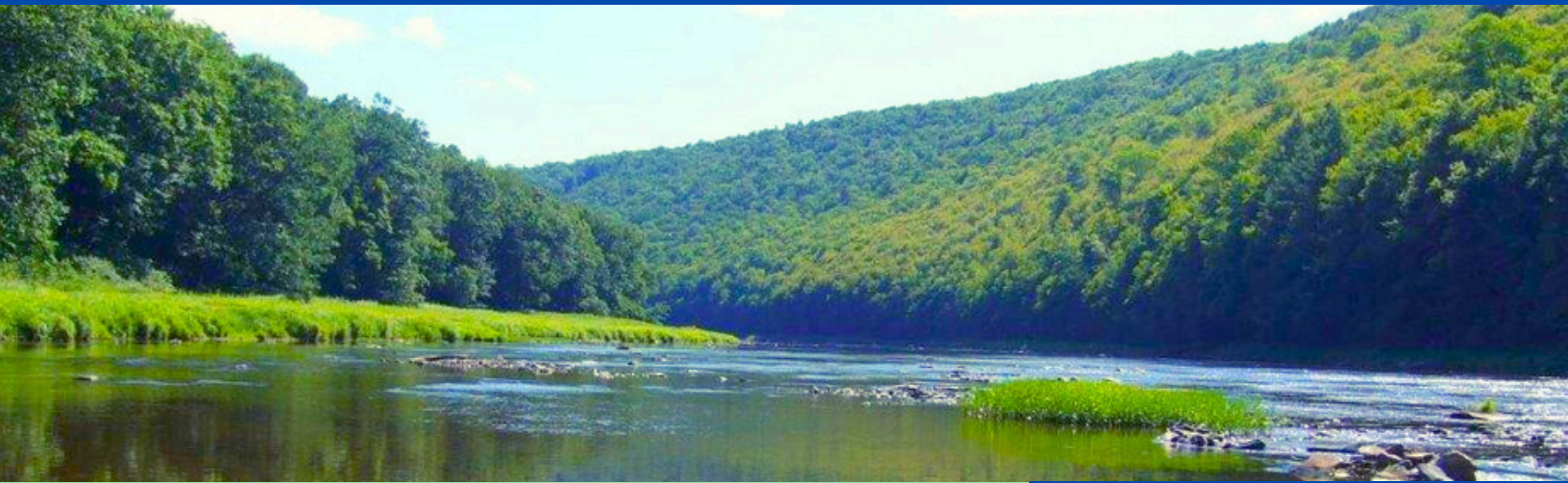


# SPRING 2026 E-BLAST



# CLARION CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## Hoppy Spring!

by Hannah Bequeath  
Education/Outreach Coordinator



A brutal winter makes springtime that much sweeter, doesn't it? Happy Spring everyone! Open a window and let the fresh air and frog song in as you read on to learn more about what the Clarion Conservation District (CCD) has been up to and what is to come!

Whether it was a webinar or an in-person event/conference, this winter held many opportunities to keep learning despite the conditions outside. Read the Winter Recap page for info on past events- many are annual, so you can start planning for next year! The peeps are out and I don't mean the marshmallows! Inside you will find articles on Soil Testing & Spring Peepers - have you heard them?! April is National Safe Digging Month -see DGLVR page for more info.

Be sure to check out the last page for more information on community events we have planned this spring such as a Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Removal Training, Trash Clean-Up, Invasive Species Scavenger Hunt, Forestry Walk, and more. Our main goal at the District is to protect Clarion County's natural resources. Thank you for your interest in our efforts!

## CONTENTS

- Recap of Winter 2026 Events
- Watershed Updates
- Agriculture Updates & "Soil Testing" Article
- DGLVR Updates
- E&S Updates
- Featured Species: Spring Peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*)
- Poster Contest & PA Leopold Conservation Award
- Upcoming Events

## RECAP OF WINTER 2026 EVENTS

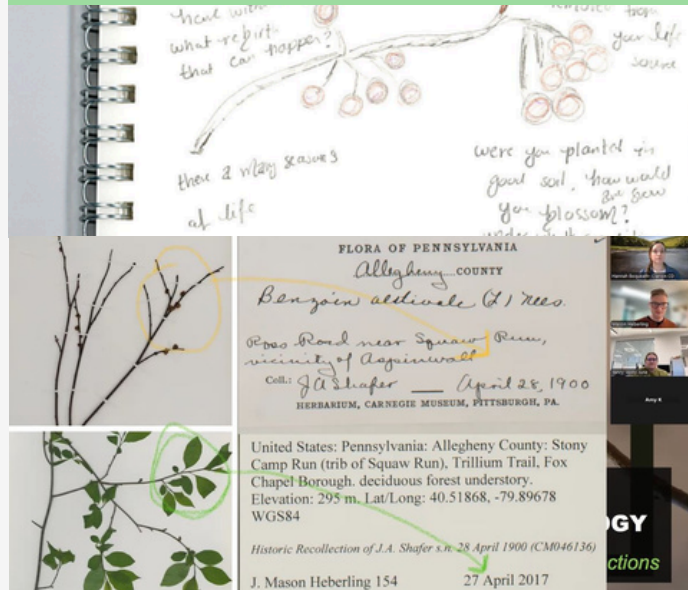
by Hannah Bequeath, Education/Outreach Coordinator

