

Centre County Conservation District – Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy

Executive Summary

The Centre County's Tributary Strategy is a working document developed by the Centre County Conservation District to illustrate our level of commitment to Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy. We have developed a plan with goals that are aligned with the Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy. Included in our strategy are details of three programs we plan to conduct as our "Special Projects". Each "Special Project" has a specific theme and is outlined in detail in this strategy. The Centre County Conservation District will administer these projects by providing cost-share funding and technical assistance to the participating landowners. All practices (BMPs) included in the "Special Projects" will reduce nutrients and sediment from entering the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Our goals for the next five years (2005 – 2010) is to meet Centre County's BMP installation requirements listed on the "Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy's watershed model run #3 ". The following programs will help achieve our goals:

- **Implement our current agricultural programs for the installation of BMPs and Nutrient Management Plans; Seek grant monies to sustain these programs**
- **Maintain technical and administrative support to Centre County Grazers and Project Grass.**
- **Seek funding from PADEP Energy Harvest Grant program for the installation of a methane digester in this county**
- **Seek funding to assist local watershed groups, farmers, and other landowners with invasive species control**
- **Develop a program to encourage no-till and cover crop programs and host no-till/cover crop workshops**
- **Increase involvement with Centre County watershed groups; Assist with their implementation plans**
- **Support the local foods initiative**

Centre County Conservation District – Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy

County Description

Centre County is the fifth largest county in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is divided into thirty-six municipalities. The County's cultural and natural resources make this an attractive place to live. It is also popular for its great trout streams. According to Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Centre County has high quality, Class A Wild Trout Streams.

A highlight of this region is the many acres of prime farmland. A recent study conducted by the Centre County Chamber of Business reported that Agricultural services as an industry has increased 80% in this county between 1990- 2001.

The Centre County Agricultural Land Preservation Board stated that preserving farmland in Centre County is important based on the 1997 Census of Agriculture The Census of Agriculture reported:

- There are 788 farms in Centre County on 135,982 acres.
- 449 of the farms in the county are full-time operations.
- The average farm covers 173 acres, but there are 11 farms in the County over 1,000 acres.
- Centre County's farms sold agricultural products valued at over \$50 million (58% from dairy products).
- The average Centre County farm sold \$64,109 in products; 183 farms had sales of over \$100,000.

The Centre County Planning Office reported in their *Comprehensive Plan 2002 (Land use study)* that between years 1995 – 2002 there was a 10.10% of agricultural development increase in Centre County.

According to Penn State Cooperative Extension – Keystone Agricultural Initiative -

- Number of farms: 1,213
- Land in farms: 109,000 acres (15.8%)
- Value of Production (2001) \$61.3 million

Centre County Commodities

- 2002 Production -27.7% crops, including nursery & greenhouse and 72.2% livestock,

Water Resources and Quality

All of Centre County's land area is part of the Susquehanna River Watershed that drains to the Chesapeake Bay. The West Branch Susquehanna Watershed, Juniata Watershed and the Lower Susquehanna Watershed of the Susquehanna River Basin are located in Centre County. There are four reported subbasins that are on the list of impaired streams according to the Clean Water Act. They are: Subbasin 06-A Penns Valley Watershed – this impairment is due to agriculture. Subbasin 09-C Bald Eagle Watershed – the Little Fishing Creek sub-watershed is impaired due to Agriculture and the Beech Creek sub-watershed's impairment is from Acid Mine Drainage (AMD). The Moshannon Creek Watershed is in Subbasin 08-D and the impairment is due to AMD. And, Subbasin 11-A Little Juniata Watershed – the Halfmoon Creek sub-watershed is impaired by agriculture

It states in the - *08/22/01 DEP Bureau of Watershed Management Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS)* that Watersheds affected by agriculture include Spruce Creek and its tributaries Halfmoon Creek and Warriors Mark Run. The restoration of these streams impaired by agriculture is needed to protect the nationally known brown trout fishery of Spruce Creek. Best management practices (BMPs) should be installed to restore the worst of the impaired watersheds. Approximately 2 miles of Spruce Creek and 3 miles of its tributary Halfmoon Creek need BMPs to help reduce sediment and nutrients.

Trends of significance to water quality/ Trends of Land Use

Centre County Planning Office developed a Comprehensive Plan published in 2002. In this plan it is stated that Centre County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state. Centre County had a 1990 population of 125,000 and has increased by 8.8% to 135,758 in 2000. The unemployment average has been averaging 2.5 to 3.0%, which is indicative of a healthy economy and steady growth in business and industry in Centre County.

