbodies through implementation of agricultural best management practices (BMPs). It is a statewide program, implemented primarily by County Conservation districts.

In 2025 ACAP partially funded 3 projects with the following BMPs:

Project #1: 1- 50 ft. x 56 ft. Roofed Solid Manure Storage Structure, 1- 68 ft. x 8 ft. Concrete Manure Storage Tank, 1- 120 ft. x 50 ft. Roofed Heavy Use Area and 1- 42 ft. x 8 ft. Concrete Manure Storage Tank. Additional BMPs included 352 ft. of gutters, 770 ft. of underground outlets, 435 ft. of access road, and 450 sq. ft. of lined waterway.

Project #2: 1- 65 ft. x 64 ft. Roofed Heavy Use Area for dairy cows, 1- 45 ft. x 64 ft. Roofed Heavy Use Area over existing concrete for dry cows, and 1- 52 ft. x 128 ft. Roofed Heavy Use Area with 143 ft. x 13 ft. x 8 ft. Concrete Under Barn Storage Tank. Additional BMPs included 2 infiltration basins, 256 ft. of gutters, 375 ft. of underground outlets, and 334 ft. of access road.

Project #3: 1- 50 ft. x 280 ft. Roofed Heavy Use Area. Additional BMPs included 2- 14 ft. x 16 ft. concrete access pads, 1- 16 ft. x 16 ft. concrete access pad, 520 ft. of gutters, 526 ft. of underground outlets, and 300 ft. of access road.



Chesapeake Bay Program

2025 marked the 36th year for the Conservation District's administration of the Chesapeake Bay Program. The Bay Program is a unique regional partnership leading and directing restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The program works with landowners who would like to reduce sediment and nutrient runoff from their farms.

District personnel performed 20 Initial and 28 Phase II farm inspections as part of a new requirement with the "reboot" of the Chesapeake Bay Program. The purpose of these visits was to ensure that Mifflin County Ag producers have the required Ag Erosion & Sediment Control (AG E&S) plans and Manure Management plans to be in compliance with relevant environmental regulations. The District also assisted 23 farmers in developing Manure Management plans covering 3269.26 acres and assisted 23 farmers with the development 32 Ag E&S plans covering 2703.01 acres.

Nutrient Management Program

2025 completed the 27th year of the conservation district's delegated agreement with the State Conservation Commission to administer Pennsylvania's Nutrient Management (Act 38) Program. The District's primary responsibility is the technical review and approval of nutrient management plans that are prepared and submitted by commercial or individual planners for farms that are considered Concentrated Animal Operations (CAOs). A concentrated animal operation is a farm with more than two animal equivalent units (AEU's) per acre of land suitable for manure application (animal equivalent unit defined as 1,000 pounds of animal weight). In addition, farms that are not legally required to comply with Act 38 may do so voluntarily. Nutrient management planning is done with nitrogen and phosphorus as the nutrients of concern. Other features of the program include odor emission regulations for certain size livestock operations and a certification program for commercial manure haulers.

In 2025, the Conservation District reviewed and approved 5 nutrient management plans. Additionally, the District completed 23 annual status reviews of previously approved nutrient management plans

Farmland Preservation

The Conservation District serves as the administrator of the Mifflin County Agricultural Conservation Easement program.

This program preserves the future of productive farmland in the county by purchasing the development rights to participating farms. Farm owners are paid a percentage of the easement value, or difference between the agricultural and market values of the land, to keep their farms in productive agriculture. Funding for easement purchases is provided by the PA Department of Agriculture, the Mifflin County Commissioners, and in some cases, United States Department of Agriculture.

In order to be eligible, a farm must meet the following minimum criteria: (1.) be located within a recorded Agricultural Security Area that has at least 500 acres enrolled, (2.) contain at least 50% of soils which are available for agricultural production and are Capability Classes I through IV, (3.) contain the greater of 50% or 10 acres of harvested cropland, pasture, or grazing lands, (4.) be contiguous acreage of at least 50 acres, unless the tract is at least 10 acres and is utilized for a crop unique to the area or is contiguous to a property which has a perpetual conservation easement in place. Farms that meet this criteria are competitively ranked according to the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) process. The LESA assigns points to each farm according to soils, farm productivity, development pressure, and clustering or proximity to other farms in the program. Depending on funding available, the highest ranked farm(s) receives an offer for easement purchase based on certified appraisals of the farm's agricultural and market value. Once the easement is purchased, that farm must remain in agricultural production in perpetuity.

Statewide, there have been 6,648 farms preserved in 59 counties totaling 660,712 acres. In Mifflin County, there are now 33 farms preserved totaling 3,586 acres at a cost of \$4,075,435.

Environmental Education

Envirothon

The District continued its sponsorship of the Envirothon, an environmental education competition for senior high school students that tests their knowledge of natural resource issues. The 2025 Mifflin/Juniata County Envirothon was held at Kish Park in Lewistown, PA. Two teams from Mifflin County High School and 3 teams from Mifflin County Academy of Science and Technology attended the event. The winning team went on to represent Mifflin County at the Pennsylvania State Envirothon held at Windber Park in Windber, PA.

Field Days and Events

The District participated in several other youth education events. The MCCD staffed a stream health station at the Reeds Gap Fall Fest (Reeds Gap State Park) in October. MCCD staff also helped with the Mifflin County School District (MCSD) Eco Day, Rainbow summer program, CMA Harvets Fest, and assisted with the Farm Bureau 3rd grade AG tour.

Education was not limited to youth. The MCCD assisted with and/or participated in several educational and outreach meetings for the Ag community and the general public. The District held a Stream Buffer Field Day that included electro shocking conducted by PA DEP. Mike Stuck, Jenna Dunk and Erica Smith completed individual Manure



2025 Mifflin County Envirothon winning team

Management manual training at the MCCD district office. The District also held several DGLVR Municipal meetings and a joint 102/DGLVR spring meeting was held with the Juniata County Conservation District in Juniata County.

Other District Activities in 2025

In 2025, the MCCD continued their annual tree seedling sale. The 2025 sale included evergreens, fruit trees, shade trees, shrubs, and wildflower seed. The MCCD sold over 500 trees/shrubs. Proceeds from the annual seedling sale fund environmental education efforts in Mifflin County.

The MCCD also adopted two planters in downtown Lewistown as part of the Downtown Lewistown Adopt-A-Planter program. Planters were planted with native flowers and perennials to help display plants that are native to our region.

District personnel also participated in the following resource-related activities/committees: PA Envirothon Board of Directors, the DG&LVR Quality Assurance Board, Mifflin County Farm Bureau Nominations Committee, Mifflin County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, and Downtown Lewistown Inc.

The District welcomes opportunities to form partnerships with local agencies, organizations, and government entities to further promote conservation, and ensure the protection of natural resources for future generations.



MCCD staff (l to r): Floyd Ciccolini, Erica Smith, Jenna Dunk, Mike Stuck, Bailey Coder, Wendy Smith, Kaylyn Brosius, Trevor Weaver

District Staff

District Manager:
Trevor Weaver

Administrative Assistant:
Wendy Smith

Ag Conservation Technician:
Erica Smith

Ag Resource Conservationist:
Mike Stuck

Resource Conservation:
Floyd Ciccolini

Watershed Specialist:
Bailey Coder

Resource Conservationist:
Kaylyn Brosius

Ag. Resource Conservationist:
Jenna Dunk

Board of Directors:

Cathy Haughwout, Chair
David Glick, Vice Chair
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