

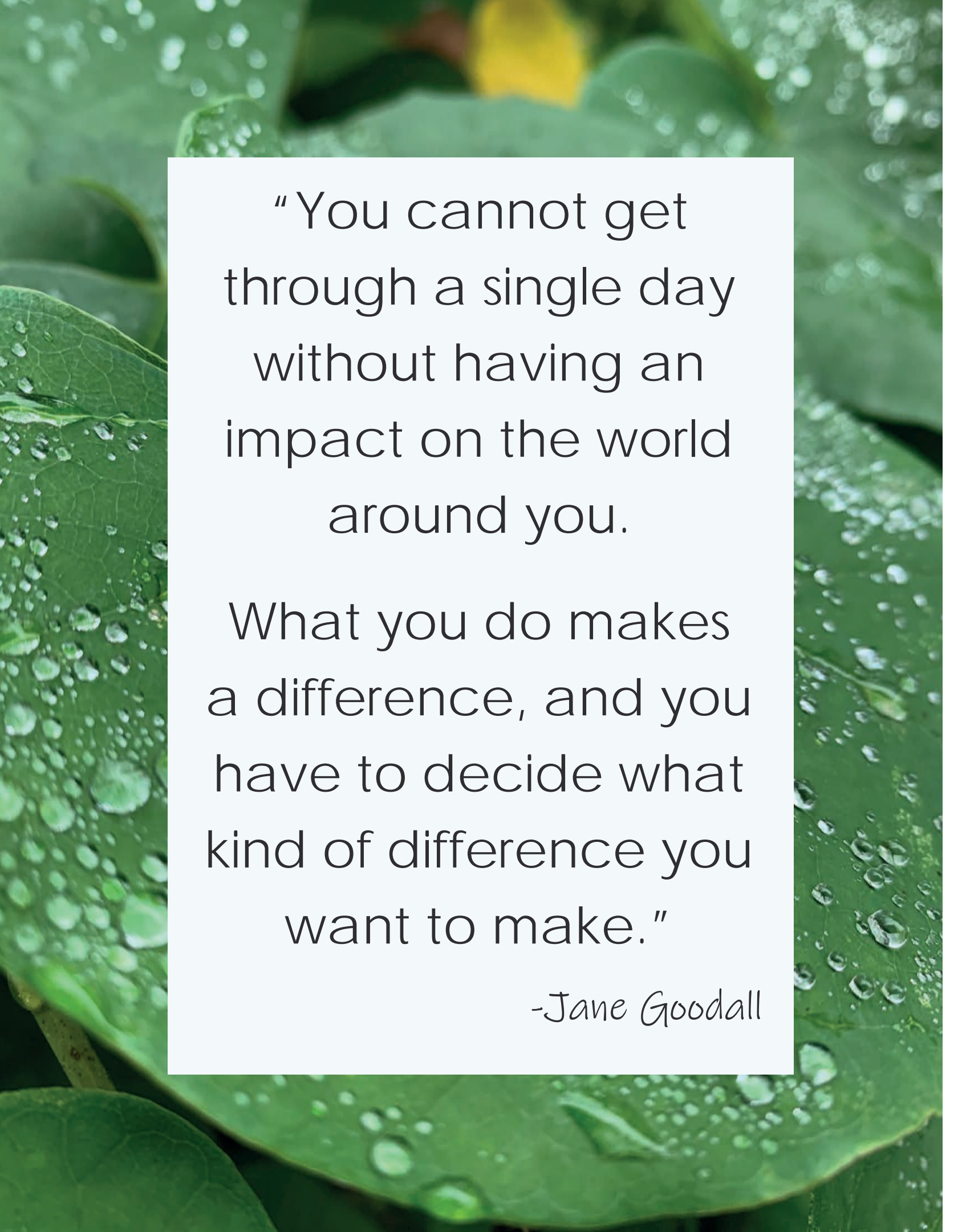


# INDIANA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT



BUILDING BRIDGES  
**2020 IN REVIEW**





“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you.

What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

*-Jane Goodall*

# CONTENT

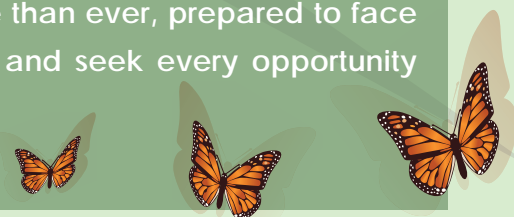
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## TALENT, TEAMWORK, AND TENACITY: Indiana County Conservation District Shines in a Momentous Year



As I contemplate the past 12 months and the considerable grief and trials that our country and our community have experienced, I am tempted to leave 2020 behind without reflection. But there are many accomplishments in this historic year which we must acknowledge, and yes, even celebrate. Facing the spread of a global pandemic, the District, like many agencies, organizations, and institutions, confronted enormous barriers and emerged sturdier and more agile than ever, prepared to face any challenge and seek every opportunity possible.



With design for the construction of our new office building and environmental education center finally completed, construction had just commenced when COVID-19 derailed plans. Undeterred, District personnel, under the visionary leadership of Manager Doug Beri Jr., swiftly set into motion plans to deliver all of its stellar programs and services without interruption. Office Administrator Tammie Robinson and her team conducted a virtual Envirothon, the first in the state of Pennsylvania! Congratulations to the Marion Center High School Bee Hive Five and United High School's Team 1 on being the first teams to win a virtual Envirothon. For this and her many significant contributions to the District, spanning nearly 40 years, the Evergreen Conservancy awarded the Evergreen Award to Tammie in 2020.

Another District winner was Dirt/Gravel,

& Low Volume Roads (DGLVR) Program Specialist Brooke Russick. Brooke garnered the title Conservation District Employee of the Year for 2020 from the PA Association of Conservation Districts for her work advising county and local officials through the rural road improvement program. To date since 1997, the DGLVR program has provided \$5,826,695 of funding towards rural roads infrastructure improvement projects and education.

Agriculture Specialist Curtis Swiantek exemplified steadfast commitment to one of Indiana County's leading industries, providing technical assistance and educational opportunities to the agriculture community without missing a beat, despite the constraints of the pandemic.



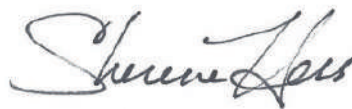
Also sustaining uninterrupted services to the District's clients despite pandemic related hurdles, Watershed Specialist Robert Sabo demonstrated his sharp professional skillset throughout the year, capably addressing the county's legacy water quality and ecosystem pollution spots; similarly, Resource Technician Samantha Dull carried out the District's delegated regulatory responsibilities such as Chapter 105, 102, and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) reviews with her usual veracity and timeliness. These are important actions that ensure economic and community development projects move forward, avoiding costly and exasperating delays.