Centre County is facing water quality impacts and land use issues due to expanding urbanization and highway construction. Other water quality and land use concerns is the environmental impact of our agricultural land. According to The Centre County Planning Office (Comprehensive Plan /Land Use/- 2002) they shown agricultural development has increase over 10% in the past ten years

CENTRE COUNTY Land Use

Land Use	Acres	% of County		1995	1990	1985	Change 1995 to 2002
	2002	2002	2002				
Residential	24,189	3.41	2.93	2.23	1.7		16.38%
Commercial	2,104	0.30	0.25	0.25	0.16		20.00%
Industrial	728	0.10	0.12	0.12	0.09		-16.67%
Vacant Structure	73	0.01					
Mined Land	2,774	0.39	0.53	1.75	2.17		-26.42%
Transportation	15,448	2.18	2.04	2.16	1.81		6.86%
Communications	44	0.01					
Utility	790	0.11					
Public or Semi-Public	2,111	0.30	0.29	0.27	0.24		3.45%
Recreation	3,241	0.46	0.5	0.43	0.4		8.00%
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT	51,501	7.26	6.66	7.21	6.57		9.01%
Agriculture	109,851	15.48	17.22	17.83	18.7		10.10%
Forested	514,429	72.51	70.9	69.48	70.27		2.27%
Reclaimed Land	12,846	1.81					
Vacant and Unused	17,231	2.43	4.63	4.94	3.91		-47.52%
Water	3,628	0.51	0.6	0.54	0.55		-15.00%
Total	709,486	100	100	100	100		

Centre County Watershed Groups

Watershed Groups throughout Centre County identify agriculture as a significant contributor of sediment and nutrients in Chesapeake Bay Watershed – All the watershed groups state that stream-bank stabilization and riparian protection on agricultural land are highly effective methods to reduce sediment and nutrient loads to the stream. There are recommendations in all the assessments for buffer establishments on farmland as well as the installation of additional best management practices that will reduce sediment and nutrient runoff from farms. Centre County Conservation District has developed relationships with each group. We would like to expand our relationship with these groups and provide technical support for the implementation of their assessment. Listed below are the groups of Centre County and their accomplishments to date:

Moshannon Creek Watershed Coalition (MCWC)

Moshannon Creek---major source of impairment: Acid Mine Drainage

www.moshannoncreek.org

- *Working on a watershed snapshot
- *In the process of compiling mining data to be used as part of a watershed snapshot
- *Attained 501 (c) (3) status
- *Applied for grants to conduct four different restoration projects
- *Constructed new web site
- *Currently conducting a Trout Run tributary Assessment
- *Conduct quarterly monitoring on Moshannon Creek, monthly on Trout Run

Beech Creek Watershed Association (BCWA)

Beech Creek---major source of impairment---Acid Mine Drainage

<http://mywebpage.netscape.combcwasite/index>

- *Have conducted three restoration projects---Butts Run, Contrary Run, Jonathan Run (Acid Rock Drainage from I-80)
- *Currently conducting a watershed assessment
- *Outreach activities include printing place mats with Beech Creek information on them to be given to area restaurants and the purchase of a new display board (PACD grant)
- *Constructed three watershed boundary signs
- *Publish a newsletter
- *Received a DCNR grant to do a Beech Creek rails to trails feasibility study
- *Conducting monitoring as part of assessment

Spring Creek Community

Spring Creek---major source of impairment---urbanization and some agriculture

www.springcreekwatershed.org

- *Conducted a project A Conservation Techniques for Watershed Wise Backyards and Businesses@
- *Have a current riparian restoration project
- *Held Candidates' Night for State House Representatives
- *Spring Creek Water Resources Monitoring Project---conduct extensive sophisticated monitoring program on Spring Creek. Plan to include storm-water monitoring and spring monitoring
- *Plan for Recovery project includes Slab Cabin restoration project (PSU)

ClearWater Conservancy

Spring Creek---major source of impairment---urbanization and some agriculture

Sponsors Spring Creek Clean Up Day

Obtains conservation easements

Completed the Spring Creek Watershed Plan

Completed the Spring Creek Rivers Plan

Sponsored Vision 20/20

Education outreach for State College and Bellefonte Schools

Bald Eagle Creek

Centre County Conservation District and Bald Eagle State Park

Sojourn was held in May 2004.