**January**- Ten people braved the weather and attended the **Winter Nature Journaling** event held at the Clarion Conservation District (CCD) office that introduced the concept of nature journaling as a peaceful, thought provoking way to record observations of nature and potential changes. The event educated participants on identification and citizen science tools such as the iNaturalist, Seek, and iMapInvasives apps that can report their findings to potentially aid in real scientific research. The **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Farmer's Breakfast** took place in Clarion, PA (see Ag page for more info).

**February**- The District tabled at the annual **Clarion Forest Landowner's Conference** held at the PennWest Clarion University science building in Clarion, PA. CCD is a part of the Clarion Forest Stewardship Committee that organizes the conference each year. CCD partnered with Mason Heberling; Associate Curator of Botany at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, and Abby June Yancy; PhD Candidate in the Department of Geology and Environmental Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh, to host a **Phenology Webinar** (pictured right- top) that introduced about 30 participants to the concept of phenology, current research that is being done, and citizen science tools such as Nature's Notebook, that can be used by anybody to help contribute to scientific data and research.

**March** - The **28<sup>th</sup> Annual Western PA Grazing Conference** took place in Clarion, PA and included a free pre-conference documentary showing of **Roots So Deep** (pictured right- middle) that was open to the general public (see Ag page for more info). CCD tabled at the annual **Clarion Woodfest** event at the Clarion Mall, Clarion, PA. A **Soil Health & Composting Workshop** (pictured right-bottom) was held at the end of the month at the Over Family farm in Sligo, PA with about 30 people in attendance. Thank you to partners: Dale Kriner (USDA-NRCS Earth Team Volunteer, Quiet Creek Herb Farm, Clarion County Master Gardeners, and the Over Family. Financial support for the "Enhancing Climate and Water Education in Clarion County" project has been provided by the Department of Environmental Protection's 2025 Environmental Education Grant Program. Go to the Watershed Page for more info on the next programs in the series!

**Below:** CCD's "Enhancing Climate & Water Education in Clarion County" project through a DEP Environmental Education grant is underway with the first few events already taking place (Fall Nature Journaling, Winter Nature Journaling participant journal entry pictured below top, and Phenology Webinar pictured below bottom.) More to come this spring / summer! Join us!



**Below:** About 40 people attended the free showing of the **Roots So Deep** documentary exploring the relationship between farm management practices and the environment.

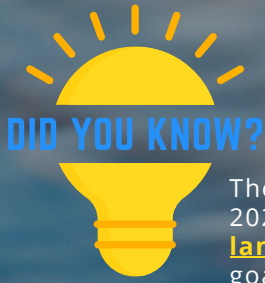


**Below:** Participants at the Soil Health & Composting workshop got to learn about soil via a soil pit, learn about the soil food web through an interactive activity, and about food waste/composting. 25 free compost bins, Rodale composting books, and soil test kits were distributed thanks to the DEP EE Grant.



# Watershed Updates

by: Hannah Bequeath, Education / Outreach Coordinator



## DID YOU KNOW? WPC's Riparian Restoration Tree Planting Initiative

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) is accepting applications year-round through June 2027 for its Riparian Restoration Tree Planting Initiative, which **provides native trees to landowners planted at no cost** as part of Pennsylvania's statewide water quality improvement goals. Landowners with open (or mostly open) land along waterways in more than 30 counties may apply (Clarion County is included). Funding covers the costs of: a variety of trees and shrubs native to Pennsylvania, tree protection materials labor to plant the trees.



**Qualifications:** Sites should have: a stream, including intermittent tributaries, springs and runs, that has little to no woody vegetation within 35 feet of the streambank; at least 250 feet of linear bank and a 50-foot setback from the stream edge (approximately ¼ of an acre of open riparian area); a public or private landowner, including farmers, willing to allow native trees to be planted within a mapped project area and consent to multiyear landowner agreement.

### How to Apply:

Applications are open year-round through June 2027. Apply at <https://bit.ly/3R68Mwg>. Or email Samuel Honchalk at [shonchalk@paconserve.org](mailto:shonchalk@paconserve.org) with your contact information, listing "Riparian Trees" in the subject line. If you have questions regarding the Riparian Restoration Tree Planting Initiative or the application process, please email Alysha Trexler at [atrexler@paconserve.org](mailto:atrexler@paconserve.org).