Providing invaluable support for the staff were the District's Office Assistant Nancy Clawson and AmeriCorps individuals, Monica Lee and Tamathy Stage. Their contributions were key to achieving all the District's wins related to agricultural, environmental, economic development and community improvements in Indiana County in 2020.

Through all of the programmatic and regulatory work, we marveled as a parcel of vacant land was transformed to foundation, walls, and roof and finally, into the current ICCD

Headquarters and Environmental Education Center. It is a building that is exceedingly pleasing to the eye and will soon be a place where children and adults can learn and avail themselves of resources to advance their own conservation, environmental, and agriculture goals. We owe a debt of gratitude to those who contributed to bringing a dream to reality, into the splendid structure located at 435 Hamill Road, Indiana PA.

It may seem like I'm bragging, but I am simply incredibly proud of the District staff and former and current boards of directors for their commitment and talents used to overcome the barriers presented by a global pandemic and myriad hurdles that have arisen over the years. We are prepared to face and overcome challenges, employ innovative ideas, and pursue new opportunities. Here is to an outstanding 2021; I invite you to join us in this adventure!



Sherene Hess, Chair, ICCD  
Indiana County Commissioner



## LETTER FROM THE DISTRICT MANAGER

The year 2020 brought a wealth of challenges for the county, state and nation. COVID-19 continues to change the way we operate as a community. Through those challenges, however, the District has persevered, showing that we can overcome any obstacle that crosses our path.

We were able to transition to remote work throughout much of 2020, while still delivering the same quality services that county residents have come to expect from our office. We expanded our capacity by creating an Education and Outreach Coordinator AmeriCorps position. Additionally, the new office and education center grew closer to completion.

The District installed its first bridge in Green Township this year, paving the way for a different approach to future stream crossing projects. Beyond that, the District planted nearly 1000 trees across three riparian buffer projects, installed 3000 FT of rotational grazing fencing, and replaced eight undersized stream culverts.

District staff became experts at video conferences and webinars! During conservation week we launched our first series of videos showcasing our projects and programs. Despite challenges with COVID, we were the first District to host a virtual Senior Envirothon competition and were able to move forward with a virtual Junior Envirothon competition featuring instructional videos created by staff and partner organizations.



2020 has shown us that the Conservation District is stronger than it has ever been. We are positioned to reach new heights in programming, and strengthen our significance in community and economic development while maintaining our core mission of conserving and restoring our county's natural resources.

Together with the community and our numerous partners, we will continue to bridge gaps in natural resource management, delivering a bright and sustainable future to our county residents.

Kind Regards,



Douglas M. Beri Jr.  
District Manager





# BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

After breaking ground in December of 2019, contractors started construction of the new Office and Education Center. Throughout 2020, a six-acre parcel was transformed into the new home of the Conservation District. The 7,377 SQFT facility houses an education center, conference room, and eight offices for District staff. The property also has significant space to bolster outdoor learning opportunities for county residents, as well as students from both the Indiana County Technology Center and Westmoreland County Community College.

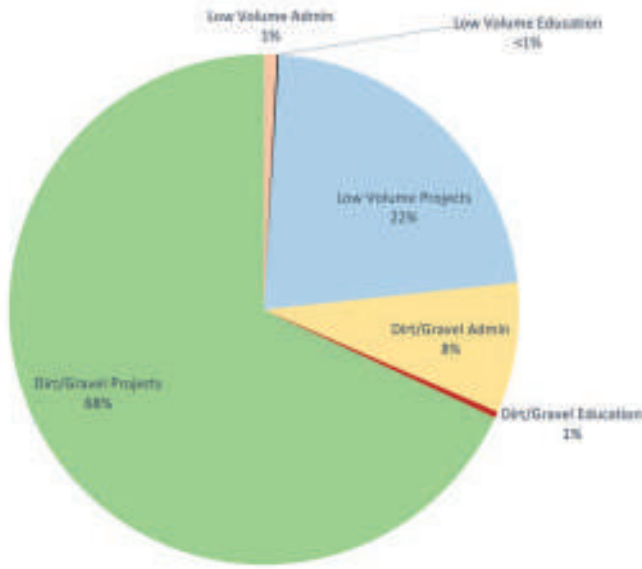


The new facility will give District staff an opportunity to stretch the reaches of their programs by filling educational gaps in the community in the subjects of conservation, natural resource management, and agriculture. In early 2021, staff took occupancy of the new facility and are working to develop plans to expand the outdoor learning facilities for the building grounds.



# DIRT/GRAVEL AND LOW VOLUME ROADS

2020 DGLVR Program Expenditures



Every year ICCD works with public road owners through the Dirt/Gravel, & Low Volume Roads (DGLVR) Maintenance Program. In 2020, ICCD funded seven road projects in six municipalities to minimize roadway impacts on streams, while also decreasing long-term maintenance costs. Over \$556,000 funded dirt and gravel road improvements and \$158,000 funded low-volume road improvements.

## Grant Township, Lentz Road



Lentz Road was a typical rural township road. It was narrow from years of grading and had deep ditches that ran hundreds of feet directly to a stream. With no budget to fix it, roadside springs and residential runoff kept ditches wet year-round. The ditches drained directly to Rairigh Run, a high quality stream with native brook trout reproduction, which made it a high priority for DGLVR funding. The township worked with a contractor to install 680 feet of underdrain, three new crosspipes, and over 1400 tons of slate fill. The next proposed phase is to cap the slate with aggregate to give a stable, permanent driving surface. The project was funded with \$25,274 from ICCD Dirt and Gravel grant funds and \$7,717 in township in-kind contributions.



# 2020 DGLVR PROJECTS

This map shows projects funded with fiscal year 2020 funds from the Dirt/Gravel and Low Volume Road Program.



- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Grant Twp, Mumau Rd          | 5. Armstrong Twp, Union Flat Rd      |
| 2. Grant Twp, Magnolia Rd       | 6. Burrell Twp, Hill Drive           |
| 3. East Mahoning Twp, Steele Rd | 7. East Wheatfield Twp, McFeaters Rd |
| 4. Washington Twp, Brewer Rd    |                                      |

Dirt/Gravel and Low Volume Roads

# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## Green Township, Barr Road

Featured in our 2019 annual report, this dirt road was nearly lost in a heavy rain event in 2018. During an intense summer storm, a 5 FT plastic pipe was overwhelmed and flooded the road. This crossing is on Whitaker Run, a high-quality stream with native trout reproduction. Replacing this crossing was not only a priority for public safety, but a priority for ICCD to improve our natural resources. ICCD consulted with Trout Unlimited and the Penn State Center for Dirt & Gravel Road Studies to determine that a bridge structure spanning over the entire stream channel was the most effective and efficient means of replacement.



