

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a river scene. In the foreground, several large, cut logs are floating in the water, arranged in a line. The riverbank is covered with a dense layer of light-colored, textured material, possibly straw or hay, which appears to be part of a restoration project. In the background, there is a line of trees, some of which are bare, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting. The overall tone of the image is somewhat muted and naturalistic.

Cameron County Conservation District

74 East 3rd Street
Emporium, PA 15834

Annual Report 2020

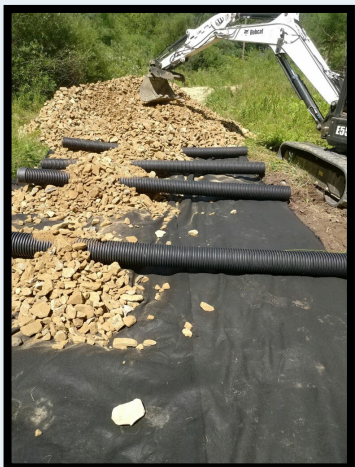


Table of Contents

From the Chairman.....	Pg. 3
District Board & Staff.....	Pg. 4
In Memoriam	Pg. 5
Conservation Education.....	Pg. 6-7
The Wild Envirothon.....	Pg. 8
Trout in the Classroom	Pg. 9
Recycling in Cameron County.....	Pg. 10
Garden beds at Woodland Elementary	Pg. 11
Erosion & Sedimentation and Waterways & Wetlands	Pg. 12
Natural Gas Development	Pg. 12
Agriculture in review	Pg. 13
Watershed in Review.....	Pg. 14-16
Dirt and Gravel & Low Volume Roads	Pg. 17
Bucktail Watershed Association	Pg. 18
Corporative Agencies.....	Pg. 19
2020 Picture Review	Pg. 20



From the Chairman

2020 was a difficult year! Isn't that an understatement? Sickness death, fear and isolation rampaged our world. Our personal and social freedoms were restricted, limited, or eliminated. Political scandal, turmoil, and waste rose to new heights, while trust and confidence in government wore thin. Our precious 1st amendment was tested, battle lines were drawn, and the once neutral press took political sides. The recent robust economy was wrecked overnight and brought to its knees. People were frightened, disillusioned, and heartbroken over so many losses of friends and relatives.

WHAT A MESS!

We're still neck-deep in all of this, but I believe we've turned a corner for the better. Present conditions will eventually subside and we'll return to just about what we had before, although some "new normals" will prevail.

Cameron County, aka "Our little piece of paradise" will still stand strong! Our mountains and streams, forests and wildlife, clean air and water will remain unshaken, as it has through this

pandemic-something we all can count on and always fall back on!

We at the Cameron County Conservation District will continue to strive to keep it that way.



Here's to hoping that the "new normal" for Cameron County remains strong, peaceful, and as pristine as we've all come to depend upon .

Mark Johnson



[Envirothon student Wes Walters presents one of his photos to District Manager, Todd Deluccia.](#)



[Axolotl, a Mexican Walking Fish, is the District's office pet.](#)



[Stream study in Bobby's Run, with Western PA Conservancy](#)



District Board & Staff

2020 District Board of Directors

Mark Johnson, Chairman
 Paul Lyon, Vice-Chairman
 Shawn Mason, Treasurer
 Kirk Baine, Secretary
 Lori Reed, Commissioner
 Bill Pearson, Public
 Steve Zoschg, Farmer

Associate Directors

Marsha Hendrickson
 Brian Gillette
 Steve VanEerden

District Staff

Todd Deluccia, District Manager
 Jim Zoschg Jr., Conservation Resource Technician
 Jon-Marc Burdick, Watershed Specialist
 Jennifer Dixon, Administrative Assistant



District Staff from left to right: Todd Deluccia, Jenn Dixon, Jim Zoschg Jr., and Jon-Marc Burdick

In Memoriam



In April of 2020, the District lost Associate Director and friend , Dr. Joseph “Doc” Blackburn. Born and raised in Danville, PA; Doc, along side his late wife Sherley, spent most of his life in the hills of Cameron County, where he practiced General Family Medicine. Doc spent several years as an Associate Director for the Cameron County Conservation District, where his love for the outdoors gained him the nickname “Wandering Joe.” Doc was a humble and quiet man, who’s spirit will be missed by not only the District Board, but the community as well.