### UPCOMING 2026 PROGRAMS

The following programs are free, but you must register to reserve your spot. \*All programs, except the Water Workshop, are directed towards adults.\*

For more info and/or to register, go to [www.clarionconservation.com/events](http://www.clarionconservation.com/events)

 <b>22</b> January	<b>Noticing Nature: Winter Nature Journaling</b> CCD Office, Clarion, PA <small>*Participants will receive free journaling supplies</small>	5 - 6:30 PM
 <b>25</b> February	<b>Noticing Changes: Phenology Webinar</b> Online <small>*Participants will receive a free book on Phenology</small>	5 - 6:30 PM
 <b>28</b> March	<b>Soil Health &amp; Composting Workshop</b> Sligo, PA <small>*Participants will receive a free Compost Bin, Book, &amp; Soil Test Kit</small>	TBD
 <b>30</b> April	<b>Noticing Changes: Invasive Species</b> CCD Office, Clarion, PA <small>*Participants will receive a free field guide and native plant</small>	TBD
 <b>16</b> May	<b>The Power of Plants: Forestry Walk</b> Rimersburg Rod & Gun Club, Rimersburg, PA <small>*Participants will receive a free native tree, tree tube, stake, and an entry to win invasive species removal tools</small>	TBD
 <b>13</b> June	<b>Water Workshop*</b> Toby Boat Launch, Clarion, PA <small>*Free transportation available from Rimersburg to Clarion &amp; back. *Participants will receive discount coupons donated by the Clarion River Brewing Company and an entry to win a rain barrel, an aquatic bug kit, or a freshwater fish identification guide. Free tour of PA American Water Facility- transportation from boat launch to facility &amp; back provided.</small>	TBD <small>*All ages welcome!</small>
 <b>27</b> June	<b>The Power of Plants: Rain Gardens &amp; Riparian Buffers</b> CCD Office, Clarion, PA <small>*Participants will receive a free native plant</small>	TBD

**Questions?**  
 Contact Hannah at [hbequeathccd@gmail.com](mailto:hbequeathccd@gmail.com) or call 814-393-6147

Financial support for the "Enhancing Climate and Water Education in Clarion County" project has been provided by the Department of Environmental Protection's 2025 Environmental Education Grant Program.

# Agriculture Updates

by Hannah Bequeath, Agriculture Conservation Technician (ACT)



The 28th Annual Western PA Grazing Conference (pictured above) was held on March 12<sup>th</sup> at the Trinity Point Church of God in Clarion, PA. Over 160 people attended the event. The keynote speaker, Steve Kenyon, of Greener Pastures Ranching Ltd. (a regenerative farm in Alberta, Canada) presented on growing soil and the abundance of insects and wildlife (his “employees”) he has on his farm that provide essential ecosystem services for his operation to succeed. A few favorite quotes were “Modern agriculture grows plants from the soil. Regenerative ag grows soil from the plants”, “It’s not drought that causes bare ground, its bare ground that causes drought”, and “Soil is the greatest source of freshwater in the world”.

Additionally, a free movie session was held the evening prior to the conference on March 11<sup>th</sup> featuring the documentary Roots So Deep that explores the relationship between neighboring farmers’ management practices (conventional vs. adaptive grazing practices) and the environment.

The conference is organized by the Western PA Grazing Conference Committee. Members include NRCS, Clarion, Clearfield, and Jefferson Conservation Districts, Penn State Extension, NW & SW PA Project Grass, and local farmers. Grant support was provided by the PA Grazing Lands Coalition. Thank you to all that attended, including all of our vendors and sponsors that supported the conference!

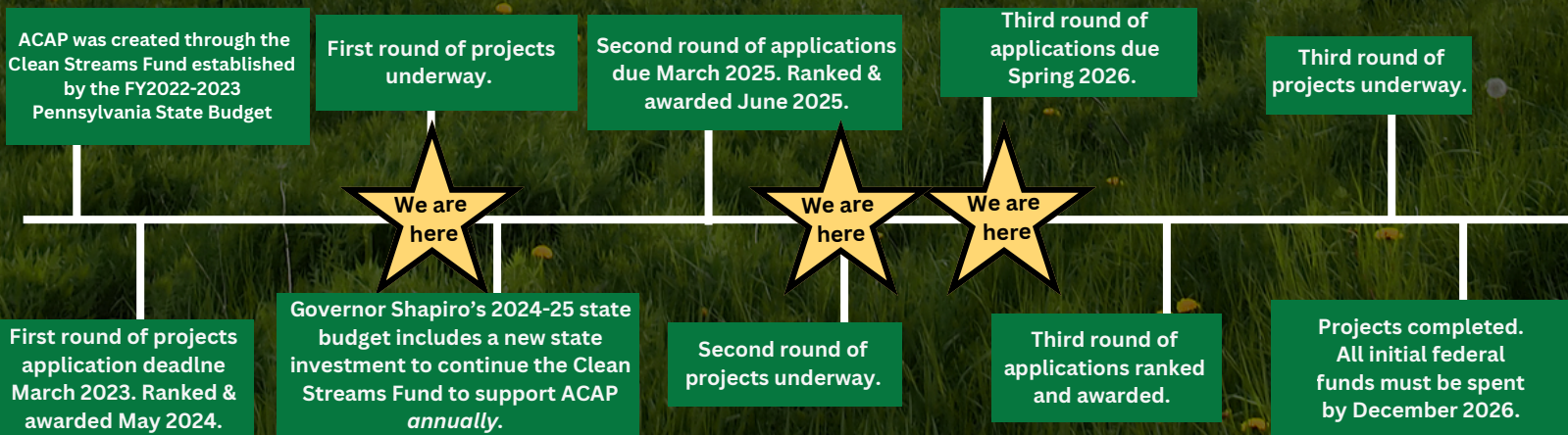
On January 30<sup>th</sup>, about 50 people joined us for the 5th Annual Farmer's Breakfast (pictured below); an opportunity for Clarion County producers to network with each other and gather info and updates from agencies that provide services to the ag community. Special thanks to Jane Burkett, Venango Conservation District, and Emily Rahalla, Armstrong Conservation District, for providing presentations on local ACAP projects that were completed in our neighboring counties.