Before



During



Building Bridges to Cleaner Streams





During



After

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

A pre-fabricated bridge with a 50 FT long deck was installed to span the 27 FT wide stream. This bridge will now easily pass a 500 year storm with engineering estimates indicating that it will pass nearly three times the 500 year storm. It is the most dramatic stream improvement we have completed in which we have completely restored the stream channel to its natural state.

### FUNDING SOURCES AND PROJECT COSTS

- \$74,423 — ICCD Dirt & Gravel Road grant funds
- \$111,979 — Penn State Center for Dirt/Gravel Road Studies demonstration funds
- \$1,000 – Green Township in-kind contributions

### PROJECT PARTNERS

Green Township, Trout Unlimited, Penn State Center for Dirt/Gravel Road Studies



# Dirt/Gravel and Low Volume Roads

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### Banks Township, Sidney Road

Sidney Road crosses over Keal Run, a stream with native brook trout reproduction, with a severely undersized culvert. The crossing was a barrier to aquatic organisms moving upstream and was a high priority for replacement by our partner, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Although in a remote corner of the county, it is within State Game Lands and open for anglers to enjoy for the next 100 years.



Before



After

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The previous crossing was a 5 FT round plastic pipe that created a large scour hole at the outlet. A 10 FT wide concrete box culvert was installed to reconnect the stream channel through the culvert, restoring it to its natural state. This project eliminated a significant barrier to aquatic organism passage.

### FUNDING SOURCES AND PROJECT COSTS

\$187,780 — ICCD Dirt/Gravel Road grant funds  
\$500 — Banks Township in-kind contributions



## Dirt/Gravel and Low Volume Roads

# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### Canoe Township, Stiver Road



Canoe Township had a deteriorating stream crossing on Stiver Road. The bottoms were rusted away and the twin pipes were a constant source of maintenance requiring the Township to unclog debris and fight beavers building dams within the pipes. Twin pipes are always eligible for replacement with DGLVR funds if they are replaced with one opening, spanning bankfull width or larger.



Before



After

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The twin 7 FT pipes were replaced with one aluminum box culvert over 16 FT wide and nearly 7 FT high. The pipe was recessed into the streambed two feet to bury the bottom plate, mimic the natural stream channel, and ensure stream connectivity. In the after picture, you can see the reconstructed low-flow channel with bank margins which help to ensure aquatic organism passage in dry periods.

### FUNDING SOURCES AND PROJECT COSTS

\$116,001 — ICCD Dirt & Gravel Road grant funds  
\$3,789 — Canoe Township in-kind contributions

## Dirt/Gravel and Low Volume Roads

# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## Brush Valley Township, Littletown Road

Brush Valley Township had a mess on their hands on Littletown Road. The problem was common: a small tributary to the South Branch Brush Creek was washing out the roadway. The solution, however, was not as simple as replacing the Township culvert. Merely 30 feet upstream from the road was a garage and culvert in the stream channel that severely blocked stream flow. Whenever that culvert plugged, the stream washed down the public roadway. It was critical that those off right-of-way obstructions be addressed as part of the project. The Township worked closely with the landowner to gain permission to fully remove both structures on the upstream channel.



Inlet of previous 2.5 FT pipe and inlet of new box culvert and upstream restoration.



Before



After



Top Photo: Upstream channel with garage and cast in place culvert causing roadway flooding  
Bottom Photo: Newly restored stream channel



Before



After

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The culvert under Littletown Road was replaced with a 10 FT wide by 4 FT high concrete box culvert and approximately 50 FT of the upstream channel was restored. This project removed a significant barrier to aquatic organism passage, restored the natural stream channel, and reduced flooding risk to neighboring homeowners.

## FUNDING SOURCES AND PROJECT COSTS

\$92,736 — ICCD Low Volume Roads grant funds

\$4,992 — Brush Valley Township in-kind contributions

Better Roads, Cleaner Streams



# AGRICULTURE



Agriculture is a key cornerstone of the foundation of the District. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Indiana County has 951 farms that comprise a total of 148,288 acres, with 58% being used for crops compared to 42% for livestock, poultry, and other products. Despite the pandemic throughout 2020, the District continued to provide technical assistance to agricultural producers in the county.

In partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the District provided technical assistance and program availability visits to farmers throughout the county regarding drought management, best management practices, soil health, and funding assistance. Additionally, several farm visits were conducted to provide manure management assistance and Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP) application guidance.

The District also provided assistance to the county Farmland Easement Board by completing inspections of ten preserved farms during the summer. Additionally, the District assisted with ranking 22 farm applications for preservation, which led to an additional 80 acres being preserved from future development.

Farming remains one of the most important industries in Indiana County. The District continues to serve our farming community by implementing best management practices to reduce soil and nutrient loss, thereby making the farm more profitable while cleaning up our streams in the process.





## Agriculture

# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## Poverty Hill Farm, West Wheatfield Township

During heavy rain events, Hires Run would become inundated with sediment runoff, in part due to agricultural activities upstream. Buttermilk Falls, located in an Indiana County Park, would turn brown during these episodic events, negatively impacting the aquatic ecosystem and popular tourist destination. Through a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection, the District worked with the local farmer to address these agricultural impacts by installing streambank fencing, rotational grazing systems, stabilized watering points, and riparian buffer plantings.



### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

- 3000 FT of division and streambank fencing was installed on 20 acres of grazed pasture, enabling the farmer to have four paddocks and a sacrifice lot to rotate cattle.
- 700 FT of water line was installed to three new watering points to limit the cattle in the stream for watering.
- A 400 FT stabilized walkway was installed to allow cattle to move from the paddocks to the barn without causing erosion.
- One stabilized access point was added to the stream for watering cattle.
- Nearly three acres around Hires Run were fenced off and planted with trees and shrubs to enhance the riparian buffer zone and prevent future erosion of the streambank.
- Educational signage about the project is planned to be installed at Buttermilk Falls County Park.

### FUNDING SOURCES AND PROJECT COSTS

\$88,152 — Department of Environmental Protection Mariner East 2 Pipeline Penalty Funds

# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## Urban Agriculture

Agriculture has the power to transform communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught society concepts that many of us already knew. It is critically important to know where your food comes from, to buy your food from local farmers, and to support local businesses that source foods from local regions. Throughout the pandemic, food insecurity became an even more significant challenge for many Americans.

Urban agriculture provides the means to supply locally grown foods and create greenspace that benefits overall community health. To help move Indiana forward, the District applied for and received a grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts to provide opportunities for urban agriculture. This project was built on partnerships with various community organizations and featured urban agriculture webinars and the installation of a pollinator meadow at the Indiana Community Garden.

In order to plant the pollinator meadow, tarps were used to kill the existing lawn vegetation. Once the land was ready, volunteers raked the soil, planted various native herbaceous perennials, and seeded the site with a native grass and flower mix to attract bees, butterflies, and other pollinators. Over the summer, volunteers worked to pull weeds that came up in the wildflower meadow as it was getting established.







## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

- District staff partnered with the Indiana Community Garden at Mack Park to create a 5,812 SQFT pollinator meadow to serve as a community demonstration while supporting pollinator habitat and increasing crop yields for existing edible garden plots.
- District staff held the first of three Urban Agriculture webinars focused on backyard conservation on December 10, 2020. Participants learned how to prepare gardens for the winter, as well as the purposes and progress of riparian buffers in the region. Over 20 participants attended the webinar or viewed the recording.

## FUNDING SOURCES AND PROJECT COSTS

\$28,769.92— National Association of Conservation Districts

## PROJECT PARTNERS

Indiana County Conservation District, Indiana Community Garden, National Association of Conservation Districts, Mack Park



# WATERSHEDS



A watershed is an area of land that drains into a common body of water. Everyone lives in a watershed! Indiana County has an abundance of flowing freshwater; however, much of it is plagued with pollution. The District works to address sources of pollution including abandoned mine drainage, sediment, and nutrients. Every year the District conducts watershed assessments, develops implementation plans, oversees restoration projects, provides capacity-building technical assistance to watershed organizations, and conducts public education and outreach events.

Despite the restrictions of the pandemic in 2020, the District provided technical assistance to Indiana County’s eight watershed associations, as well as the Ken Sink Chapter of Trout Unlimited and Conemaugh Valley Conservancy. We also worked to plan several future projects and were awarded nearly a half million dollars from the Department of Environmental Protection’s Growing Greener Plus program to rehabilitate the Lucerne 3A/Waterworks abandoned mine drainage treatment system located on Twolick Creek.





## Watersheds

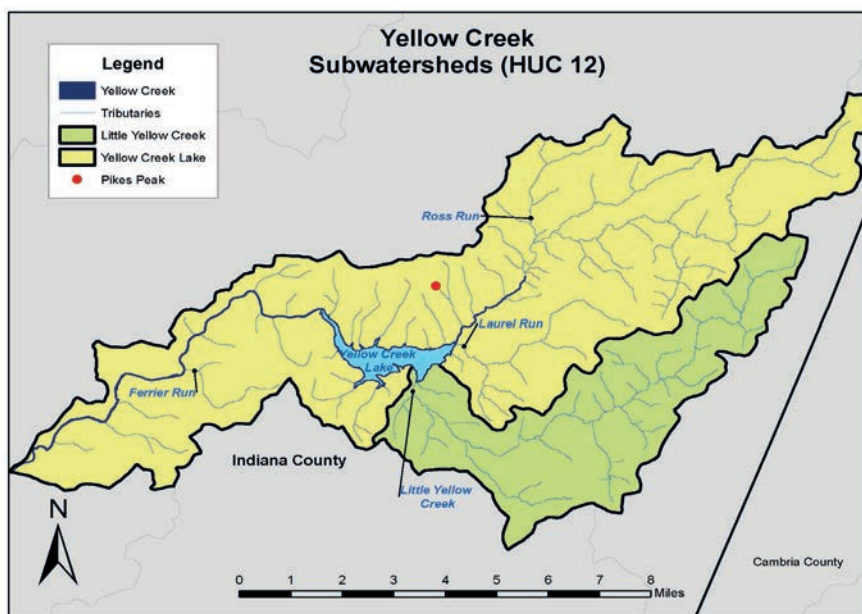
# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## Yellow Creek QHUP

In partnership with Blacklick Creek Watershed Association and Hedin Environmental, the District is working to conduct water sampling and data analysis as part of the initial components necessary for designating the Yellow Creek Watershed as a Qualified Hydrologic Unit (QHUP). This plan will open up future funding opportunities for the watershed to clean up abandoned mine drainage and is expected to be completed in 2021. Abandoned mine drainage is water that is polluted from mining activity that occurred before the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) of 1977. In Indiana County this is primarily a result of abandoned coal mining operations. This water can contain high acidity and heavy metal concentrations that coat streambeds and kill macroinvertebrates, leaving the stream devoid of life. Planning is essential to prioritize abandoned mine drainage discharges throughout a watershed to ensure a thoughtful and targeted approach to improving water quality.



Staff and volunteers sampling as part of the Yellow Creek QHUP project.



## FUNDING SOURCES AND PROJECT COSTS

\$83,624— Department of Environmental Protection Growing Greener Plus

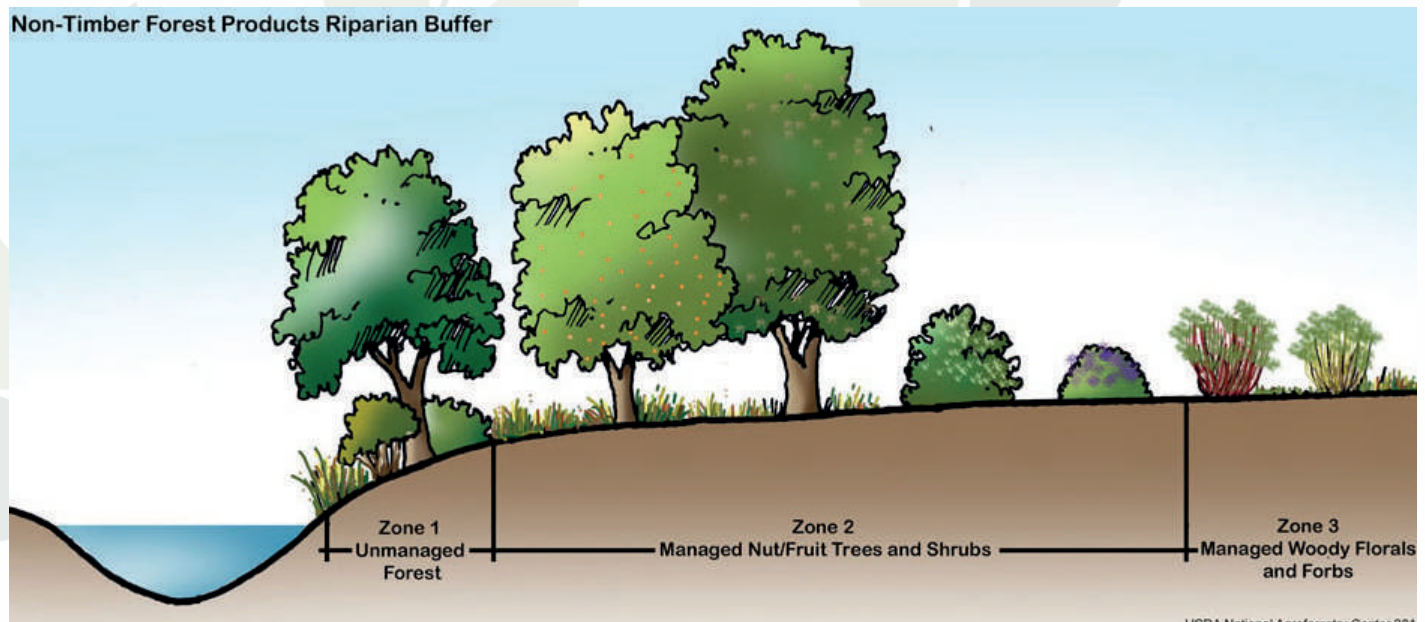
## PROJECT PARTNERS

Blacklick Creek Watershed Association, Indiana County Conservation District, PA Department of Environmental Protection, Saint Francis University Center for Watershed Research and Service, Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps AmeriCorps, Hedin Environmental, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana County Chapter of Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps.

# PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

## Trees, Trees, and More Trees - Riparian Buffers

Forested riparian buffers are the strips of trees and shrubs along waterways that help protect stream health by filtering runoff and providing shade and food sources for aquatic life. Additional buffer benefits include stabilizing soil and protecting cropland and downstream communities from flood damage. ICCD has focused on multi-functional buffers such as various fruit or nut trees and shrubs that can produce additional revenue for farmers on land that is frequently flooded and has poor crop yields, thereby diversifying landowner income.



Indiana County Conservation District planted three forested riparian buffers across Indiana County in 2020. Two of these forested riparian buffer zone (RBZ) projects were funded through multi-functional riparian buffer mini-grants from the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts. The third RBZ was a part of the Poverty Hill Farm project featured on page 17, and funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Many native tree/shrub species were used in these RBZ projects including: White Pine, Eastern Hemlock, American Hazelnut, Persimmon, Swamp White Oak, Scarlet Maple, Sugar Maple, Shagbark Hickory, Buttonbush, American Redbud, Silky Dogwood, Spicebush, Black Gum, Pin Oak, Red Oak, American Elderberry, Black Willow, and White Flowering Dogwood.



White Pine





Planting at Poverty Hill Farm



Planting at Ben Franklin Elementary



Before and after riparian buffer planting at a private property in Armstrong Township.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

- Three riparian buffer zones were planted in Armstrong, White, and West Wheatfield Townships.
- Nearly 5 acres of riparian buffer zones were planted in 2020
- Nearly 1000 trees and shrubs were planted

## FUNDING SOURCES AND PROJECT COSTS

\$5,892 - Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts / Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

\$9034 - Department of Environmental Protection Mariner East 2 Pipeline Penalty Funds

## PROJECT PARTNERS

Indiana County Conservation District, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Indiana Area School District, Evergreen Conservancy, Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps AmeriCorps, Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps.

# PERMITTING



An economically important program at the District is permitting. Pennsylvania Chapter 105 (Water Obstruction & Encroachments) and Pennsylvania Chapter 102/National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) are the two programs in which permits are issued through the District office. Keeping permitting at the local level ensures that applications are processed in a timely manner, allowing important development projects to move forward on schedule, which drives sustained economic development in the county. In 2020, the District processed 62 total permit applications in both program areas.

## Permitting Chapter 105

### Water Obstruction and Encroachment

*Pennsylvania's Dam Safety and Encroachments Act (25 PA Administrative Code Chapter 105):*

Every year, the District processes dozens of permit applications for activities that may impact a waterway such as a stream, wetland, floodway, or other body of water. This is crucial to ensure that projects do not have negative impacts on waterways while reducing flood risk.

- Chapter 105 General permits are needed for any work that impacts a stream.
- This type of work includes construction, stream crossing culverts, retaining walls, fish habitat structures, agricultural crossings, utility line crossings, and other obstructions and encroachments.
- Chapter 105 general permits protect and prevent aquatic ecosystems and wetlands from any threats that these encroachments may present, such as sedimentation and barriers to aquatic organism passage.



Agricultural crossing/ramp using a GP-6 permit. Stone and seeding were used for streambank stabilization.

### Acknowledged Chapter 105 Permits

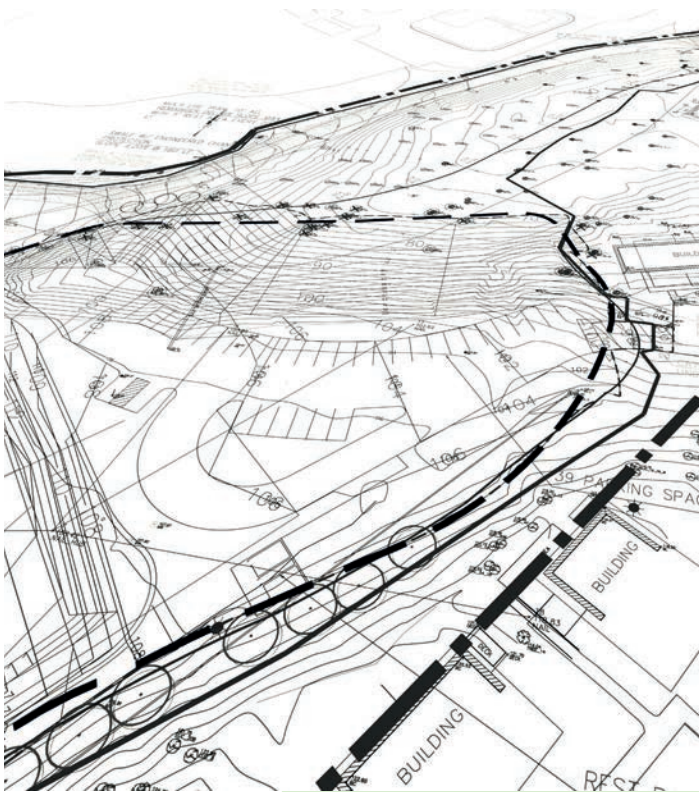
- GP1: 2 (fish habitat enhancement structures)
- GP2: 1 (small docks and boat launching ramps)
- GP3: 3 (bank rehab/protection, gravel bar removal)
- GP4: 2 (intake/outfall structures)
- GP5: 18 (utility line stream crossing)
- GP6: 4 (agricultural crossings and ramps)
- GP7: 5 (minor road crossing)
- GP8: 15 (temporary road crossing)



Permitting

# Chapter 102 - NPDES

## Earth Disturbance



*Erosion and Sediment Control Program (25 PA Code Chapter 102)*

Pennsylvania Chapter 102 and Federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations exist to reduce the impacts of development on waterways. Sediment is the leading cause of pollution in waterways with accelerated erosion from human use of land making up 70% of the total sediment deposition in rivers, streams, lakes and reservoirs.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are required to be installed and properly maintained on construction sites. Two of the most commonly used BMPs are compost filter sock and silt fence. BMPs are used to filter sediment from storm water that may leave the site and prevent it from entering the waters of the commonwealth. Conservation Districts issue NPDES permits and inspect BMPs on construction sites.