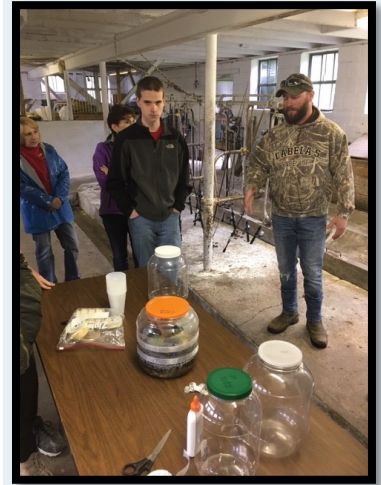
District Welcomes

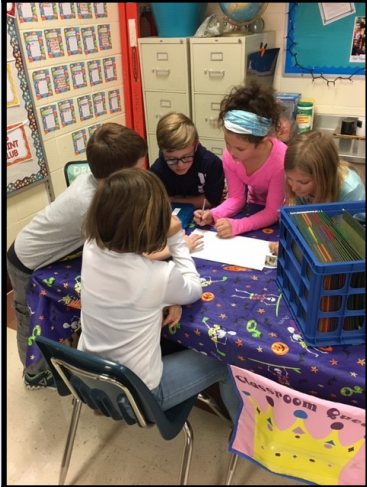
The District welcomes Cameron County Commissioner Lori Reed to the board in January of 2020. Lori, a native to Cameron County is in her second term as acting Cameron County



Commissioner. Lori brings to the board her love of the outdoors and dedication to the communities of Cameron County.

[District Chairman, Mark Johnson welcomes Commissioner, Lori Reed to the District Board.](#)





Conservation Education

In 2020 the District continued to reach out to the community of Cameron County to further Conservation Education practices. Although teachings were done a little different throughout the year, the District did manage to help outreach conservation education to our youth and adults of the community, via zoom meetings, social media, and in person settings.



[CCCD Conservation Resource Technician, Jim Zosch Jr., talks to local farmers at the Ag Producers Meeting.](#)

Conservation Education in School

The District makes monthly visits to Woodland Elementary School, to continue efforts of Conservation Education. In January and February the Districts, Jenn Dixon was able to present the H2O Olympics and Jeopardy Labs to the third-grade classes. Students were able to learn about water molecules, adhesion, and cohesion along with a recap competition of the first half of the year teachings.



[Third-grade students experiment the H2O Olympics](#)

The Kindergarten students at Woodland Elementary were presented the program Aqua Charades. The students learned about the animals in our area that live in water. Project Wilds First Impressions program was also presented, where students showed their first impression of select animals in our area. Unfortunately, after February the students from our local school district were sent to remote learning, and the District was unable to continue monthly visits.

Conservation Education - Remote Learning

In March the world saw a pandemic take presence throughout the nation. This made us teach conservation education in a new way. With the help of technology, the District was still able to reach our community by holding virtual lessons on conservation education. Wildlife and gardening were just some of the lessons taught through zoom meetings and social media. The District's Jenn Dixon, with the help of her children, held Facebook live videos showcasing recycling and building of trienniums. Daily posts to the public on nature hunts and hikes, recycling crafts, and nature in our community were just some more ways the District continued to reach out while we were all at home.



Nature hunt during a pandemic

Conservation District Youth Camp

In July the District held its first annual Conservation District Youth Camp at Andrews Farm for kids in third through eighth grade. Students spent the day outdoors studying fish in the Salt Run creek with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and building deer anatomy while they also learned Explore Bow Hunting with Cameron County Conservation District Manager, Todd Deluccia, and built homemade rain



Student shoots his deer anatomy box

gauges using recycled soda bottles with Jenn Dixon. The participants even

got the chance to shoot their built deer anatomy boxes with Woodland Elementary gym teacher, Nick Keller.



Deer Anatomy with Todd Deluccia

2020 Envirothon Participants

Seniors:

- Dalton Ball (4 Yr.)
- Caleb Reider
- Eliza Farabaugh
- Albert Haynes

Juniors:

- Sarah Abratis
- Wes Walters
- Reggie Goodrow
- Natalie Zucal
- Kaylie Bresslin

Freshmen

- Devin Streich



4 year Wild Envirothon participant
Dalton Ball

The Wild Envirothon

Although the Wild Envirothon competition was cancelled for the 2020 year, students from across Pennsylvania still had the opportunity to test their knowledge in the subjects of Aquatics, Wildlife, Forestry, Soil and Land Use, and a Current Event Issue during a week long virtual competition held in May.