Thank you to the Limestone Firehall for allowing us to use their hall for the event, Mauthes Country Corner for catering the delicious breakfast, and our partners who spoke and provided information to the farmers; Penn State Extension - Clarion County, USDA-NRCS, USDA-FSA, Clarion Venango Forest County Farm Bureau, Horizon Farm Credit, and SBDC-Ag Center of Excellence.



A busy construction season is ahead!  
6 ACAP projects have been contracted in Clarion County since the start of the program (2023).  
All 6 projects are predicted to be completed in 2026.

## Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) Time-line for Clarion County



# Soil Testing

by Hannah Bequeath, Agriculture Conservation Technician (ACT)

## Who should test soil?

- Anyone (farmers, gardeners, landscapers, landowners, etc.) experiencing the following problems: nutrient deficiencies in crops, poor plant growth and response from applied fertilizers, low crop yields or poor quality forages, irregular plant growth in your fields, managing manure or compost applications.

## Why should we test soil / what does the analysis tell you?

- A soil test measures **nutrient levels, soil / water pH, organic matter, and exchangeable acidity**.
- The final report includes the chemical analysis of the soil along with **lime and fertilizer recommendations** for the crop specified.
- Provides a decision making tool to determine what nutrients to apply and how much, increasing potential for higher yielding crops and higher quality crops, and aiding in more efficient fertilizer use / less waste & pollution.

## When should we test soil?

- Spring (before planting) / Fall
  - Sample fields the same time each year to achieve more accurate trends in the soil fertility.
  - Cropland and vegetable production: fall. Pastures and perennial crops: late summer.
- About every 3-5 years or more often if manure is applied or if you are trying to make large nutrient or pH changes in the soil.
  - Sandy-textured soils every 2 to 3 years
  - Clay soils every 3 to 4 years.
- However, if problems occur during the growing season, send in a soil sample for analysis.

## How to test your soil:

- **Tools Needed:**
  - Clean plastic bucket to collect soil samples.
  - Soil sampling tube, auger, or spade
  - Large paper or plastic bag to hold soil cores or sub-samples (grocery bags work well)
  - Sharpie / permanent marker for labeling
  - Sample bag/box from the soil test lab- Purchase a test kit from your county Penn State Extension office
    - ~\$7-10 / kit
    - 1 kit needed per field/growing area or for each 20 acres within a field
    - The test kit consists of a sample submission form, instructions on how to take a soil sample, a sample bag and return envelope for mailing your sample back to the laboratory. If interested in using your own sampling container or if you will be submitting 3+ samples, contact the Clarion County PSU Ext. office for instructions.
- **Sampling Depth:**
  - Fields that are plowed or chisel plowed: 8 inches deep
  - Fields that are no-tilled consistently: 8 inches deep for P & K and 4 inches deep for pH
  - Pasture Fields & Lawns: 4 inches deep
  - Gardens: 6-8 inches deep
- **Sampling Areas to Avoid:**
  - Farm lanes and field borders, fertilizer bands in crop rows, and any area that is very different from the rest of the field: (severely eroded areas, sandy spots, wet areas)
- **Collecting Soil Samples:**
  - Divide the sampling areas by field (and areas less than 20 acres within a field)
  - Use a random **zigzag pattern** across the sampling field/area
  - Collect samples (15- 20 individual samples for a farm field, 8-10 samples for lawn or garden) at the required depth to represent the “one” sample for the area and place the samples in the plastic bucket.
  - After collecting and placing the sub-samples in the plastic bucket:
    - Pour the entire amount into a plastic or paper grocery bag (if taking more than one soil test) – then continue taking the next field sample - don't forget to **label where it came from!**
    - Take the sample from the grocery bag and pour it out on newspaper where it can air-dry (do not add heat or microwave)
    - When the soil is dry. **Mix** the entire sample then place the sample in the soil testing bag/box. **Label where it came from!**
    - Complete the sample information form for sample identification, field history, and planned crops.