In 2020, the Indiana County Conservation District processed 12 NPDES permit applications which included projects for: Sherman Street Streetscape and Park, INDIGO Operations Facility and Parking Expansion, Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Complex Parking Lot Expansion, IUP Demolition of Foster Hall, Eat Pike Road Waterline Extension and Replacement, South 13th Street - 8" Pipe Replacement, Falling Run Road Waterline Extension, and Two Lick Creek Water Treatment Plant Backwash Tank and Electrical Improvements.



The above photo displays compost filter sock (an erosion and sedimentation control) surrounding a stream to protect the stream from sediment runoff from a nearby construction site.

# EDUCATION



Education is one of the most important components of the District's operations. The District does both adult and youth education which includes hosting manure management workshops, trainings for municipal officials on road maintenance practices, urban agriculture workshops, environmental workshops, and, most notably, the Junior and Senior County Envirothons.

COVID-19 didn't stop the District from offering the annual Envirothon competitions. When the pandemic abruptly cancelled all in-person events, the Pennsylvania Envirothon board, along with their partners, developed an on-line competition for senior-high teams that had been preparing for months for the annual contest. Utilizing on-line meeting platforms, students worked together, remotely, to virtually compete in the Senior Envirothon. Indiana County was the first in Pennsylvania to hold an online Envirothon competition.

## 2020 Senior Envirothon (Spring)

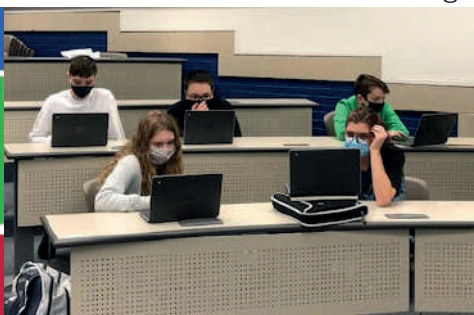


Marion Center Bee Hive Five Team

Fifty students comprising ten teams participated in the 2020 Virtual Senior Envirothon. High Schools represented included Blairsville, Homeschoolers for Christ Co-Op, Indiana, Marion Center, Purchase Line, and United. Five-member teams participated in a virtual competition in which they were tested on knowledge of aquatic ecology, forestry, soils and land use, wildlife, and a current issue which was "Water Resources: Local Control and Local Solutions."

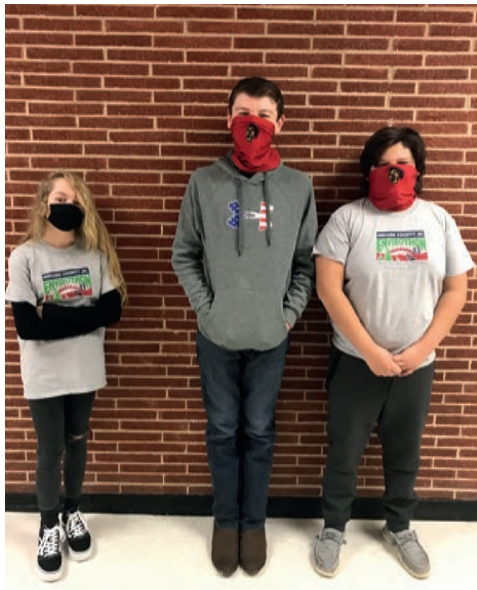
This year's Sr High contest ended in a tie for first place between Marion Center's Bee Hive Five and

United's Team 1. Third place was earned by the Homeschoolers for Christ Co-Op. Each of the 10 members of the winning teams were awarded a \$250 David S. Frick Envirothon Education Grant to be used toward post-secondary education. Since the grant program's inception, Indiana County students have earned \$34,000 in Envirothon education grants. The grants are funded by donations from local businesses, conservation organizations, and private citizens.





# 2020 Junior Envirothon (Fall)



Saltsburg 7th Grade Team



Saltsburg 8th Grade Team

Sixty-Five students comprising 13 teams including Hilltop Baptist Homeschoolers Co-op, Homeschoolers for Christ Co-op, Homer Center, Penns Manor, Purchase Line, Saltsburg, and United School District participated in the virtual Junior Envirothon competition. Saltsburg earned 1st place in the 7th grade category with United taking 2nd and Homer Center taking 3rd. In the 8th grade category, Saltsburg earned 1st place with 2nd place going to Homeschoolers for Christ Co-Op, and 3rd place to Homer Center.

The Junior Envirothon utilized the theme “Water Resources: Local Control and Local Solutions.” The lessons focused on groundwater recharge, surface water runoff, Low Impact Development, and how to protect our water resources from pollution. Staff and partners prepared video lessons for each station on topics that covered:

- Abandoned mine drainage treatment at the Tanoma Wetlands and macroinvertebrates as an indicator of water quality;
- Riparian forested buffers and their impact on water quality;
- Agriculture best management practices, soil infiltration and runoff, and what we all can do to protect ground and surface water;
- The various herons native to Pennsylvania and how water quality affects their health and habitat.



Many partners assisted with filming the lessons including DCNR Yellow Creek State Park, DCNR Bureau of Forestry, Evergreen Conservancy, Indiana Borough Planning and Zoning Department, Indiana County Parks and Trails, ICCD AmeriCorps, PA Game Commission, and Penn State Extension. Financial support for both events was made possible by a \$4,705 grant through the Bork Family Fund, a fund within the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies.



# Thank You, Financial Contributors

Thanks to the generous outpouring of community support, the Indiana County Conservation District was able to raise \$7,545 to support the 2020 Junior and Senior Envirothon competitions, as well as the David S. Frick Scholarship Fund. Without this support, we would not be able to make the Indiana County Envirothon such an invaluable community educational program!

"If we want children to flourish, to become truly empowered, let us allow them to love the Earth before we ask them to save it."

- David Sobel



## **FOUNDATION SUPPORT**

- Bork Family Fund, Community Foundation For The Alleghenies

## **CORPORATE SUPPORT**

- Gibson-Thomas Engineering Co., Inc.
- J.H. Hickman Surveying LLC
- Catalone Pipe & Supply Co.
- Elderton State Bank
- The Markosky Engineering Group, LLC
- Lias Tire, Inc.
- Stiffler, McGraw and Associates, Inc.
- Keller Engineers, Inc.


