

# 140 Attend Soil Meeting

A pair of Franklin and Marshall College students urged the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources to take more vigorous action to prevent soil erosion, which last year dumped a million tons of precious topsoil into the Conestoga River alone.

From a study of siltation in the Conestoga watershed last year, F&M students R. Craig Kochel and Robert A. Dorsey, concluded that the county can expect to lose approximately 8½ inches of topsoil every 1,000 years.

Their testimony was a highlight of a 2½-hour public hearing conducted by the state Environmental Quality Board in Hensel Hall to determine water quality standards for streams in Lancaster and portions of Berks, Chester, Lebanon and Dauphin counties.

Terming soil erosion a "grave situation," Kochel said the soil runoff, not including losses created by Tropical Storm Agnes last June, ran to a staggering 730,000 tons in 1972.

While siltation standards are not proposed in the state's criteria, Kochel said sediment directly affects the quality of streams and urged DER for stricter enforcement of soil erosion laws.

His remarks were echoed by spokesmen for conservation and sportsmen's groups - notably by the Pennsylvania Fish Commission, the Lancaster County Conservation District, Federated Sportsmen of Lancaster County and the Lancaster League of Women Voters.

Dr. Maurice Goddard, DER secretary and chairman of the hearing attended by 140 persons, noted that the new erosion control law, which goes into force July 1, will help alleviate the stream sediment situation.

But he said his department is not currently equipped with either the money or manpower to

immediately enforce all provisions of the new law.

Goddard said the major focus will be concentrated on earthmoving activities. Farmers will have until 1977 to implement a conservation plan for their farms to stop soil erosion.

Kochel also told the hearing that sewer construction teams along the banks of the Conestoga were creating excessive siltation of the river by stripping virtually all vegetation from its banks. Little restoration work is being done, he said.

Much of Wednesday night's testimony called for inclusion of various watershed areas to be designated as conservation zones.

Airport issued earlier Wednesday recommended only the Hammer Creek watershed from Speedwell Forge Lake to its source in Lebanon County be labeled a conservation area.

David W. Daniels, a biologist for the Pennsylvania Fish Commission, requested that Creek Basin and the Fishing Creek basins be added to the conservation zone classifications.

It is probable that waste discharge facilities already existing in the conservation areas will have to be upgraded to satisfy the rigid standards, and that no new waste discharge sources will be permitted.

Hugh Hetzer of the Chester Water Authority, also requested that water quality standards for the east and west branches of the Octoraro Creek be equalized, and the west branch from Puseyville to Black Rock become a conservation area.

He also sought to have boating and fishing banned from the Octoraro Reservoir, not because the authority doesn't filter drinking water drawn from it, but because of expense and supervision.

Mrs. John Beihele of the

League of Women Voters, said she was disappointed the Fishing Creek area was not designated a conservation area.

Robert K. Mowrer, of the Federated Sportsmen, sought to include 11 other basins as conservation designations, including the west branch of the Octoraro and Fishing Creek. The others are Reynolds Run, McCreary Run, Tucquan Creek, Trout Run, Middle Creek, Segloch Run, Rock Run, Donegal Creek tributaries and Shearers Creek.

## HIT PRESENTATION

The main criticism of the DER standards was its presentation, which many persons said was too technical for the average citizen to understand.

Only one person asked for a lowering of standards. That was C. E. Taylor, manager of the ore division of Bethlehem Mines Corp.

He sought to have the amount of dissolved solids permitted in the upper reaches of the Conestoga substantially raised.

Taylor noted that in correcting air pollution at its Grace Mine, the firm is using a "scrubber" unit which removes pollutants by a water process. This is eventually discharged into the river at higher than recommended levels.

A resident, Terry Brown, opposed Taylor's testimony contending any lowering of dissolved solid standard would be detrimental to the river's aquatic life and the water supply.

An overflowing trunk line, spilling untreated material from a city sewerage in the Little Conestoga Creek line near the Maple Grove pumping station also came under fire from several residents.

Mayor Thomas J. Monaghan replied saying if surrounding townships had cooperated earlier in expanding sewage lines and treatment plants, many of the water pollution problems wouldn't be so acute today.

He said only federal approval is

holding up the replacement of the overtaxed trunk line that residents are complaining about.

Twenty-five and a half miles of streams in the lower Susquehanna River basin are now polluted or soon will be unless waste treatment standards are toughened the report by the state Bureau of Water Quality Management said.

The waters affected include parts of Conoy Creek near Elizabethtown, Mill Creek near New Holland, Conestoga Creek near the city, Lititz Run, Cocalico Creek near Ephrata and Chickies and Little Chickies creeks near Manheim and Mount Joy in Lancaster County, and Valley Creek near Atglen, and Tweed Creek near Oxford, in Chester County.

Most have been hurt by municipal and industrial sewage discharges nearby, the report notes.

The report takes in a total of 133 streams, ponds and rivulets in all of Lancaster County along with small chunks of Berks, Chester, Lebanon and Dauphin counties.

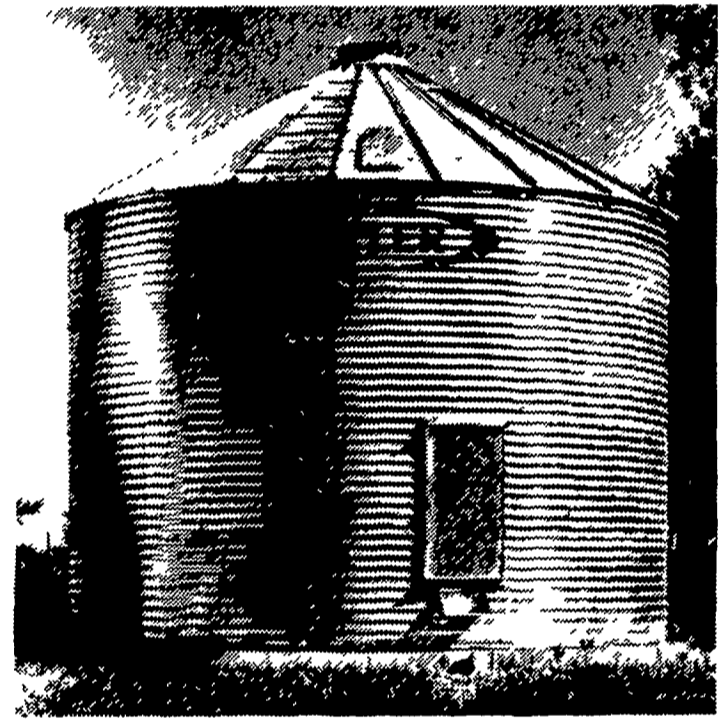
Between now and April 15 the state will be refining existing

regulations and creating new ones. The DER must send its water quality criteria to the federal government for approval by then. When government approves the standards, the state will then be empowered to make those discharging wastes into streams comply with the regulations, if they haven't already.

About 30 specific local industries, municipalities and individuals stand to be affected by any change in the regulations, including Elizabethtown, Manheim, Mount Joy, Lititz, Ephrata, New Holland and Terre Hill boroughs, as well as Lancaster City, according to the report.

Besides focusing on stream clean-up, the state report also recommends an increase in the number of county creeks to be set aside for cold-water fishing, trout stocking and conservation. Restrictions on waste discharge are harsher in these areas than in the rest of local water sheds designated for general uses like water supply, recreation, warm water fishing and power generation.

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