Working with the PaSEC to sponsor a Bald Eagle Conservation Plan

Lloyd Wilson chapter of Trout Unlimited sponsored a lake assessment

Penns Creek, Elk Creek, Pine Creek, Muddy Creek---major source of impairment---agriculture and encroaching development

Penns Valley Conservation Association

PVCA

www.pennsvalley.net

- *Completed an watershed assessment and began an implementation strategy

- *Held public meeting to discuss the importance of Native Plant Communities

- *Held public meeting to discuss the South Central Centre County Transportation Study

- * Completed the restoration of an outdoor classroom, an Eagle Scout project, at the Penns Valley environmental Center

- * Continued the meadow restoration project at the Penns Valley Environmental Center

- *Completed the Growing Greener Streambank fencing projectBconstructed 3 miles of fencing on nine farms, nine stabilized livestock stream crossings and secured 60.3 acres in reserve as riparian buffer.

- *Constructing two wetlands projects—one on the Williams property and one on the Smith property

- *Sponsor an Education Coordinator for the Penns Valley School District

- *Conducted monitoring as part of assessment

Spruce Creek---major source of impairment---agriculture and encroaching development

Spruce Creek Watershed Association

In process of forming---working with Huntingdon County

PSU Keystone Project

Under psu.edu

Monitoring and restoration projects are underway

Keystone Assessment is completed

Centre County chapter of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps

PaSEC

EASI.org

*47 people currently monitor 16 sites on a monthly basis, using the Hach field kits

*Applied for a Cold Water Heritage grant to implement a Bald Eagle Creek Conservation Plan

*Monitoring 6 different streams in Centre County for DO, temperature, pH, alkalinity, conductivity, phosphates, stream flow, macroinvertebrate evaluation

*Monitor Spring Creek, Buffalo Run, Galbraith Gap Run, Slab Cabin Run, Elk Creek, Moshannon Creek, Bald Eagle Creek, Little Fishing Creek

Centre County Chesapeake Bay's Solutions to Water Quality Issues/Trends

Grazing Programs – Centre County Conservation District recognizes grazing as a practice that has both maximum environmental benefits and improves farm economy. We work with Project Grass as well as our own – Centre County Grazers. We receive funding through Project Grass and PACD to help with grazing activities in this county. We encourage farmers to develop rotational grazing systems.

Rotational Grazing has been a trend that has increased over the past few years. Since 1998 the Centre County Chesapeake Bay Program has assisted with the conversion of farm acreage into managed grazing pastureland. Between 1998 -2004 we assisted with planning, cost-sharing and installing 620 acres of rotational grazing pastures. We have recruited 23 landowners who are on our grazing list waiting for financial and technical assistance with their rotational grazing plans.

Our “*Agricultural Best Management Practice Implementation Program*” funded by the PADEP Growing Greener Grant, landowners received additional points on their evaluation worksheet. Those landowners have a greater chance of receiving cost-share monies if they installed some land into a rotational grazing system.

We have partnered with USDA-NRCS and Penn State Cooperative Extension to start a local grazing group. This group is a farmer directed group. We currently have 80 members. An average 25 members attend each pasture walks or meetings. PACD has been very supportive with our grazing education and outreach. They have funded our events for the past 4 years through the Chesapeake Bay Mini-Grant.

The district strongly supports rotational grazing as an environmentally sound agricultural practice. We have dedicated our time to grant applications, plan writing and implementation, field day preparation, and newsletter articles that support rotational grazing. The Bay Technician currently sits on the Southwest Project Grass Chapter board and the State Project Grass Committee where she serves as the State Conference Chairperson.

Riparian Buffers and Stream-bank fencing – the Spring Creek Community Watershed Plan, the Penns Valley Conservation Association’s Plan, the Spruce Creek Watershed Association’s Keystone Plan, the Juniata Cleanwater Partnership’s Watershed Assessment, the Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (WRAS) State Water Plan, the Clearwater Conservancy’s River Conservation Plan, and the Foster Joseph Sayers Lake Assessment Study **ALL** state that the stream-bank stabilization and riparian protection on agricultural land are highly effective methods to reduce sediment and nutrient loads to the stream. There are recommendations in all the watershed group’s assessments for buffer establishments on farmland as well as installation of additional BMPs that will reduce sediment and nutrient runoff from farms. The District recognizes the importance of riparian buffers. We have assisted with many fencing programs through various agencies such as DEP, CBF, and NRCS. We continue encouraging landowners in the establishment of riparian buffers. In our last Growing Greener program – “*Agricultural Best Management Practice Implementation Program*” and in our most recently awarded grant – “*Agricultural Best Management Practices Implementation Program II*” landowners received additional points on their evaluation worksheet – therefore they have a greater chance of receiving cost-share monies if they installed stream bank fencing.

