

S & W Conservation District Reports

The highlight of the year for the Lancaster County Soil and Water Conservation District was the opportunity to host the 20th Annual Convention of Pennsylvania Soil and Water Conservation District Directors, and Soil and Water Conservation Commission. The convention was held on November 8-9-10, at the Host Town Motel in Lancaster.

The featured speaker of the convention was Lieut. Gov. Raymond Broderick. Another highlight was a group bus tour of two Amish farms, a tour of the Ephrata Cloister, and a visit to the Landis Valley Museum.

As an added attraction to the convention, associate directors conducted tours to various places of interest throughout the Lancaster County District. Several points of interest that were visited are several farms using cropland terraces and sod waterways, Muddy Run project, Pennsylvania Dairy, a pretzel factory, and an Amish carriage shop.

There were numerous other activities conducted and participated in during 1967. The district has been involved in the development of a long-range plan for the conservation and wise use of Lancaster County's natural resources. At present all cooperating agencies are working on this project.

Approximately 300 people attended the district's annual field day held in July at the farms of Edwin Kurtz and Louis Hurst, north of Ephrata. Ivan Yost of Narvon R2 won the contour plowing contest held in conjunction with the field day. Ivan then represented Lancaster county at the State Plowing Contest at Somerset, Pa.

Conservation Education

A total of 1205 FFA members and adults were introduced to conservation education through the public schools by the use of 25 conservation field trips and 34 conservation films during 210 hours of instruction. Students were also involved with such projects as collecting and mounting soil profiles, farm field mapping, applying conservation practices to school farms, and using many cooperating agencies to enhance the instructional areas of conservation.

Two 4-H clubs in the county learned conservation principles and techniques by constructing exhibits, preparing speeches and reports, watching films and participating in land judging contests.

The district participated in

soil stewardship week with newspaper, television, radio and church programs.

With the assistance of the cooperating agencies the district held 5 community watershed meetings in the county.

District Cooperator Program

A total of 133 landowners became cooperators during the last year. With these additions there are now 1,414 cooperators using conservation practices on 141,182 acres. One hundred seven basic farm plans were prepared for 10,751 acres of the county's farmland. In addition 39 old plans were revised. Technical services were provided on the farms of 2,062 landowners.

Each year progress is being made in the establishment of conservation practices to reduce the costly process of erosion. The following erosion control practices were established during 1967.

Diversion terraces—5 069 feet; grassed waterways—68 3 acres; cropland terraces—32 996 feet; pasture and hayland planting and renovation—215 acres, strip-cropping—2,067 acres; open drains—1,175 feet; tile drains—12,837 feet, mulching road cut and fill slopes—2.47 acres, revitalizing grass on medial strips

and interchange islands—37 miles.

The district also encouraged the removal of 200 dangerous trees from along the county's highways.

Financing Conservation

Lancaster county farmers received \$94,999.00 in cost sharing benefits in 1967. Farmers who enroll and complete practices, according to required specifications, earn cost-share payments. In most cases the payment represents half the cost of completing the practice.

Government lending agencies continued to stress services to assist and promote the family farm during the past year and to work with the Soil Conservation District.

To accomplish the above objective, lending authorities include loans to finance all conservation approved practices. Time and time again a few dollars investment in conservation practices results in net income returns many times over the small outlay, and continues year after year. The continued success of farming in our county, especially the family farm operations, depends to a large degree to soil and water conservation practices that are carried

out on our farms.

Soil and water association loans are also available to watershed organizations to carry out plans to protect, develop and utilize the land and water resources in small watersheds.

During 1967 Lancaster county farmers and other rural residents benefited by \$1,579,640 from the loans and other services provided by government lending agencies.

Woodland Management

Close surveillance of the county's woodlands is maintained to spot any indication of insect damage. A light plane is used for this observation by air. Fifty-eight acres of trees were planted under district supervision in 1967. A total of 206,000 board feet of timber was marked for cutting.

Wildlife and Recreation

Wildlife preservation in Lancaster county is directly associated with the soil and water conservation program. Soil conservation practices contribute to good wildlife management and help to increase the numbers of wildlife on the land. As an example, conservation practices such as diversion terraces, grassed waterways and open drainage ditches are kept in a

grass cover which provides good

food and cover for rabbits and ringnecks. Contour strip cropping provides many field edges which makes better habitat for wildlife. In addition to soil conservation practices, there have been many specific wildlife practices initiated during the last year that have contributed to the success of the wildlife management program.

Lancaster county farmers during 1967 completed the following wildlife management programs:

Developed 37 acres of wildlife habitat; converted 30 acres to wildlife conservation or recreation facilities; cut .3 acres of wildlife borders; maintained 10 game refuges; maintained 200 safety zones.

On four game projects in the district there is a total 28,087 acres being managed for wildlife improvement. Lancaster county also has three tracts of State Game Lands comprising a total of 2,472 acres. On these three tracts 14 acres of woodland border cuttings were made and 1.2 miles of roads maintained to game food plots.

In 1967, 68 miles of stream were approved for stocking, 4 miles of stream were improved for fish habitation, and 392,459 fish were planted in Lancaster county's waterways.



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