

## Bicentennial Tree Planting

### Planned for October 24

Through the District's Partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation Keystone 10 Million Tree Initiative and the PPL Community

Roots program, a tree planting event is planned at the Lynn Sheaffer Dum Memorial Park in Elliottsburg in an effort to promote stewardship of the land and protect water quality as we celebrate our County's history.

Please contact Kristie at 717-582-5138 or [ksmith@perryco.org](mailto:ksmith@perryco.org) if you are interested in participating as a volunteer.

## County-wide Action Plan Updates

Over the last several months, the District has been collaborating with the Tri-County Planning Commission and Herbert, Rowland & Grubic Inc (HRG) to identify, verify, and quantify a recipe of best management practices that when installed in specific areas will help the County achieve the pollution reduction goals set by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). A pollution reduction goal toolkit was provided to all of the tier 3 & 4 counties—Perry County is a tier 3. The next step of this process is to network and receive input and feedback from our County stakeholders. Those who have already expressed interest in participating will be hearing from us periodically throughout the summer, but it is not too late to join in on these discussions! Please contact Kristie Smith at 717-582-5138 or [ksmith@perryco.org](mailto:ksmith@perryco.org) if you would like to be a valued contributor during this planning process. *Updates and more information can be found at [www.perrycd.org](http://www.perrycd.org)*



## Got Bugs?

**Report Them: Call the Spotted Lanternfly Hotline Mon-Fri between 8am and 5pm (1-888-422-3359)**

**This invasive has been reported and confirmed**

**in:**

**Newport  
Duncannon  
Marysville  
Millerstown**

**HELP STOP THE SPREAD**



## Let's Talk Residue

To Be Announced (August)

Do you farm high residue fields? Join us for discussions on practices & farmers' experiences.



## Grazing Group

To Be Announced (August)

Join us for a pasture walk to connect with fellow grazers.

**Contact the office for information.**

## Perry County Conservation District

**31 West Main Street, P.O. Box 36  
New Bloomfield, PA 17068  
717-582-8988 ext. 3002**



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(New Bloomfield, Pa)**

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PERRY COUNTY  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



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# Summer 2021 Newsletter



## NRCS Update

A new funding pool was established in the 2018 Farm Bill: The Terrestrial Wildlife Program. This funding category is solely dedicated to wildlife projects with an emphasis on the establishment of pollinator habitat, any insect or animal listed on the Pennsylvania State Wildlife Plan can be addressed. If you currently have agricultural land that is in production, you might be eligible for this program. NRCS has a wildlife biologist on staff that could meet with you during a site visit to see if this might be a good fit for what you wish to accomplish with your land.

Please contact Kevin Morgan at the office 717-594-3010 for more information.

## National Pollinator Week

**June 21-27**

### Join Us On Facebook & YouTube

Through a collaborative effort with several local organizations and landowners that are also passionate about pollinators, the District is excited to showcase our video tour project with scenes and interviews from around the County that are designed to celebrate these tiny creatures that do a very important job! The content provided is suitable for all age groups and wildlife enthusiasts alike. Please look for our post on YouTube & Facebook.



## What's new with REAP?

REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection) is a state tax credit program administered by the State Conservation Commission (SCC). The normal reimbursement rate is 50% of the total cost of eligible best management practices and equipment. This year, farms that are located within the Chesapeake Bay TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load), *all of Perry County*, would be eligible for 90% reimbursement for certain practices through tax credits. Some of these practices include cover crop rollers, multi-species cover crop mixes, stream bank fencing, watering facilities, and riparian buffers. Also starting this year, farmers are eligible to apply for REAP within 3 years of the project completion. This is different than the previous practice lifespan period. The SCC expects to begin accepting applications for 2021 on August 2, 2021. If you are interested in applying for REAP, please contact Lauren Leinbach at 717-594-3003 or lleinbach@perryco.org



## Baken, Cisna, and Montour OH MY!

We would like to hear from landowners in the Baken Creek, Cisna Run, and Montour Creek watersheds to discuss the opportunities available for the installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to improve water quality, such as No-till Practices, Planting of Cover Crops, Riparian Buffers, Grassed Waterways & Filter Strips, Grazing Land Management Practices, and Streambank Stabilization & Restoration.