Four students from Cameron County School District participated in the online event. This week-long event had individuals complete a 20 question quiz that focused on one of the five station topics each day. Prizes of \$20 Amazon gift cards were awarded for each of the top-10 subject winners. Cameron County representative, Sarah Arbritas, was a top 10 winner in the Soils and Land Use station.

The online competition may not have been what the students like, but it still gave them the opportunity to utilize their knowledge and learning they had worked hard at throughout the year.



Trout in the Classroom

The 2019-2020 school year started off with excitement for third-grade students in Mr. Jones and Mrs. Wilsons classes at Woodland Elementary, as they prepared for their chance to raise trout in the classroom. The District once again was on hand to present monthly programs that revolve around the Trout in the Classroom program, along with the classes general science learning. Throughout the year, students were introduced to conservation education, learning about wildlife, aquatics, life cycles and more. Program curriculum such as Project Wet, Project Wild, Growing up Wild and others were used to help bring a fun and creative understanding to the class.

The students once again raised rainbow trout from egg to fingerling stage throughout the school year in their classroom. Although this year they were unable to release their raised trout themselves in a certified stream, the District and CCOYA's, Don Bickford did release the raised trout for the students.



[Above Picture: Third-grade class at Woodland Elementary school, Trout in the Classroom.](#)



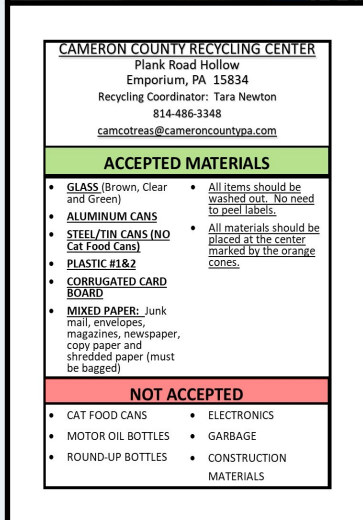
[Left Picture: The District's, Jenn Dixon presented conifer tree life cycle to third-grade students at Woodland Elementary](#)

Recycling in Cameron County

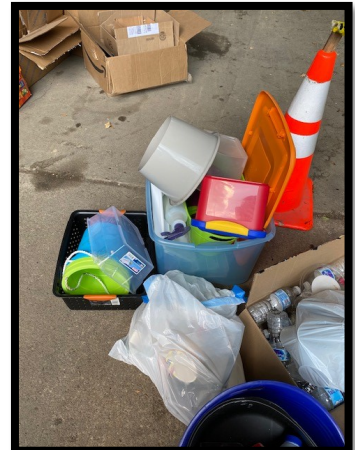
Recycling collections in Cameron County continue to grow more every year. The District, along with the Cameron County Recycling Collections crew, has worked hard to help educate the community on proper and safe ways to collect plastics, aluminum, cardboard, paper and glass. Holding workshops, posting announcements on social media and newspaper articles are just some of the ways to reach out to the community.

The Cameron County School District continued to work with the District on paper collections in both the Woodland Elementary and Cameron County High School. Although the 2019-2020 school collections were cut short due to Covid shutdowns, the School District managed to collect 1,411 lbs. of paper for the year. Although there will be no collections in the 2021 school year, we plan on starting collections again in the 2022 school year.

Collection Date	Woodland	High School	Total
12/19/19	222	246	468
11/14/19	198	205	403
10/24/19	242	298	540



Recycling's from the Cameron County Recycling Center



Garden beds at Woodland Elementary

In the spring of 2020, Brian Lovett, a teacher at Woodland Elementary School, reached out to the District's Jenn Dixon to help bring back to life the garden beds that once flourished at the grounds of the school. Reestablishing the garden beds gives the teachers a hands-on experience teaching the students the science behind growing their own food.

The District, along with the help from Jill Perry of the Emporium Garden Club, and the employees at Webtec Corporation in Emporium were able to start construction on a new set of garden beds in June. A grant that was secured by the Emporium Garden Club through the National Garden Club, Inc. helped to purchase materials needed to bring these beds back to life.

Summer planting of pumpkins and potatoes gave the students something to harvest in the fall, along with their own radishes they planted from seed. The time spent in the garden has made a great impact on the students. In the spring of 2021, the classes will begin preparations for a spring harvest of lettuce and radishes.



Above: Woodland Elementary teacher, Brian Lovett, waters potatoes with a student.

Below: Third-grade students with their harvest.



