



LEBANON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2009 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

OUR MISSION

To protect and promote wise stewardship and conservation of the natural resources of Lebanon County on both private and public lands; and to educate and encourage all people to share in this worthy mission.

Format: Category

- Long Range Goal
- * Annual Objectives

LAND USE - RURAL DEVELOPMENT - PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Promote methods for preservation of agricultural land, the environment, and encourage proper land use.
 - * Administer the Lebanon County Ag Land Preservation Program.
 - * Continue participation in the partnership with the Lebanon County Planning Department (hereafter County Planning) by participating in the implementation of the County Comprehensive Plan (i.e.- increasing public awareness of the: Kittatinny Ridge, Highlands Region, Chiques Creek Act 167 Plan, north extension of Leb. Valley Rail Trail, and local water resources initiatives).
 - * Encourage participation in the Capital Resource Conservation & Development Area (RC&D) through meeting attendance, Board representation and participation in a county committee.
 - * Promote participation in land use, rural development, farmland preservation and environmental programs through informational meetings suited for landowners, newspaper articles, and mailings; emphasize increase in funding for farm preservation.
 - * Seek funding for farmland preservation for easement purposes and increased administrative funds.
 - * Participate in opportunities that seek to sustain agriculture (i.e. – PA FarmLink; PA Department of Agriculture [hereafter PDA] Center for Farmland Transition; support policies that acknowledge farming as a developed land use; achieve preservation to meet acreage target goals; support innovative practices and agritourism; promote Century Farm initiative with PDA and Lebanon Valley Chamber of Commerce; maintain historic and scenic data on preserved farms via “Self-Guided Farmland Preservation Tour” brochure; utilize PDA PA Preferred Program in plant and bulb sale marketing; evaluate support of biofuels projects).

- * Measure and regularly report on lands lost to non-agricultural development via the “ Prime Farmland Use In Lebanon County” publication)

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT - FLOODING - WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY

- Administer the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program in accordance with the Department of Environmental Protection’s (hereafter DEP) Delegation Agreement.
 - * Work with County Planning, local municipalities and Fort Indiantown Gap on a case by case basis to resolve erosion and sedimentation (hereafter E&S) conflicts and uphold provisions of our Memorandum of Understanding.
 - * Implement stormwater provisions of the Nutrient Management Act (Act 38).
 - * Work to minimize downstream impacts from earth disturbance activity through Chapter 102 Erosion Control Rules & Regulations, Dirt & Gravel Roads applications and other means.
 - * Work with municipalities, County Planning and County Administrator to implement education/outreach components of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program.
 - * Encourage land use practices that recharge water supplies and protect groundwater, and assist local water systems with both current and future issues.
- Seek funding and work with landowners and cooperating agencies/groups in the promotion and implementation of watershed and water quality management programs.
 - * Administer and promote Chesapeake Bay Special Projects as facilitated by the DEP and the State Conservation Commission (SCC) through the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy and budget.
- Promote protection of watersheds emphasizing its’ benefits toward water quality improvements via: non-point source pollution and erosion control, wildlife habitat improvement, and wetland protection benefits.
 - * Continue to promote local watershed association and conservation organization initiatives.
 - * Continue a cooperative effort with partnering agencies in watershed and conservation initiatives.
 - * Promote water conservation via public education (workshops, fairs, news articles, and school and camp programs etc.).
 - * Support director and staff participation in the Lower Susquehanna Center

For Land and Water.

- * Partner with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (hereafter NRCS), DEP, Penn State Cooperative Extension and others in implementing a Conewago watershed program emphasizing conservation tillage, crop nutrient management, conservation buffers and weed and pest management but not ignoring non-ag. challenges like legacy sediment .
 - * Support director involvement in Lower Susquehanna River Basin Regional Water Resources Planning Committee.
 - * Continue activities of the Lebanon County Groundwater Education Team including administering the Groundwater Guardian Program.
- Encourage options of a pro-active nature to residents seeking to alleviate point source pollution via sinkholes.
 - * Offer a sinkhole repair video and other literature to the public.
 - * Encourage reclamation of sinkholes through Chapter 102 Program responsibilities.

EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL

- Continue to assist agricultural landowners in meeting their Chapter 102 Erosion Control requirements.
 - * Assist the NRCS in the development and implementation of conservation plans that increase landowner compliance with programs and the Chapter 102 Erosion Control Regulations. Achieve goals of 90 to 100% of conservation planning acres set through regular conservation planning meetings with NRCS.
 - * Ensure conservation plan compliance through annual inspection of farms for district administered programs.
 - * Assist the Capital Region RC&D in the delivery of the “Park The Plow” Program to promote no-till farming in Lebanon County.
- Educate township officials and cooperating agencies about erosion control laws and techniques.
 - * Participate in annual convention of county township officials, as requested.
- Administer state contracted Dirt and Gravel Roads Program.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

- Promote nutrient management in Lebanon County.