Nutrient Management Plans – The Centre County Conservation District strongly supports nutrient management as an environmentally sound agricultural practice. We have dedicated our time to plan writing and review, workshops, presentations, and newsletter articles that encourage nutrient management plan development. Farmers who wish to participate in many of our cost-share programs are required to have a nutrient management plan. Centre County Conservation District has two PA Certified Nutrient Management Specialists on staff.

Composting and Dry Stack Pads – The Centre County Conservation District highly recommend manure composting, and dry stack pads as methods of waste storage systems. In our last Growing Greener program – “*Agricultural Best Management Practice Implementation Program*” landowners were offered 90% cost-share funding for these types of BMPs. Liquid manure storage systems were discouraged and the landowners were offered only 50% cost-share funding for this practice. With our new grant - “*Agricultural Best Management Practices Implementation Program II*”, no cost-share funding will be available for the construction of liquid manure storages.

The District considers composting as an environmentally sound alternative in waste management. Composting shrinks the volume of manure, making transporting less labor intensive and time consuming. Composting manure also address nutrient, odor and weed issues.

“Agricultural Best Management Practice Implementation Program” landowners were offered 90% cost-share funding to install a composting system; conversely, we had a difficult time convincing farmers to compost. From this experience we learned that farmers view composting as a labor intensive practice and they aren’t interested in purchasing the necessary extra equipment, such as a compost turner. Although we did not construct a manure compost pad with these funds, we plan to continue to try to make composting more appealing to farmers by addressing their concerns about the practice.

Local Foods Initiative - The District is involved with the local food movement in this county for many reasons. The Local Foods Initiative encourages environmentally sound farming. In addition, farms that sale their products locally support agriculture in this county and maintain a good economic base for the industry.

Goals for Centre County’s Local Foods Program:

1. Build relationships among and between producers and institutional buyers (restaurants, grocery stores, schools etc)
2. Educate producers and buyers regarding a wide range of topics related to enhancing their ability to work together as well as to help producers take greater advantage of direct marketing opportunities.
3. Promote the concept and potential of local foods and produce
4. Expand participation in the Local Foods Network
5. Help to identify and prioritize needs and projects related to expanding markets for locally produced food.
6. Increase the public’s awareness and appreciation of, as well as participation in, local agriculture

Remaining Future Needs

The current agricultural programs that we administered at the Centre County Conservation District have generated interest; we have a list of farmers who are waiting for cost-share funding to help installing BMPs on their farms.

Based on the work accomplished in this three-year time span, we have a good estimate of the future Chesapeake Bay Program workload. Through the programs we are proposing for our Chesapeake Bay Program “Special Projects” and the issues we plan to address in the following five years, we plan to accomplish the goal set for us by the PA Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy.

We plan to recruit more landowners to participate in our various programs. Our emphasis on Slab Cabin, Little Fishing Creek, and Penns Creek and Spruce Creek watersheds is important because sections of these streams are on the 303-(d) list for impaired streams. There is a future need for cost-share funding to assist with the installment of agricultural BMPs in these watersheds

Our upcoming No-Till Promotion is a needed program in Centre County. The development of this program will help meet the no-till acreage goal of the Pennsylvania – Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy. Chesapeake Bay funding could help develop and sustain the no-till promotion in Centre County.

We will expand our participation with the Local Foods Initiative. This is an important movement to help keep small family farms viable. Through our support of this Initiative, we will help achieve the goals and priorities outlined by Governor Rendell and Secretary McGinty in the *Greater Environmental and Public Health Protection As a Driver of Economic Growth: The Rendell Administration's Agenda For DEP* “ In the Overall Administration Priorities it states “...Environmental protection is too often seen as a tradeoff with economic growth rather than as an engine of efficiency, productivity, and enhanced competitiveness. To the extent this win/lose mentality persists; society will fail to take the necessary steps to protect the environment and will compromise quality of life and enhanced prosperity. To help change this dynamic, DEP will, in all programs – Support and encourage economic development that protects the environment and create jobs”. Also it is states as a Priorities “In the Community Revitalization and Development section, DEP will in all programs....Eliminate incentives for sprawl development and promote preservation of agricultural lands.