Erosion and Sediment and Waterways and Wetlands

In 2020 the District saw a slight increase in stream permits issued through the Chapter 105 Program, while the number of erosion and sedimentation control plans reviewed also increased compared to 2019's statistics.

We received one NPDES permit last year for the Driftwood Telecommunication Site.

The District was also able to offer technical assistance to a number of landowners throughout the year in regards to the Chapter 105 and 102 programs.

During the course of the year, the District approved seventeen general permit registrations in the Chapter 105 program, seven of which were for habitat work or streambank erosion control that incorporated habitat structures. We approved nineteen E&S Control Plans. Seventeen of the plans were associated with General Permits in the Chapter 105 program and two involved timber harvests.

Natural Gas Development

In 2020 there was a significant increase in natural gas activity in Cameron County compared to the previous year. The following information is a summary of natural gas well development from the Department of Environmental Protection's Oil and Gas Management website.

Twenty-four (4 in 2019) nonconventional (deep) wells were drilled last year in the county. However, twenty-six (17 in 2019) permits for nonconventional natural gas wells were issued for Cameron County. No permits were issued for conventional (shallow) gas wells last year, nor were any drilled.

There are currently 153 active natural gas wells in the county, of which ninety-three are unconventional wells located on seventeen different well pads. There are sixty-three wells that DEP considers abandoned in Cameron County. However, only twenty of those were ever gas producing. Forty-three were drilled, found to be dry, and then were left without being plugged. These abandoned wells are decades old and were drilled before modern-day regulations. Overall, the Department conducted 583 inspections at natural gas well sites in Cameron County last year. Four violations were noted on Seneca Resources' well sites during these inspections. Outstanding violations were noted against Seneca Resources for an event that occurred in August 2019 that polluted groundwater. A new violation occurred in August of 2020 when production fluids were released after equipment failure. Two follow up inspections noted that this violation was outstanding.

Agricultural Conservation Review

The Conservation District continued its work with the agricultural community in Cameron County in 2020 through the challenges of the CoVid-19 pandemic. In February the 17th Annual Agricultural Producers' Meeting was held. Attendees heard from different agency staff and were able to earn pesticide license credits through the program.

Several agricultural best management practices were installed on Toby Nelson's farm in June through a grant that Toby received from the DEP Small Business Advantage Grant Program and with matching grant funds from the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed Grant Program. A manure storage building was constructed on Junior Grimone's farm in September and rain gutters were installed on his pig barn through a DEP 2017 Growing Greener Grant received by

Headwaters RC&D Council. In December the Conservation District assisted Bill and Cathy Lyon with the installation of a water holding tank that will be used as part of the watering system for a Natural Resource Conservation Service rotational grazing project on the farm.



[Best Management Practices being installed on the Lyon Farm.](#)

When the pandemic permitted, outreach efforts continued with the local agricultural producers. To date, Conservation District staff have been able to meet with the majority of local ag producers.



[Manure storage building constructed on the Grimone Farm.](#)



Watershed in Review

2020 was a busy year with stream restoration projects. Eight streambank stabilization and fish habitat enhancement projects, Six aquatic organism passage (AOP) sites, and two stream access projects, and one acid mine drainage (AMD) treatment project were completed.

Two projects were completed along Sinnemahoning Portage Creek. The Petra Stabilization was a site that had a severely eroded bank of approximately 300 feet. A 100-foot long rootwad reclamation and four log framed stone deflectors were installed along the bank to create habitat and turn water away from the eroded bank. The Morgan Stabilization consisted of a couple smaller sites within a larger property that totaled approximately 400 feet in length. Along this stretch various techniques were used to stabilize the banks and create high quality fish habitat. A log crossvane, two log framed stone deflectors, four single log deflectors and a 100– foot rootwad reclamation were installed.



[Morgan Stabilization](#)

The 3 Brothers Camp Stabilization was completed in Finley Run. A 100-foot long and 6-foot high bank was severely eroded along 100 feet of the stream and was threatening to wash away the driveway, thus adding sediment into the waterway. A 100-foot long modified mudsill was installed there to curb the erosion and provide overhead cover for the fish.

Two sites were also completed on the Driftwood Branch of Sinnemahoning Creek. In 2018 the District installed a canoe launch in the Borough of Driftwood at the confluence of the Driftwood Branch and Bennetts Branch. Upstream on the Driftwood some erosion was occurring. This bank is approximately 300' long and 8' high. In 2020 the District installed a 300 foot long random log restoration. Two loads of logs were installed randomly and rip rap was placed to stabilize the bank and hold down the logs as well. The randomness of the logs just added a diversity of pocket water against the bank and is great holding water for trout, bass and other inhabitants of the Driftwood. The Mason Stabilization was completed at the Mason Farm. This bank is approximately 800' and was beginning to erode, threatening the loss of crop land which is priceless in Cameron County. Ten log framed stone deflectors were installed along this stretch to create a little habitat, in addition to stopping erosion. The deflectors should build some sediment against the bank to further stabilize the site.