- * Administer the Act 38 Delegation Agreement in Lebanon County.
 - * Assist municipalities with Animal Waste Storage Ordinance technical support.
 - * Promote mortality and/or animal waste composting.
 - * Promote the development of nutrient management plans through the use of the Manure Management Manual, the current Penn State Agronomy Guide, Act 38, farmland preservation, USDA Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, and township permits.
 - * Provide information, technical and administrative assistance for best management practice design and installation through opportunities such as Chesapeake Bay Special Projects, Small Watersheds Public Law 566, Resource Enhancement And Protection (REAP), Municipal Animal Waste Storage Ordinances etc. Achieve goals of processing 90 to 100% of design assistance requests in cooperation with NRCS assistance.
 - * Promote no-till field practices that reduce erosion and subsequently nutrient loss.
- Continue to educate the public and local municipalities and staff regarding nutrient management law/rules and regulations.
 - * Promote funding from PDA and the State Conservation Commission sources such as Plan Development Incentive Programs (PDIP), Agri-Link, and the Nutrient Management Plan Implementation Program.
 - * Encourage education and participation from the agricultural community and private industry on Act 38 requirements.
 - * Strive for improved relations between urban and rural people when investigating odor and fly problems utilizing cooperating agencies.
 - * Conduct an educational meeting for interested citizens concerning regulation changes of the Nutrient Management Act (i.e.-members of the regulated community including equine operators).
 - Continue to cooperate with the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network and the Capital RC&D to provide educational events.
 - * Assist with administering the Farmer to Farmer and Park The Plow Programs.

RECREATION

- Promote within the county the development of parks, recreational facilities and environmental education centers.
 - * Support the ongoing planning and implementation of regional and local parks (i.e. Quittapahilla Educational Wetland Preserve, Lebanon Valley

Rail Trail, Governor Dick, Union Canal, Swatara Water Trail) and recreation initiatives.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

- Encourage the public to improve fish and wildlife habitat.
 - * Encourage public education and participation in creating, maintaining and enhancing wildlife habitat.
 - * Continue inter-agency partnerships promoting wildlife habitat (i.e.- Farm Bill Programs and Middle Creek [Tundra Swan] Initiative).
- Continue assisting organizations and agency partners with wildlife management projects.
 - * Continue assisting Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art (Saw-whet Owl banding) and Quittapahilla Audubon Society (bird counts, nest boxes etc.)

FORESTRY

- Promote forestry education and outreach.
 - * Conduct tree seedling sale and/or flower bulb sale.
 - * Assist municipalities with rural and urban forestry programs (i.e.- Community of Lebanon Assn. and City cooperative downtown tree replacement effort, TreeVitalize).
 - * Assist landowners with horticultural and silvicultural questions.
 - * Assist landowners with proper identification of forest pests and their control measures.

EDUCATION

- Continue an active environmental and conservation education program.
 - * Continue to conduct the Envirothon at all levels including service to the State Envirothon Board and chairing the 2012 Canon Envirothon.
 - * Conduct environmental programs and workshops as requested by the public including schools, clubs, organizations and cooperating agencies.
 - * Educate/assist teachers in meeting ACT 48 professional development hours through various workshops relating to state standards.
 - * Participate in opportunities related to state's "No Child Left Inside" initiative.

- Provide environmental and agricultural education information and assistance to students, teachers, farmers, landowners, and the general public.
 - * Continue to publish educational newsletters and update our website with educational information in all areas of our annual goals and objectives .
 - * Encourage hands on environmental education opportunities.
 - * Promote energy-saving products and programs (i.e.- compact fluorescent light recycling program). Create an energy page with links on our website to other energy websites.
 - * Promote recycling within the county (i.e.- link to Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority website).

DISTRICT IMAGE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

- Increase Public Awareness about the District and our role.
 - * Assist local groups and agencies in conservation –related initiatives.
 - * Seek and encourage news media coverage and sponsorships for special district meetings, events, and services.
 - * Participate in public displays, forums, and other outreach opportunities.
 - * Maintain current professional brochures/publications about the District.
 - * Consistently update website regarding current programs. Make website more user-friendly. (i.e.- post goals and objectives on the website, try some small illustrational videos, list a speakers bureau available as time resources may permit and district library sign out materials).
 - * Continue to recognize excellence in natural resources conservation and stewardship via our Lebanon County Conservation Awards Celebration.
 - * Involve more staff and directors in opportunities before the County Commissioners (show & tell about District events: tree sale/flower bulb sale, Envirothons & watershed forums, etc.).
 - * Participate as a pilot county in the PACD marketing project.

DISTRICT OPERATIONS

- Form a team to explore and help with a strategic plan for potential transition to an independent conservation district.
- Improve Conservation District intragency (staff, directors, associate directors) cooperation and participation in all district operations.
 - * Seek possible sources of local, state, federal, and private resources available for district programs and special projects.
 - * Continue to maintain a current computer network (i.e.- Maintain a cooperative partnership with the County/City of Lebanon GIS and other partners).

- * Facilitate director, associate director, nominating organization, and auxiliary roles. Invite Directors and Associate Directors to participate more in district operations and activities such as communication, performance evaluations, budget hearings and outreach/program promotion.
- * Encourage nominating organizations to submit director nominations.
- * Investigate ways to improve employee retention to maintain customer services.
- * Offer a student internship to assist with district projects and programs.
- * Support professional development of staff.
- * To remain sustainable the District will continue to recover costs on administration of all programs, and to offer a quality level of service.
- * Investigate purchase and maintenance of non-USDA personal computers for completing projects such as bookkeeping, mapping, and website maintenance that may not be compliant with the USDA Common Computing Environment (hereafter CCE).
- * Research and implement a computer network solution that considers remaining on the USDA CCE server.