**PennState Extension**

Clarion County Penn State Extension Office  
160 Amsler Ave. Suite 1  
Shipperville, PA  
814-223-9028

### Sources:

1. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). "Soil Testing: Small Scale Solutions for your farm". January 2009. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/stelprdb1167377-soil-testing.pdf>. Accessed 1 April 2026.
2. Penn State Extension. "Soil Testing". Updated 5 July 2023. <https://extension.psu.edu/soil-testing>. Accessed 1 April 2026.

# DIRT, GRAVEL, & LOW VOLUME ROAD (DGLVR) UPDATES

by Alicia Ramsey, DGLVR Technician



Genetti Hotel & Suites 200 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA 17701 • Lycoming County

SEPTEMBER 29, 2026

PA Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Program  
2026 Annual Maintenance Workshop Offers – One Day ESM Re-certification!

## MUNICIPALITY DAY

7am: Registration and Full Breakfast

8am – 8:30am: Class Sessions

8:30am – 4:00pm: Field Trip (Includes lunch & time with Vendors)

REGISTRATION  
will be available  
May 4, 2026

"Municipality Day" cost is \$50 and will include a full breakfast, brief classroom session, field trips to several sites, lunch stop and with the Vendors back at the facility. During the field trip we will visit a variety of local sites to showcase Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Practices such as: road fill, crosspipe installations, outlet protection, underdrain, Driving Surface Aggregate DSA, vegetation management, managing off right-of-way drainage, infiltration practices and more.

**"If you have a current certification from attending the Center's ESM Training in the past 5 years, this Workshop will count as a re-certification for an additional 5 years."**

\*\*Hotel accommodations are available. Please see below for instructions and pricing.



Pennsylvania  
State Conservation Commission

### Upcoming Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) Trainings:

- April 29 & 30 (Crawford County)
- July 8 & 9 (Clarion County)
- August 4 & 5 (Clearfield County)
- September 2 & 3 (Lawrence County)

Each is a 2-day course. Registrants must attend both days to receive credit for this course. Registration at 7am. Training 8am - 4pm. Breakfast & lunch provided.

To register, go to

<https://dirtandgravel.psu.edu/course-registration/#ESM>

### Upcoming PA One Call / Pennsylvania 811 Trainings:

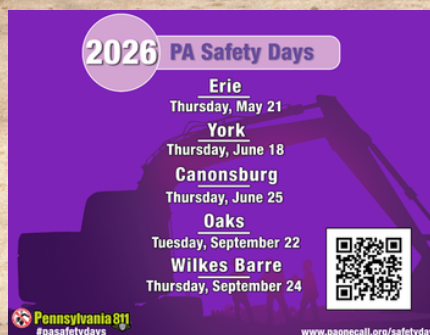
- **Locator Program? (Mercer County)**
- April 9 Excavator Program (Jefferson County)  
8am - 10am
- April 14 Project Planning Program (see below)
- April 16 Locator Program (Indiana County)  
8:30am - 12pm

Go to [www.pa1call.org](http://www.pa1call.org) to register / get more info on the above events.



National Safe Digging Month is a reminder for both excavators and homeowners to contact 811 at least 3 business days before starting any digging.

This can ensure facility owners and operators can accurately locate and mark underground lines, reducing the risk of accidental damage. Excavators can prevent injuries and reduce the risk of disruptive utility outages.



**811 Pennsylvania**

# PROJECT PLANNING PROGRAM

FREE

**TOPICS**

- Obligations under PA ACT 287 ✓
- Subsurface Utility Engineering ✓
- Coordinate PA ✓
- Best Practices ✓

4/14/2026 from 12:00pm - 1:00pm  
Lunch Provided Clarion Twp Municipal Building

For more information on the CCD DGLVR Program, please visit our website [www.clarionconservation/dglvr](http://www.clarionconservation/dglvr) or contact our DGLVR Technician, Alicia Ramsey, at [ramseyccd@gmail.com](mailto:ramseyccd@gmail.com) or call 814-221-4094 (cell), 814-393-6139 (office).

# EROSION AND SEDIMENT (E&S) UPDATES

by Hannah Bequeath, Education/Outreach Coordinator

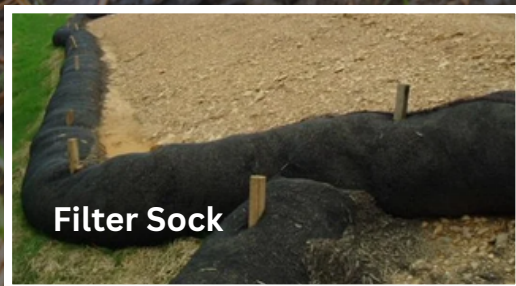
Erosion and sediment (E&S) controls are crucial for water quality protection because they prevent soil particles (which often contain pollutants like nutrients, pesticides, and heavy metals) from leaving a site via wind or water and entering waterways. By managing runoff and stabilizing soil, these measures reduce high turbidity (cloudy water/sedimentation), prevent the destruction of aquatic habitats, limit nutrient loading/harmful algal blooms, and protect municipal water supplies. Erosion controls stop soil particles from detaching (e.g., mulching, blankets), while sediment controls trap soil already displaced (e.g., silt fences, basins).