- Ensure community and land use planning and regulations pay close attention to ag. needs and viability
- Provide business planning, resources, and incentives
- Ensure agriculture is effectively represented in all economic development efforts and discussions
- Support and expand agricultural land preservation efforts

Remaining Future Needs-continued

Our immediate future need is financial support for our upcoming “Special Projects”. The Projects are located in specific watersheds in Centre County. We are focusing our time in three impaired watersheds: Spruce Creek/Halfmoon Creek, Slab Cabin Run and Little Fishing Creek. We will combine our efforts with the many partners who are participating with the Centre County Conservation District to meet the most critical environmental issues in the most cost-effective manner.

Chesapeake Bay Program - Special Project Synopsis

The Centre County Conservation District will provide cost-share funding to farms that are willing to install stream-bank fence, rotational grazing system and/or a cover crop system, develop or update a conservation plan, and develop a nutrient management plan. Other BMPs will be offered based on the farm's environmental needs so that a whole farm plan is achieved. We are recruiting new farmers, but also including our current list of Bay farmers for this program. We rank farms using the evaluation sheet we developed. The evaluation sheet was designed so landowners who are located in an impaired watershed are first to be eligible for the cost-share funding. The evaluation sheet gives additional points to landowners whose farms are located in identified this impaired watersheds. The evaluation sheet will eliminate – where applicable- those landowners who are not willing to install stream-bank fencing.

Eligible Landowners will install stream-bank fencing and convert some land into sustainable pasture and/or use a cover crop system. A grazing system will be prepared to reduce the amount of acreage eroded due to poor sod cover. Also the grazing system can help limit the areas of un-stable animal concentration areas. Landowners are required to have a Nutrient Management Plan developed with all BMPs listed. A Landowner - District contract will be signed. The contract will list the scheduled BMPs. The schedule BMP installation sequence will list stream-bank fencing as the first BMP installed.

Other BMPs will be offered to help further reduce sediment and nutrient pollution to the stream. The Centre County Conservation District staff will select the additional BMPs as the most appropriate practices based on each farm's environmental need. These additional BMPs are: heavy use area protection, roof run-off systems, diversions, and access road stabilization. Liquid manure storages will not be a cost-sharable item within this Project.

With our funding, the Centre County Conservation District will augment other agency programs. We will offer additional cost-share funding that will complement other cost-share programs such as NRCS-CREP. By working in conjunction with other agencies, we will use their monies – when possible – other funding sources to establish riparian buffers, erect stream-bank fencing, and install agricultural crossings. We will use our funding to install grazing systems, and build other best management practices. However, the CCCD will match other agency funds so each landowner will receive 100% cost-share monies to erect stream-bank fence and build an agricultural stream crossing. The CCCD's remaining funds will provide 80% cost-share to install other practices to accomplish a more holistic conservation system. Liquid manure storages will not be funded through this program.

Project 1 Spruce Creek Watershed Program

Spruce Creek is part of the Little Juniata Watershed (subbasin 11-A). Centre County Conservation District was awarded funding from Chesapeake Bay Foundation-Small Watershed Grant and Chesapeake Bay Program to work in this watershed.

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and California University of Pennsylvania offered to cost-share 25% for the installation of stream-bank fencing, riparian buffer establishment, and stream crossings. The staff of US Fish and Wildlife has pledge time and material towards the construction of best management practices in the Spruce Creek Watershed.

The PSU – Center for Watershed Stewardship students are currently working in the Halfmoon Creek/Spruce Creek Watershed as part of the Keystone Initiative. They have identified 38 landowners that live along impaired stretches of the Halfmoon and Spruce Creek. As this program develops, the Watershed Stewardship students will develop a riparian designs and fish habitat restoration for participating landowners in the watershed.

CCCD's intent is to use the various funding sources to install BMPs on identified farms. The BMPs planned for this project include stream-bank fencing, riparian buffers, cover crops, and rotational grazing system (to include exterior/interior fence and off stream watering system). We are currently working on five consecutive farms along the Halfmoon Creek within the Spruce Creek Watershed.

The following are partners that are assisting with CCCD in the Spruce Creek Watershed:

- Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
- California University of Pennsylvania
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation – Small Watershed Grant
- PADEP Growing Greener Grant
- PADEP fencing program
- Chesapeake Bay Program
- Penn State University – Center for Watershed Stewardship
- Spruce Creek Watershed Community
- Huntingdon County Conservation District
- NRCS - CREP
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

Project 2 Slab Cabin Run Watershed Program

Slab Cabin Run is located in the Bald Eagle/Spring Creek Watershed (subbasin 09-C). We are partnering with the State College Borough Water Authority has hosted two roundtable discussions with the Slab Cabin Run area landowners. The Water Authority contacted those landowners and invited them to meet with FSA, NRCS and CCCD staff to discuss our environmental and agriculture programs. The State College Water Authority has offered to purchase and plant large potted trees for landowners who are willing to establish riparian areas along Slab Cabin Run. NRCS and FSA offered the Conservation Enhancement Reserve Program as a funding source. The CCCD offered to install additional BMPs to meet additional conservation need at each farm.

