

LYCOMING COUNTY CLEAN WATER PLAN NEWSLETTER

May 2021



BMP Showcase:

Riparian Buffer at Sherman Beef Cattle Farm

Wanting to keep pace with the ever-changing face of agriculture, while at the same time preserving the farm for the next generation, Sherman restored a small, impaired stream on his land using best management practices such as streambank fencing and riparian buffers. Following this restoration, a diverse ecosystem re-emerged, that also benefited livestock health. The implementation of additional conservation practices has increased production capability, while decreasing overhead expenses, leading to improved sustainability and economic success. Learn more [here!](#)



Benefits of Streamside Buffers in Danville

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Deputy Secretary Lauren Imgrund, State Forester Ellen Shultzabarger, and officials from Geisinger Health System today toured a streamside buffer at Geisinger Woodbine Lane in Danville that demonstrates how property owners can include pollinator habitat and recreation opportunities in projects that help reduce water pollution.

Funded by DCNR, PennVEST, and Geisinger, the two-acre streamside buffer of native shrubs and trees was planted near a portion of Sechler Run to improve water quality in the tributary of the Mahoning Creek. The streamside buffer features a quarter-mile walking path for Geisinger staff and visitors, and a 1,000-foot-long wildflower planting for pollinators running parallel to the trail.

"Across Pennsylvania we are seeing growing understanding and interest in planting trees as a natural solution to many issues including for climate resilience, improving water and air quality, reducing flooding, and the impact forests and trees have in improving human health," Shultzabarger said. "DCNR is hopeful that we see many more projects of this kind all over the commonwealth." Streamside buffers are critical in reducing erosion of streambanks, helping improve water quality, providing more favorable conditions for wildlife and enriching the landscape near a stream.

Visit the [Buffer My Stream](#) page to learn more! - [Pennsylvania Pressroom, May 26, 2021](#)

CAP News

While we are still waiting for the results from our first draft submission, a lot of planning progress has been made! Peer groups have continued to meet and further develop the CAP.

Partners have begun to strategize ways to prioritize and implement CAP projects, and our first Implementation Peer Group meeting occurred on May 25th.

A scoring metric seemed to be most popular among stakeholders, with priority given to projects that achieve the most nutrient and sediment reduction. Priority will also be given to projects that will be the "best bang for our buck"; projects that are efficient and result in high reductions compared to their cost.

This model is based on Chesapeake Conservancy data.

Testimonies

"The CAP supports our local goal of making sure all of our county's farmers are in compliance with their conservation plans, manure management plans, and such. We believe the CAP will help to steer more resources toward BMPs that landowners are willing to put in, which helps us to help farmers fund projects and install BMPs that improve the farm and local waterways. Just having a plan isn't enough ... the CAP helps us define the funds and resources we need to back up our goal of farm compliance."

-Katie Doster, District Manager, Lebanon County Conservation District

Announcements

-The May 27th Stakeholder Check-In meeting was cancelled.
-A CAP Virtual Open House is scheduled for Wednesday, June 26th at 7pm. This is a public meeting for general information about the plan, and will include a discussion about landowner interest in participating. Find the official press release [here](#).

-A public survey and a farmer-specific survey will be released after the Virtual Open House to gauge landowner and farmer interest in establishing best management practices on their property.

Visit www.lyco.org/CWAP for more updates and information!

Cartographer's Notes



About the Map

Pennsylvania's State Amphibian

"Ground puppy", "snot otter", "lasagna lizard", "Allegheny alligator", and many other endearing nicknames have been given to this adorable amphibian that calls Lycoming County's streams home. In fact, it's the official State amphibian! Our county's abundance of shallow, fast-moving, rocky streams provide an ideal habitat for this eastern hellbender.

Hellbenders are especially vulnerable to water pollution and an accumulation of sediment, and while it's not an endangered species, their numbers are declining and are being heavily monitored. As an indicator and keystone species, these animals rely on clean, oxygen-rich streams. By addressing the needs of these and other niche-fulfilling species, we address the needs of the larger ecosystem, which is a win for all inhabitants (including us humans)!

For more information on this map, please visit lyco.org/CWAP! -Amy M. Fry

Coordinator's Notes

We're gearing up for outreach! While the CAP is still in draft form, we can still reach out to the public and other potential partners for input.

Events like the Lycoming County Fair and public meetings, and surveys to gage levels of interest will help us plan effectively. I'm eager to learn more about people's priorities, and how we can make a difference!



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