## **Erosion Control Examples:**

- **Vegetation/Seeding:** Planting grass, trees, and shrubs is the most effective method for long-term stabilization.
- **Erosion Control Blankets/Mats:** Rolled products (fiber mats) used on slopes to prevent soil detachment and foster vegetation growth.
- **Mulching:** Applying materials like straw to cover bare soil, reducing raindrop impact.
- **Hydromulch /Hydroseeding:** Spraying a mixture of seed, mulch, and fertilizer to bind soil.
- **Retaining Walls:** Permanent structures that prevent erosion on steep slopes

## **Sediment Control Examples:**

- **Silt Fences:** Fabric barriers used to retain sediment on down-slope sides of disturbed areas.
- **Filter Socks/Berms:** Compost-filled tubes or berms that filter runoff.
- **Sediment Traps/Basins:** Small ponds or basins that allow sediment to settle out of water.
- **Inlet Protection:** Screens or rocks placed around storm drains to prevent sediment from entering.
- **Check Dams:** Small, temporary stone dams constructed across a swale or ditch to reduce water velocity.
- **Stabilized Construction Entrances:** A pad of stone that removes mud from tires, preventing off-site tracking.



*Photo Credit: Cambria County Conservation District "Best Management Practices" page.*

For more information on erosion & sediment permits and plans, please visit our website [www.clarionconservation.com/e-s](http://www.clarionconservation.com/e-s) or contact our E&S Technician, Matt Kerr, at [mkerrccd@gmail.com](mailto:mkerrccd@gmail.com) or call 814-393-6018 (office) or 814-221-1941 (cell).



(Jarren Upplinger - PA Fish &amp; Boat Commission)



(2)



(6- Steve Roble)



(Soulfully Rested)

## FEATURED SPECIES: SPRING PEEPER (*PSEUDACRIS CRUCIFER*)

by Hannah Bequeath, Education/Outreach Coordinator

**General Description:** Spring peepers are tiny tree frogs (0.75–1.5 inches—about the length of a paper clip) known for the males' high-pitched, "peeping" breeding call, which is a well-known sign of early spring in North America. The scientific name, *Pseudacris crucifer*, means "false locust" and "cross-bearer" referring to their loud, insect-like sound that they make and the *large cross/x-shaped mark* on their dorsal that extends from the back of the head to the groin. However, some individuals may have little to no markings. They are well camouflaged to look like tree bark and have some ability to make themselves lighter or darker in order to better match their surroundings resulting in shades of gray, brown, or olive to almost black. The head of the spring peeper has a dark bar that extends from one eye to the other and the sides of the head have a dark bar that extends from the nose, through the eyes, and then ends near the tympanum (external eardrum; visible as a circular, flat patch of skin directly behind each eye). The legs have crossbars. The underside of the spring peeper is cream-colored and unmarked. Males have yellow-green throats. The snout is slightly pointed. The flat, terminal pad on each of the amphibian's toes allow it to grip onto plants, while its webbed hind feet give it support. *Sensitive skin makes spring peepers good indicators of environmental health. Because they absorb oxygen and water directly through their skin, they are highly vulnerable to chemicals, oils, and salt on human hands - please learn & follow protocol for handling before doing so.*

### Life History:

Adult spring peepers come out to feed in the late afternoon and early evening. They generally eat beetles, ants, flies, and spiders. They begin breeding early in the spring and call on warm spring nights and during the day in rainy or cloudy weather. The faster and louder the males sing, the greater the chances of attracting a mate. Their calls can be heard 2 miles away! Females lay 750- 1,200 eggs in vernal pools, ponds, and wetlands where fish are not present. Their eggs are difficult to spot, as they are laid singly or in tiny groups attached to submerged leaf litter/ aquatic vegetation in shallow water, rather than in large, floating masses. Look for tiny, dark brown/black eggs with a lighter underside. Males fertilize the eggs as they are laid. Depending on the temperature, eggs can hatch within two days to two weeks. The tadpoles have gills to breathe underwater and tails to help them swim. The tadpoles may have gold flecking and their belly is cream-colored and iridescent. Tadpoles feed on algae and microorganisms and transform into frogs over the course of 6 to 12 weeks. They are said to have short lives, living three to four years at most. Snakes, salamanders, large carnivorous insects, raptors, and other birds prey on adult spring peepers. Tadpoles are eaten by aquatic invertebrates and salamander larvae.