The following are partners that are assisting with CCCD in the Slab Cabin Creek Watershed:

- State College Borough Water Authority
- Chesapeake Bay Program
- PADEP Growing Greener Grant
- PADEP- fencing program
- ClearWater Conservancy
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- NRCS-CREP

Improvements in the 303(d) watersheds are a high priority for many organizations. The Centre County Conservation District has developed partners with these organizations to help with this Project.

List of Partner Contributions for the Spruce Creek and Slab Cabin Run Projects:

- LANDOWNERS - Participating landowners will contribute 20% of the total costs of best management practices installed at their farm. This amount equals \$100,000
- WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONSERVANCY – WPC promised 25% cost-share for the installation of stream-bank fencing, cattle crossings, and the planting of warm season grasses in the Halfmoon Watershed. This amount is estimated at \$50,000.
- CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA Partners for Fish and Wildlife – The University has promised 25% of the cost to install stream-bank fencing, cattle crossings, and the planting of warm season grasses in the Halfmoon Watershed. This amount is estimated at \$50,000.
- NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE – CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM
- THE CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM - 3 farms = \$80,000
- STATE COLLEGE BOROUGH WATER AUTHORITY- The Water Authority has promised to plant large trees in the riparian zone of Slab Cabin Run. The estimated amount to purchase and plant the trees is \$25,000
- PROJECT GRASS – This grazing support group offers technical and financial support for the installation of rotational grazing systems for the state of Pennsylvania. Average cost –share amount = \$10,000/year
- PADEP – GROWING GREENER GRANT PROGRAM - \$300,000 from the “Round-7” to continue this project for an additional three years 2005-2008. PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY – Center for Watershed Stewardship- The graduate students (under the supervision of their professors) will help landowners develop a vegetative riparian buffer. The students also offered to assist with tree planting. (See attached letters 7)

Long Term Goals – to sustain our future needs

Rotational Grazing – Centre County Conservation District- Chesapeake Bay Program will continue to promote rotational grazing. We are currently assisting with the local grazing group and would like to continue this support. We help the “Centre County Grazers” by applying for PACD Chesapeake Bay Mini Grants to fund field days. We arrange these field days and pasturewalks in addition to finding special guest speakers to share their expertise with our group. We will also continue working with Project Grass Southwest Chapter and the Project Grass State Committee. We will seek additional grant funding to help off set the costs of installing rotational grazing systems on Centre County farms.

Riparian Buffers – Centre County Conservation District- Chesapeake Bay Program will always promote the installation of stream-bank fencing and encourage the planting of woody vegetation in riparian areas. We will continue to promote CREP, DEP fencing program, and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy’s fencing program.

Nutrient Management Plan Development – Centre County Conservation District-Chesapeake Bay Program will continue encouraging farmers to develop Nutrient Management Plans for their farms. We will promote the PDIP program and promote the ACT- 6 Nutrient Management Program.

No- Till – Centre County Conservation District- Chesapeake Bay Program would like to further explore a funding program to help farmers convert to a no-till program. We will continue to find support from other organizations to help us with the promotion of no-till. We are currently looking to develop and maintain partnerships with Pheasants Forever, Centre County Cooperative Extension, Centre County Crop Association, and USDA-NRCS.

Watershed Groups throughout Centre County identify agriculture as a significant contributor of sediment and nutrients in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed - The Centre County Conservation District has developed a partnership role with the various watershed groups in the county. Many of these groups have received DEP –Growing Greener Grants to fund the development of an assessment for their watersheds. Each assessment has an implementation component. These watershed groups have identified stream-bank fencing, riparian buffers, and other agricultural best management practices as needed conservation work to improve water quality. The Centre County Bay Program could give assistance with the implementation of the Watershed Assessment recommendations.

Local Foods Initiative

AMD – Centre County Conservation District-Chesapeake Bay Program could work within the Moshannon Creek and Beech Creek Watersheds to assist with Education/Outreach and provide grant writing support. We can also partner with the Headwaters RC and D.

