

Franklin County Conservation District Holds Streamside Eco-Days



Mike Kusko, Service Forester at the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (retired) hosted a forestry station at a past event. At this station, students discussed the power of trees to help keep stream temperatures down in an effort to slow algal growth.

Streamside Eco-Days is a hands-on, educational program specifically geared toward middle school students. The Franklin County Conservation District and other organizations such as Penn State Extension, PA Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service teach students about wetlands management, recycling, forestry, wildlife habitat and the importance of water quality. The programs are held at Waltonian Meadows, owned and operated by the Franklin County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League and at the conservation district's Ag Heritage Center.

The event allows students to experience hands-on watershed activities to coincide with what they have already learned about watersheds in the classroom. Students are divided into 5-7 groups and rotate to various stations.

This program has been presented to Greencastle-Antrim Middle School, Chambersburg and Fannett-Metal Middle School students. It is the district's goal to present this program to all middle school students in the county. The Greencastle School District now holds their own Eco-Days based on the conservation district's program. For 2014, about 680 seventh graders from both North and South Chambersburg Area Middle School will participate in Eco-Days.

The First National Bank of Mercersburg is helping to sponsor the event.