**Range & Habitat:** The spring peeper resides in moist, deciduous woodlands, swamps, marshland fields and meadows near ponds and wetlands. Although they are good climbers, they spend most of their time on the ground, often hiding under leaf litter during the day. Spring peepers hibernate during the winter in soft mud near ponds, under logs, and in holes or loose bark in trees. Spring peepers are very tolerant of cold conditions. They can withstand freezing during winter hibernation due to a natural "antifreeze" in their blood. They are abundant throughout all of Pennsylvania. They can be found from southeastern Canada to the eastern United States, south to northern Florida and west to Minnesota and eastern Texas. They are rarely seen other than breeding season.



### Citizen Science:

**The Pennsylvania Amphibian and Reptile Survey (PARS)** is a joint citizen science atlas project between the Mid-Atlantic Center for Herpetology and the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, with additional funding from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Wild Resource Conservation Fund. PARS needs volunteers, from skilled professional scientists to the most amateur naturalist, to create an army of citizen scientists to help tell about the status and locations of Pennsylvania's herps. To help PARS determine the distribution and status of all amphibians and reptiles throughout Pennsylvania, go to [www.paherpsurvey.org](http://www.paherpsurvey.org).

**FrogWatch USA** is a citizen science program established in 1998 to provide individuals, groups and families with opportunities to learn about wetlands in their communities by reporting on the calls of local frogs and toads. FrogWatch USA encourages volunteers to collect and contribute information about the breeding calls of frogs and toads to a national dataset that is publicly available online. The information collected by thousands of FrogWatch USA volunteers across the United States is then analyzed to inform the development of environmental protection and amphibian conservation strategies. FrogWatch USA is always seeking new volunteers to get involved in this nationwide effort! Becoming a volunteer is simple, and you do not need to be an expert on frogs and toads to participate. For more information, go to [www.akronzoo.org/frogwatch-usa-volunteers](http://www.akronzoo.org/frogwatch-usa-volunteers).

### Sources:

1. Akron Zoo. "FrogWatch USA". <https://www.akronzoo.org/frogwatch>. Accessed 1 April 2026.
2. University of Maine. "Signs of the Seasons: A New England Phenology Program". <https://extension.umaine.edu/signs-of-the-seasons/indicator-species/spring-peeper-phenophase/>. Accessed 1 April 2026. Photo: S.Smith, ECHO Lake Aquarium and Science Center.
3. National Wildlife Federation. "Spring Peeper". <https://www.nwf.org/Educational-Resources/Wildlife-Guide/Amphibians/Spring-Peeper>. Accessed 1 April 2026.
4. Natural Resources Council of Maine. "Creature Feature: Spring Peeper". 31 March 2026. <https://www.nrcm.org/nrcm-creature-feature/spring-peeper/>. Accessed 1 April 2026.
5. Fidler, Wayne et. al. PA Herps. "Spring Peeper". [https://www.paherps.com/herps/frogs-toads/northern\\_spring\\_peeper/](https://www.paherps.com/herps/frogs-toads/northern_spring_peeper/). Accessed 1 April 2026.
6. Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. "Spring Peeper". 22 January 2024. <https://dwr.virginia.gov/wildlife/information/spring-peeper/>. Accessed 1 April 2026.

# Poster Contest & 2026 PA Leopold Conservation Award Nominations

by: Hannah Bequeath, Education/Outreach Coordinator



**Entries for the 2026 National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Poster Contest must be submitted to the Clarion Conservation District by June 18th, 2026. (see theme above).**

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) poster contest, open to students in grades K-12, offers young people an opportunity to express their views on natural resource issues through the medium of art. The NACD theme for 2026 is "Soil: Where it All Begins." This theme celebrates the incredible power of soil to support life in all its forms. Soil is not just the ground we walk on. It is the starting point for healthy food, clean water, thriving habitats, and resilient communities. From backyard gardens to forests and city parks, everything begins with what is beneath our feet.

**Entries cannot be accepted directly from individuals for the state contest. They MUST go through the county conservation district first.** Please mail or email a photo of your poster and a completed Poster Contest Entry Form (contact Hannah for a copy of the form) to the Clarion Conservation District **by June 18<sup>th</sup>**. Cash prize for top winner in each grade category at state level. State winners will be entered into the NACD national competition.

For more info please contact the District's Educator, Hannah Bequeath, at 814-393-6147 or email [hbequeathccd@gmail.com](mailto:hbequeathccd@gmail.com).



## Nominations are now being accepted for the 2026 Pennsylvania Leopold Conservation Award®

The award honors farmers and forestland owners who go above and beyond in their management of soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat on working land.

Sand County Foundation and national sponsor American Farmland Trust present Leopold Conservation Awards to private landowners in 28 states. In Pennsylvania, the \$10,000 award is presented with The Heinz Endowments, Horizon Farm Credit, and Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.