[Driftwood Branch 300' long random log restoration](#)

Watershed in Review Continued

We worked with DEP's Emergency Watershed Protection program to do a stabilization project in Plank Road Hollow at the Kamatz property. Plank Road Hollow is a very narrow, steep watershed that has flooding issues. Over the years the stream had started to erode away the bank in front of the home, threatening the home itself. A 60-inch diameter pipe was installed along a 60-foot stream.

The District has also been assisting the Wycoff Run Cooperative Fish Hatchery for the past few year with fish habitat enhancement. This area of Wycoff Run is also a childrens only fishing project. The intake for the hatchery was having issues with plugging and in 2020 the District assisted with the construction of a log crossvane and new pipe to ensure adequate flow to the hatchery.

The District partnered with PA Fish and Boat Commission and DCNR staff to install large woody debris addition to Upper Jerry Run. This waterway is a beautiful stereotypical Class A wild trout stream, but it had a little room for improvement. Over several days the team dropped trees into stream to provide a natural cover which is great habitat. It also helps with spawning habitat by allowing fine gravel to settle out in various locations. The project was completed on approximately 6 miles of Upper Jerry Run.

The eight stabilization and fish habitat enhancement projects created miles of habitat , as well as halted erosion and sedimentation entering Cameron County Waterways. The District has been operating our stream restoration program now for nearly 20 years with well over 100 sites completed and miles of stabilization and high quality habitat installed.

The District worked to on two stream access sites for the area. The streambank that was used to access the stream at the Sterling Run Playground was stabilized, to protect it from erosion. The second site was at the Barclay Complex owned by Grove Township on Sinnemahoning Creek. For years locals and tourist have used the site as an informal boat launch and recreation area. Over the years many have driven down the access, this is combined with flooding, created a large mud hole making it difficult to use the access. The District installed a 150-foot long concrete launch for ease of access and to allow for easy cleanup of sediment when flooding occurs.



[Jerry Run woody debris natural fish habitat](#)



[Barclay Canoe Launch](#)

Watershed in Review Continued

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and the District partnered in Bobby's Run to complete 6 aquatic organism passage projects. Old bridges and culvert pipes were impeding fish passage in this wild trout stream. These structures were pulled and ADM steel beam bridges were installed. These bridges are very quick and cheap to install and allow a natural stream habitat through the stream road interface. Preliminary electrofishing surveys have proven success with fish passage in the watershed and should go a long way in the overall health of Bobby's Run.



[Bobby's Run AOP](#)

The cleanup of the Sterling Run drainage has been a major goal of the Conservation District for well over 20 years. In the last year or so, our efforts have been strong enough to bring many of the streams we are working on up to Class A status including Finley Run, Portable Run, and Sterling Run. However some work is still needed in areas. In 2020 the District completed the Retrofit of our May Hollow 49 treatment system. Flows had increased coming out of the deep mine due to some recent logging activity. This made the system ineffective during high flows. A third vertical flow wetland was installed to ramp up the treatment. Now the system is performing flawlessly. We are also continuing to work on 3 other treatment systems, which may be enough to completely restore the watershed. In 2021 we will be constructing these 3 systems at the FIN74, FIN5253, and MAYH10 discharges.

It is exciting to see us wrapping these projects up and seeing the fruits of our labor. 2020 was a great year with a lot of work being completed. The 2021 construction season is sure to be another big one with another eight fish habitat and streambank stabilization projects and the three AMD projects to complete.



[AMD May Hollow 49 Retro Fit](#)

Dirt & Gravel and Low Volume Roads

The Conservation District continues to work with Townships in Cameron County on the Dirt and Gravel and Low Volume Road program. The purpose of the program is to do environmentally sensitive maintenance to protect waterways.

