



April 25, 2023

For Immediate Release: CONSERVATION DISTRICT WEEK CELEBRATED April 23rd – April 29th, 2023

Contact:

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(INDIANA, PA) The Indiana County Conservation District is celebrating Conservation District week (April 23rd – April 29th) as proclaimed by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and Senate. Conservation Districts serve an important function for the counties in Pennsylvania. Tasked with protecting water resources and conserving area soils, the Indiana County Conservation District (ICCD) implements a variety of programs and projects.

Since 1997, ICCD has awarded over \$5.5 million in Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road infrastructure improvements throughout Indiana County. These projects have been completed in 26 municipalities, on 167 miles of roads for a total of 328 completed projects. Executive Director, Douglas Beri Jr., stated that “The Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Program is a vital infrastructure program providing much needed financial support for local municipalities to make improvements on roads impacting waterways in the county.”

ICCD also focuses on providing technical assistance to local watershed organizations. A watershed is an area of land that drains into a body of water. Indiana County drains into both the Ohio and Chesapeake Bay Watersheds. Beri stated “the District employs a watershed specialist who conducts watershed assessments, oversees restoration projects, educates the public, and helps build the capacity of numerous non-profit, volunteer environmental organizations within the county.”

In addition, ICCD holds the County Junior and Senior Envirothon Competitions where Indiana County students are tested on their knowledge of environmental and natural resource issues. “Teams of up to 5 students from area schools compete for scholarships of \$500 per student to the winning team”, stated Beri. “This is one of the County’s most successful environmental education programs”. The winning team from the county goes on



to compete in the state Envirothon competition. Since inception, the program has awarded \$39,000 in scholarships to Indiana County students.

In addition, ICCD is delegated by the PA Department of Environmental Protection to administer their earth disturbance programs in Indiana County. As part of this program, the ICCD reviews permits to move earth as part of development projects. Beri stated that “our office works with developers and landowners to expedite permit requests ensuring that projects stay on time and on schedule wherever possible.” “Keeping permitting at the local level prevents unnecessary delays in projects and is key to sustainable economic development in Indiana County” said Beri.

Additionally, ICCD works with farmers to implement sustainable farming practices and manure/nutrient management plans. According to Beri, “The Conservation District offers trainings, conferences, grant resources, and technical assistance to area agricultural producers in an effort to keep Indiana County farmers producing great products, while protecting the land for years to come!”

If you would like more information about the Conservation District or to schedule a technical assistance meeting, please contact our office at 724-471-4751 or visit www.iccdpa.org.

*NOTE – County Commissioner’s will be issuing a proclamation for conservation district week in Indiana County at their meeting on Wednesday 4/26 @ 10:30am.

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Photo Captions

Bar Road: Fifty-foot span bridge installed on Barr Road in Green Township, funded through the ICCD Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program.

David Frick scholarship pic Indiana 1st place Homeschoolers for Christ Co-Op

One Year Garden – Pollinator meadow installed with an National Association of Conservation District’s grant at the Indiana Community Garden

First Waves Macros – Youth learning about macroinvertebrates during a First Waves educational program.

Assignment Editors’ Note: If you are interested in obtaining additional pictures or interviews, please contact Douglas Beri Jr. at 724-471-4715 Ext. 4 or d.beri@iccdpa.org.