## **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION SUPPORT**

- PA Envirothon
- Indiana County Farm Bureau
- Indiana Moose Lodge #174
- Crooked Creek Watershed Association
- Dilltown Sportsmans Club
- Marion Center Area Lions Club

## **INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT**

- Donald Bothell
- Cindy Rogers
- Joe and Arlene Yackuboskey
- Edward Kuckuck
- Charles and Regan Houser
- Jim Resh



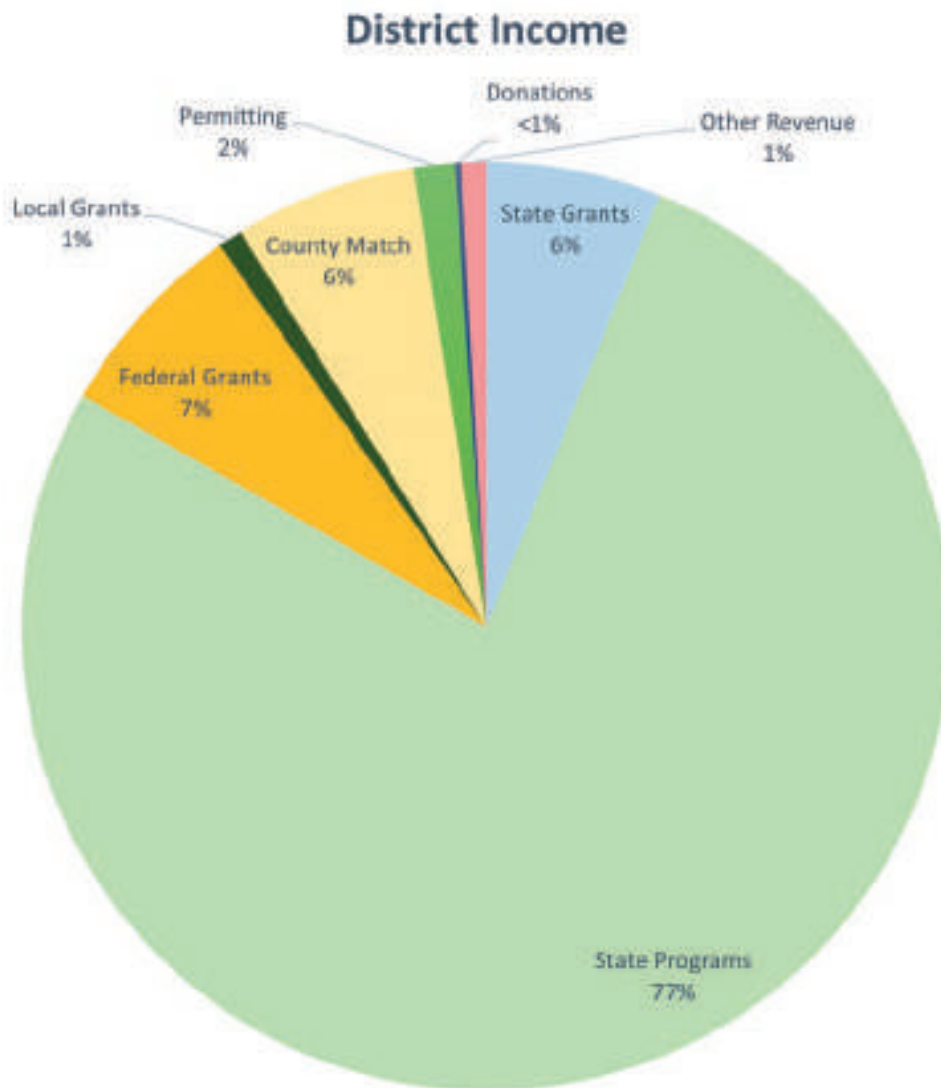


“A good financial plan is a road map that shows us exactly how the choices we make today will affect our future.”

*-Alexa Von Tobel*

# FINANCIALS

The Indiana County Conservation District is not only focused on being good stewards of the environment, but also on being good stewards of financial and taxpayer resources. We ensure the maximum amount of funding goes to on-the-ground projects and programs. This enables us to deliver exceptional program results that make Indiana County a better place to live, work and play.



## \$1.33 Million

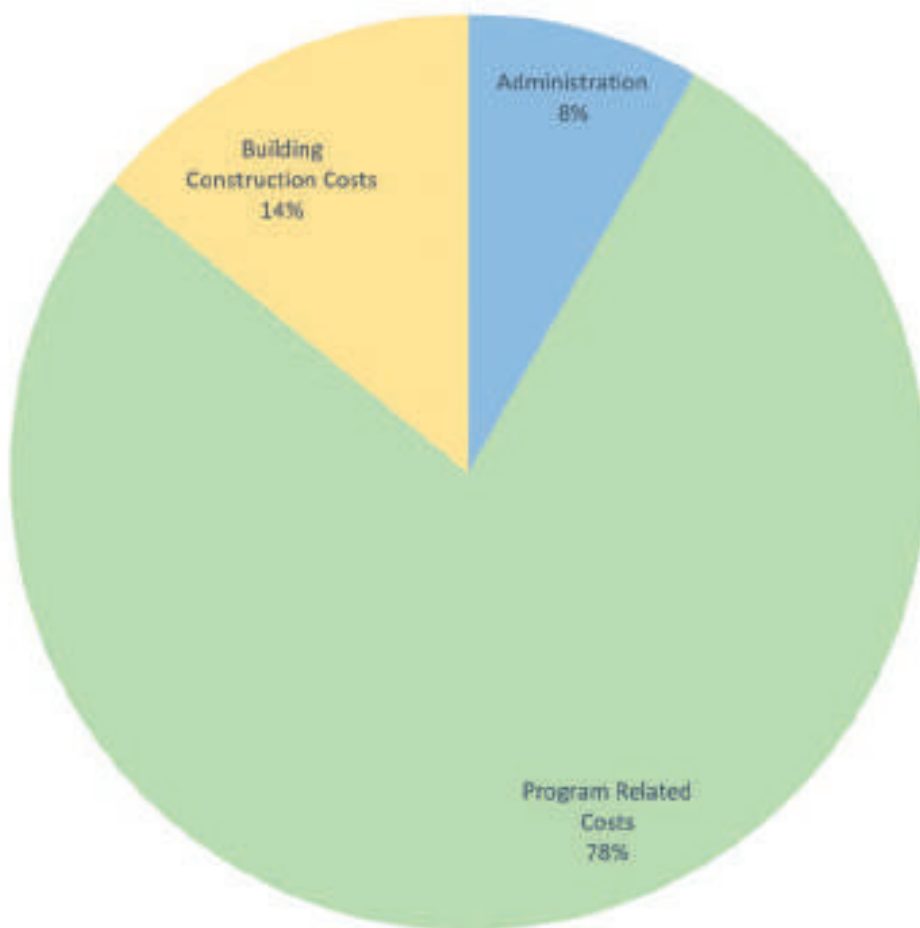
In 2020, the District brought in over \$1.33 million in funds from outside the county, comprised of money from various regional, state, and federal programs and grants. This money directly benefits Indiana County residents through implementation of conservation projects and programs.





In 2020, for every \$1.00 of county funds contributed, the District brought in \$13.50 in matching funds from state, federal, and regional programs that would otherwise not have benefited the County. This is a \$4.50 increase in return on investment from 2019. Most impressively, this was accomplished during the pandemic without any federal or state Coronavirus financial assistance. Investment in the Indiana County Conservation District is a great investment in Indiana County.