The Quality Assurance Board met to approve new projects in 2020. Two new projects were funded under the dirt road portion of funding. Shippen Township was awarded \$23,200 for the repair of a 150' long slide on Sizer Run Road. The Township completed the project in 2020, as well. A geosynthetic reinforced wall was built using waste concrete blocks and geo fabric to tie the block into the stable portion of the road. Fill was then, placed in 1-foot lifts and compacted to ensure stability. Two crosspipes were installed, as well. Lumber Township was awarded \$89,308 for work on the Hunts Run Road. The project will be the repair of two slides approximately 150' in length, the installation of 30 cross pipes and 1,800' of underdrain to improve drainage. In 2020 Lumber Township was able to begin a portion of the project, and one of the two slides was repaired again using a geosynthetic reinforced wall. Several of the crosspipes were installed in 2020. The remainder of construction will take place in 2021.



[Sizer Run Road slide repair](#)



[Plank Road Hollow Pipe Replacement](#)

The long-awaited completion of the Plank Road Hollow Low Volume Road project has finally happened. This project was located in Shippen Township and was the replacement a 950-foot stream enclosure. The existing pipe was severely undersized, causing erosion and flooding issues and damaging the road. A portion of the stream enclosure also was under a home, as well, requiring the stream to be moved. The enclosure was replaced with a 66"x 51" corrugated metal pipe that will effectively take high flows and minimize erosion.

The District continues to work with Gibson and Grove Townships on the Jerry Run Road. The project has various funding sources including DGR/LVR, PA Fish and Boat Commission, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. This project involves the application of DSA (driving surface aggregate) to approximately 6 miles of Jerry Run Road to minimize runoff into this pristine waterway. The District is also working with Gibson on the Nanny Run Aquatic Organism Passage LVR project on Mix Run Road. Both of these projects will be completed in 2021.

Bucktail Watershed Association

The Cameron County Conservation District continued the work of SIPMA by coordinating spray treatments for invasive plants in Cameron County. With the help of Heather McKean and Vegetation Mangers Inc., local invasive spraying companies, 355 acres of land and 50 miles of stream corridor along the Driftwood and First Fork branches of the Sinnemahoning Creek were treated. Funding for this program was made possible by grants secured through Growing Greener, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and Headwaters RC&D Council.

Invasive plants that were treated throughout Cameron County include:

- Mile-a-Minute
- Japanese Knotweed
- Poison Hemlock
- Lesser Celandine
- Goatsrue
- Tree of Heaven

A new invasive plant added to the spraying list in our area for 2020, is the Tree of Heaven. The Tree of Heaven plays a critical role in the life cycle of an invasive insect, the Spotted Lanternfly. The Spotted Lanternfly is a invasive planthopper that feeds on the sap of a plant and can cause fatal damage to those plants. This past year Spotted Lanternfly was discovered in Driftwood, PA, while treating tree of heaven.



[Spotted Lanternfly Adult](#)



[Tree of Heaven](#)



[Japanese Knotweed](#)



[Lesser Celandine](#)



[Mile-a-Minute](#)



[Poison Hemlock](#)

Corporative Agencies

Bucktail Watershed Association

Steve VanEerden, Chair
P.O. Box 123
Emporium, PA 15834
info@bucktailwatershed.com

Cameron County Commissioners

20 East 5th Street
Emporium, PA 15834

Cameron County Outdoor Youth Activities

Don Bickford
174 Nicklar Road
Emporium, PA 15834
www.ccoya.org

DCNR Borough of Forestry

Toby Herzing
258 Sizerville Road
Emporium, PA 15834
814-486-3353

DEP

208 West Third St., Suite 101
Williamsport, PA 17701
570-327-3636

Headwaters RC&D Council

Todd Deluccia
109 North Brady St., 2nd Floor
DuBois, PA 15801
814-503-8653

PA Fish & Boat Commission

450 Robinson Lane
Pleasant Gap, PA 16823
814-359-5127
www.fishandboat.com

PA Game Commission

P.O. Box 5038
Jersey Shore, PA 17740
570-398-4744

Penn State Extension

P.O. Box 1504
Smethport, PA 16749
814-887-5613

SIPMA

Steve Van Eerden
P.O. Box 123
Emporium, PA 15834

USDA Farm Agency

103 Market Street
Coudersport, PA 16915
814-274-8411

USDA/NRCS

Amanda Murdock
105 Market St.
Coudersport, PA 16915
814-320-4008



LEFT: Canoe launch in building stage.



RIGHT: Plank Road Hollow LVR Project



LEFT: Live stake planting by the District's Jim Zoschq Jr.



RIGHT: Timber Rattlesnake



LEFT: 2020 Envirothon team prepares for competition.



RIGHT: Trout released from 3rd grade Trout in the Classroom