

Lancaster County Conservation District Produces Impressive Outcomes through Mini-grant Program

Over the last year, Lancaster County Conservation District (LCCD) utilized mini-grant funds to conduct 3 educational mini-grants, forwarding important outcomes for protecting Pennsylvania's watersheds by reducing nonpoint source pollution and improving water quality.

As part of a Chesapeake Bay mini-grant titled "Watersheds: Making the Connection", Sally Gregory, Education Coordinator for LCCD, conducted a project aimed at educating the public on the relationship between human activities and the natural environment. Through this project, two educational displays were created (one permanent and one mobile) and four workshops were conducted, including one at the Lancaster/Lebanon Watershed Forum (see information below), with great results. 80 people were educated through this project. Some of the participant outcomes of the project included:



- 98% of participants successfully made connections of local, state, regional, and global watersheds.
- 100% recognized at least one human impact creating nonpoint source pollution.
- 98% recognized that what an individual does on the land directly affects the watershed in which they live.
- 100% indicated an intention to take action, such as: encourage awareness for our environment, remove invasive plant species, and reduce the amount of their property dedicated for a lawn (plant more trees).



Matt Kofroth, Watershed Specialist with LCCD, conducted two NPS Section 319 projects: the "Lancaster/Lebanon Watershed Forum" and "Rain Barrels in Urban Environments".

The Watershed Forum provided an educational forum and networking opportunity for 80 people concerned about water quality and resources from local watershed associations, individuals, and municipalities. In both the forum evaluations and the online survey after the forum, participants

showed an increased knowledge of their local watersheds and nonpoint source pollution concepts.

Evaluations indicated these outcomes:

- 59% of participants are now only planting native trees and shrubs around their homes.
- 56% have stopped flushing prescription drugs down their toilet.
- 56% are talking with a neighbor or friend about nonpoint source pollution and reducing its impact.
- 52% are talking with the next generation about nonpoint source pollution.
- 48% are reducing their lawn fertilizer use.
- 44% are planting a streamside tree.
- 41% are reducing their use of deicers and salts during the winter.
- 37% are reducing the size of their yards to encourage more stormwater infiltration.

Overall, 47 people were motivated to install Stormwater BMPs, 3 to adopt Agricultural BMPs, and 11 to implement E&S Controls.

LCCD's "Rain Barrels in Urban Environments" workshop, held in partnership with Lancaster Investment in a Vibrant Economy (LIVE Green), covered topics such as local watersheds, nonpoint source pollution, stormwater, water conservation, rain barrels, and rain gardens and had 30 people in attendance.

Evaluations from this event demonstrated these outcomes:



- 88% of participants increased their knowledge of rain barrels and their role in reducing water pollution.
- 50% installed their rain barrels within two weeks of the workshop.
- 50% talked with a friend or neighbor about nonpoint source pollution.
- 12% talked with a child about nonpoint source pollution.
- 25% reduced the amount of lawn fertilizers they apply.
- 12% created a rain garden.

All three projects demonstrated the potential for concrete and meaningful outcomes for Pennsylvania watersheds as a result of conducting mini-grant projects. These projects are funded by PACD through grants from the PA Department of Environmental Protection under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act (administered by the US Environmental Protection Agency) and the Chesapeake Bay Program. For more information, please visit our website at www.PACD.org and click on the “grant assistance” icon.