In 2019, Montour Creek became the first stream within the County to have a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) placed on it for the reduction of sediment, followed by a TMDL placed on Cisna Run for sediment and phosphorus in 2020. As of this summer, an Alternative Restoration Plan was drafted for the Baken Creek watershed with the hope that a TMDL can be avoided all together. Participation in this nine year project is dependent upon landowners who see the value in their land and want to invest in soil conservation, as well as improve water quality within our community and the Shermans Creek watershed. Funding opportunities to get BMPs on the ground may cycle around to Perry County in the very near future, so taking advantage of this opportunity now gives landowners and the District a chance to cooperatively get these projects done. Please contact Kristie Smith, Watershed Specialist at 717-582-5138 or ksmith@perryco.org for more information and to express interest in this opportunity.

## No-till Drill Topics



### To diversify or not to diversify

A common question asked among the agricultural community is: "Why should I plant a multispecies cover crop?"

To start, planting multiple cover crops together allows for better use of water, light, and nutrients resulting in greater biomass production and resource utilization than when a single species cover crop is used. Having different types of roots in the ground at the same time also reduces soil compaction. As a result, this increases soil aeration, water infiltration, and the diversity of micro-organisms in your soil allowing for increased nutrient availability for crops to uptake. Lastly, multispecies cover crops can serve as an excellent nutrient dense forage option for livestock that may be lacking key nutrients from single species forages. An ideal method for planting multispecies cover crops is to calibrate a piece of equipment to plant the intended seed mixture. The Perry County Conservation District is capable of calibrating the four no-till drills that we rent out across the county to plant seed mixtures; three of which are 10' wide John Deere

1590s and the fourth being a 6' wide Land Pride 606. Each drill has a disk opener spacing of 7.5-inches with the ability to plant at a disk opener spacing of 15-inches. To rent any of the above drills, there is a flat rate rental fee of \$10 / acre, a calibration fee of \$30, and (ONLY for renters who plant less than 5 acres total) a drop fee of \$25. For more information, please contact Ben Smith at 717-275-5111.

### Vertical Tillage & What You Should Know

Vertical tillage has become the latest buzz word in the agricultural community, and whether you believe it is the bane of agriculture or it is the greatest thing since sliced bread, there are some factors to consider. Vertical tillage is full-width tillage. Yes, it does leave higher residue on the surface, but it is still full-width tillage. What this means from an erosion stand point is that it isn't much different than a disk. Running an implement through a field will increase measures of erosion because this act breaks up the soil's structure. As a result, we can't treat

our vertically tilled fields the same as our no-till fields without increasing erosion. When tillage re-enters an operation, other best management practices should be included such as strip cropping, contour farming, terraces, diversions, and diverse crop rotations. Tilling an entire field without the appropriate practices in place sets the stage to lose precious top soil. Contact our office if you would like to discuss the variety of options to minimize ag erosion and come up with a plan that fits your fields. Let's save our soil and keep on farming!

### Inspection Update

Starting July 1, the District will begin our 4<sup>th</sup> round of DEP Agricultural Initial Inspections. All properties that fall under PA Chapter 91, Manure Management or Chapter 102.4; Erosion and Sedimentation, are eligible for an inspection regardless of size. Backyard animals such as chicken flocks and horses are included. In order to be in compliance with these regulations,

you must have a Manure Management Plan and/or an Agricultural Erosion and Sedimentation Plan.

These plans must be kept at your property and available upon request. The District does not keep copies of these plans. For more information on how to write these plans or for other questions, please contact Lauren Leinbach at 717-594-3003.



### Milestones in Farmland Preservation

Perry County Farmland Preservation Program is quickly approaching 10,000 acres preserved.

We are currently working with multiple landowners on proposed easement purchases and easement donations. We anticipate exceeding our 10,000 acre milestone by end of 2021. The Farmland Preservation Program preserves farms to protect them from future residential, commercial, or industrial development. Each preserved farm represents targeted investments in the future of farming and food security in Perry County. Currently, Perry County leads the state in the number of farms donated for preservation since the program started in 1988.