

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: District Receives \$164,000 for Watershed Assessment
Indiana County Conservation District
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The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) has awarded the Indiana County Conservation District (ICCD) an Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection (Growing Greener) Grant in the amount of \$164,466.00. This funding will be used to complete a watershed assessment of Lower Two Lick Creek. The Lower Two Lick Creek Watershed is comprised of the area below Two Lick Reservoir that includes many streams that feed Two Lick Creek prior to reaching Blacklick Creek. For those that don't know, a watershed is an area of land that drains all of the streams and rainfall to a common point such as a larger stream, outflow of a lake, etc.

This project is part of the overall effort initiated by the Blacklick Creek Watershed Association (BCWA) to systematically address sources of water pollution within the Blacklick Creek watershed. Douglas Beri, Executive Director of ICCD stated in a press release that "BCWA has been working toward addressing sources of abandoned mine drainage impairment for decades and has made tremendous progress in cleaning up our waterways, making possible opportunities for outdoor recreation like river boating and fishing."

Through this grant, Two Lick Creek, Cherry Run, Tearing Run, and other streams will be assessed using a combination of in-stream water sampling and surveys for aquatic life. The collected information will be used to develop a systematic plan for addressing major sources of abandoned mine drainage and agricultural impairments within the Lower Two Lick Creek Watershed. Yellow Creek Watershed was assessed during a previous assessment and will not be included in this project, even though it is part of the Lower Two Lick Watershed.

Beri explained, "This project will result in a plan that can be used by the BCWA, ICCD, PADEP, and other organizations to address sources of pollution in a prioritized way that will maximize the effectiveness of invested local, state, and federal resources. It will also give us a great opportunity to look at significant sources of pollution that impact water quality near Homer City, like the Reisinger Discharge, which will help in enabling us to address water quality issues that impact future economic development in that community."

The BCWA was formed in 1993 to address sources of water pollution, primarily AMD, that were impacting the user experience of recreational assets including the Ghost Town Trail. Between then and now, BCWA has completed 13 mine drainage and reclamation projects in the Blacklick Creek watershed. ICCD and BCWA have been long-standing partners on watershed remediation efforts. "These joint efforts to remediate water impairments, improve the overall health of our communities and create a better quality of life for residents," Beri added.

Volunteers will be needed to help with water sampling efforts, and anyone interested is encouraged to reach out Ben Wenger, ICCD Conservation Program Specialist at 724-471-4751.

This project is expected to start this fall and be completed by the spring of 2026.

Caption for attached photo: Map of the Lower Two Lick Watershed