Award nominations may be submitted on behalf of a landowner, or landowners may nominate themselves. The nomination form can be found at [sandcountyfoundation.org/our-work/leopold-conservation-award/application-info](http://sandcountyfoundation.org/our-work/leopold-conservation-award/application-info). **The nomination deadline date is August 1, 2026.**

Nominations must be emailed to [PennsylvaniaLCA@sandcountyfoundation.org](mailto:PennsylvaniaLCA@sandcountyfoundation.org).

For more information on the award, visit [www.leopoldconservationaward.org](http://www.leopoldconservationaward.org).

UPCOMING EVENTS

**\*\*To register for any of the following free events, go to [clarionconservation.com/events](http://clarionconservation.com/events) or use the contact info below. Starred (\*) events are NOT district led events, we are only a partner.\*\***

April

- **\*11th - Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) Removal Training** in partnership with the Cook Forest Conservancy at 1pm in Shippenville, PA (see info to the right).
- **14<sup>th</sup> - Litter Clean-Up** - 4-5pm meet at the corner of Miola Rd. & McCleary Rd. in Clarion, PA (near State Game Lands 72). Gloves, bags, and safety vests provided. Near a busy road - adults/older children only - children must be accompanied by an adult. *Registration not required.*
- **30th - Invasive Species Scavenger Hunt Training - Watch Party & Practice** at the Clarion Conservation District office 5-7pm. Hunt & training conducted by PA iMapInvasives / Western PA Conservancy (more info coming soon- stay tuned!).

May

- **\*All Month - Invasive Species Scavenger Hunt**
- **16th - Forestry Walk** (see flyer to the right).

June

- **\*11<sup>th</sup> - Western PA Environmental Education Summit** - Educators and environmental professionals, join us for a high-energy day of learning, collaboration, and inspiration dedicated to environmental literacy and the PA STEELS standards. At Grove City College, Grove City, PA from 9am - 2pm. This event is free, includes breakfast and lunch, and is act 48 eligible. Contact Kelcy at [kmarini@mercercountypa.gov](mailto:kmarini@mercercountypa.gov) 724-662-2242 Ext. 2394 for more info.
- **13th - Water Workshop** at Toby Boat Launch, Clarion, PA (more info coming soon!)
- **\*20th - Women's Outdoor Workshop (WOW)** - Held at Two Mile Park, Venango County, PA. Organized by Penn Soil RC&D. Stay tuned for more info.
- **27<sup>th</sup> - The Power of Plants: Rain Garden & Riparian Buffer Program** at the Clarion Conservation District Office in Clarion, PA (more info coming soon!)

For more information on our upcoming events please view our Facebook or Instagram page, our website, or contact us at [hbequeathccd@gmail.com](mailto:hbequeathccd@gmail.com) or 814-393-6147.



*The hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) is an invasive, aphid-like insect that attacks North American hemlocks. Learn how to protect Eastern Hemlock trees on your property at this free training. A treatment demo will be led by James Altemus, Forest Health Program Specialist of PA DCNR. Attendees may loan equipment from CFC for treatments on their properties. Please wear rubber-soled shoes (ideally wellies) and long-sleeves. This event will be on a volunteer property, rain or shine - any questions, please email [info@cookforestconservancy.org](mailto:info@cookforestconservancy.org). Registration not required. Location: Timberwolf Lodge (1396 McClain-Watson Road, Shippenville, PA). Approx. GPS = 41.195108, -79.411387.*

**FORESTRY WALK**

May 16<sup>th</sup> | 9am - 12pm  
**Rimersburg Rod & Gun Club**  
 442 E Rod and Gun Club Rd, Rimersburg, PA

Join the Clarion Conservation District and partners for a walk in the forest to learn more about trees in a changing world and the benefits of sustainable forestry practices. Participants will also learn how to identify and remove common invasive species. Directed towards 18+.

*The first 25 Clarion County residents that register, attend, & complete a survey will receive a FREE native tree from TWIGS Tree Nursery & will be eligible to enter a raffle for an Invasive Species Removal Kit (items pictured to the right).*

Partners: DCNR Forestry Bureau, Cook Forest Conservancy, Dave Cole (former service forester/current forester with the PA Department of Agriculture), and Penn State Extension.

Register by May 13<sup>th</sup> at [www.clarionconservation.com/events](http://www.clarionconservation.com/events)

[remakelearningdays.org/northwesternpa](http://remakelearningdays.org/northwesternpa)

Financial support for the "Enhancing Climate and Water Education in Clarion County" project has been provided by the Department of Environmental Protection's 2025 Environmental Education Grant Program and Riverview Intermediate Unit (IU6)'s Remake Learning Days Program.



@conserveclarion  
[www.clarionconservation.com](http://www.clarionconservation.com)  
 CCD Office: 249 S. 2nd Ave. Clarion, PA

Do you know someone that is interested in receiving the Clarion Conservation District newsletters? To subscribe or unsubscribe, please contact us at [hbequeathccd@gmail.com](mailto:hbequeathccd@gmail.com) or call 814-393-6147.