### District Expenses



8%

In 2020, only 8% of District expenditures were for administrative overhead costs. If following the Charity Watch metrics, this would grant us an A+ rating. This rating metric is given when less than 10% of funds are used for administrative overhead. This shows the District has remained committed to being a responsible steward of tax payer resources.

# AWARD-WINNING STAFF

## PACD's State Conservation District Employee of the Year

In 2020, DGLVR Program Specialist Brooke Russick was awarded the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District's "State Conservation District Employee of the Year" award for her outstanding contributions to conservation in both Indiana County and the Commonwealth.

*(Pictured Left to Right: Doug Beri and Brooke Russick)*



## Evergreen Conservancy's Evergreen Award



In 2020, Office Administrator Tammie Robinson was awarded the Evergreen Conservancy's Evergreen Award for her 36 years of service with the Indiana County Conservation District and for immeasurable contributions to the Indiana County Envirothon.

*(Pictured Left to Right: Tammie Robinson, Cindy Rogers, and Bob Lankard)*

The Indiana County Conservation District was also recognized by the Department of Environmental Protection for our commitment to professional development. Indiana ranked in the top 12 of all Conservation Districts in the Commonwealth. Robert Sabo ranked eighth among all Commonwealth conservation district employees.

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organization objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results." - Andrew Carnegie



# WHO WE ARE

## District Staff



Back From Left to Right:

Tammie Robinson

Samantha Dull

Nancy Clawson

Douglas Beri Jr.

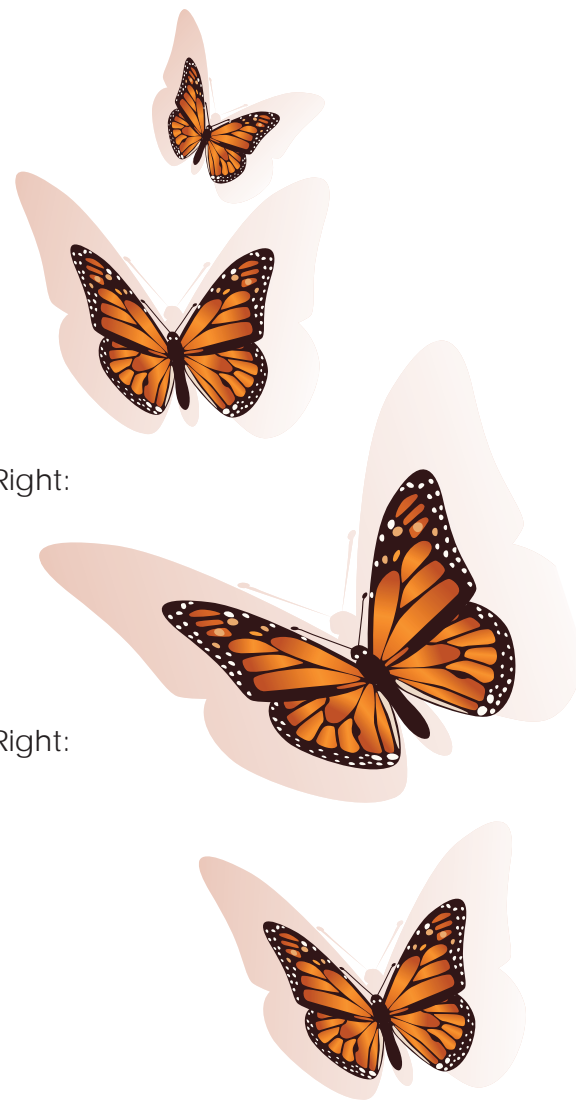
Front From Left to Right:

Robert (Bob) Sabo

Brooke Russick

Not Present:

Curtis Swiantek



## AmeriCorps

Every year, the District partners with the Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps AmeriCorps program to provide service opportunities that improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. In 2020, the District shared a Project Assistant position with the Evergreen Conservancy focused on addressing water resource issues throughout the county. Additionally, the District was able to bring on a full-time Education and Outreach Coordinator to help boost conservation and agricultural education programs.



Pictured from left to right: Monical Lee, Project Assistant and Tamathy Stage, Education and Outreach Coordinator



# WHO WE ARE



## District Board

From Left to Right:  
Richard Stumpf,  
Sherene Hess,  
Janis Long,  
Beth Marshall,  
Aaron Simpson

Not Present:  
Jason McGinnis,  
Scott Overdorff



## District Board - Associate Directors

From Left to Right:  
Craig Andrie  
John Somonick  
Cindy Rogers  
Thomas Beresnyak Jr.

Not Present:  
Alysha Trexler  
Joe Yackuboskey  
Karin Eller





## 2021 PERSONNEL

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**SHERENE HESS**

*CHAIRPERSON / COMMISSIONER*

**BETH MARSHALL**

*VICE-CHAIRPERSON / FARMER*

**AARON SIMPSON**

*TREASURER / FARMER*

**JANIS LONG**

*PUBLIC DIRECTOR*

**GREGG VANHORN**

*FARMER DIRECTOR*

**RICHARD STUMPF**

*PUBLIC DIRECTOR*

**VINCENT RECESKI**

*FARMER DIRECTOR*

### ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

**CRAIG ANDRIE****ALYSHA TREXLER****CINDY ROGERS****JOE YACKUBOSKEY****JOHN SOMONICK****SARA KING****KARIN ELLER****THOMAS BERESNYAK JR.**

### DISTRICT STAFF

**DOUGLAS M BERI JR.**

*DISTRICT MANAGER*

**TAMMIE ROBINSON**

*OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR /  
ENVIROTHON COORDINATOR*

**NANCY CLAWSON**

*OFFICE ASSISTANT*

**BROOKE RUSSICK**

*DGLVR PROGRAM SPECIALIST*

**CURTIS SWIANTEK**

*AGRICULTURE CONSERVATION  
SPECIALIST*

**SAMANTHA DULL**

*RESOURCE CONSERVATION  
TECHNICIAN*

**ROBERT (BOB) SABO**

*WATERSHED SPECIALIST*

**MONICA LEE**

*PROJECT ASSISTANT / PMSC  
AMERICORPS MEMBER*

**TAMATHY STAGE**

*EDUCATION AND OUTREACH  
COORDINATOR / PMSC AMERICORPS  
MEMBER*

## 2020 PERSONNEL

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jason McGinnis**

*Chairperson*

**Scott Overdorff**

*Vice-Chairperson*

## CONTACT US

**INDIANA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

435 Hamill Road  
Indiana, PA 15701

724-471-4751

info@iccdpa.org  
www.iccdpa.org





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Indiana, PA 15701

[www.iccdpa.org](http://www.iccdpa.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/iccdpa/>