

## Lawrence County Conservation District Helps to Revitalize City Lots



Volunteers from New Castle High School's service learning program have helped Lawrence County Conservation District by planting trees.

Lawrence County Conservation District's (LCCD) efforts to revitalize city lots have been recognized nationally. The program is featured on the cover page of the January 2012 issue of *Forestry Notes*.

From the article:

Several years ago, leaders from Lawrence County in western Pennsylvania were faced with a dilemma – what to do with 150 lots that had fallen into repository due to delinquent taxes? When the lots did not sell at auction, and were not claimed by an adjacent landowner, the county was left to maintain them.

Then, in 2007, county commissioners had an idea: Revitalize the lots to bring more green space to the City of New Castle and the surrounding area. The county could liven up the unmowed lots with trees, shrubs and native grasses, **all with the help of the Lawrence County Conservation District.**

County Commissioner Chairman Steve Craig said, "Our conservation district took on the project and developed it in a way I could never have imagined."

The county provided \$2,000 to get the program started. After those funds were used to buy seedlings, tree tubes and signage, the district was awarded \$40,000 in 2009 from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. This funding allowed the district to plant 200 trees over four planting seasons, ending this fall.

The district's goal is to revitalize at least ten lots a year. The district is using this project to increase watershed health and creating partnerships to see it through.



Area after tree planting.

