

Elk Bugle

Volume 9 Issue 4 Winter 2021

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Letter from the District Manager

If you're reading this, perhaps you're back to work after what was hopefully a good holiday . Or perhaps you're catching up on missed emails after taking extra time off between Christmas and New Years. Regardless, I hope this newsletter finds you refreshed, relaxed, happy, and healthy.

It's been a challenging year here at the District. The loss of our longtime secretary, Diane Myers, left an incredible void. There are still things we are finding that need done. It was easy and appropriate to struggle for a bit, logistically and emotionally, but we're working on getting back on track. A few weeks ago we hosted a Conservation, Crafts, & Cocoa (peep pg. 6-7) event and it was the first firm step back to a positive direction. The community support for our event was wonderful. Our Facebook post reached over 9,000 people and we had to extend registration capacity after the first 24 hours. These are the types of magical community moments that we all need this time of year.

Thank you.

Thank you for your support and outpouring of sympathy for Diane. And thank you for your continued support of our mission and our activities. We couldn't do what we do without you. Merry Christmas, Happy Holiday, Happy New Years, and Best Wishes. —Kate





Who's covering that program?

With recent staffing changes some folks may find themselves wondering who is the correct contact for the various programs at the Elk County Conservation District .

Here is a list of staff, their program responsibilities, and contact info.

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Kate Wehler

District Manager

District Administration, Chapter 105 Stream and Wetland Permitting, Chapter 102 Erosion and Sediment Control, Dirt, Gravel, Low Volume Roads Program
kwehler@countyofelkpa.com

Maddie Stanisch

Resource Conservation Technician

Chapter 102 Erosion and Sediment Control, Environmental Education
mstanisch@countyofelkpa.com

Micaela Lefever

Watershed Technician

Water Monitoring Program, Stream improvement projects, AMD Reclamation, Aquatic habitat improvement projects, Water Sampling
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Ryan Grimm

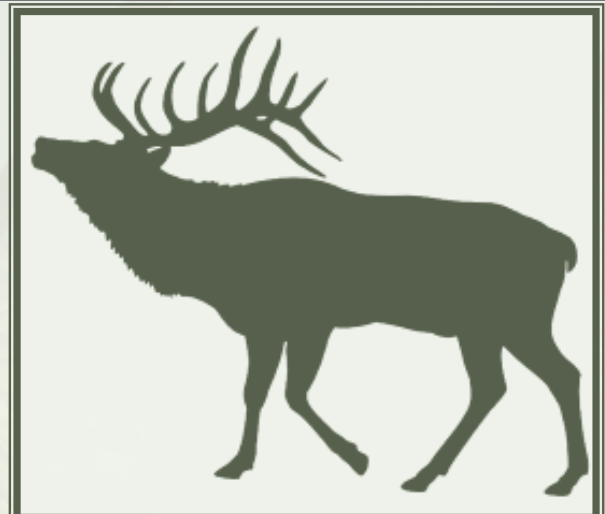
Resource Conservation Technician

Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads Program,
Agriculture Activities
rgrimm@countyofelkpa.com

Victoria Challingsworth

Resource Conservation Technician

Environmental Education, West Creek Wetland Learning Center Activities, Pollinator Programs, Chapter 105 Stream and Wetland Permitting
vchallingsworth@countyofelkpa.com



Welcome to the Conservation District's Newest Staff

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Maddie Stanisch, a native of Kane, joined the District as a Resource Conservation Technician in November. She previously worked at the McKean County Conservation District doing invasive plant management and recycling.

Maddie attended Slippery Rock University, graduating in 2018 with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Environmental Science.

In her free time, she enjoys working out at the gym, clay target shooting, and drawing.

Carole Johnson, an Elk county native, joined the Elk County Conservation District and Elk County Community Recycling Center team as an Administrative Assistant in December of 2021. Previously she worked at St. Marys Stone Mulch and More as their secretary for over nine years.

In her free time, Carole enjoys camping, ATV riding and spending time with her husband, Rusty, and daughter, Rachael. She also enjoys scrapbooking and crafting, working in her landscaping, and travelling.



DGLVR Annual Meeting

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November 23, 2021

Ridgway, PA - The Elk County DGLVR program hosted their annual update meeting. Most eligible entities were in attendance, and topics discussed ranged from proper stream crossing installation, to projects implemented this past summer. Special thanks to the Royal Inn for providing breakfast and a room!

DGLVR Fall Funding

During the fall round of the 2021 application period, the DGLVR program received four dirt and gravel applications and none for low volume. The QAB recommended to fund two projects and the District board agreed.

They were:

City of St. Marys: Jackson Road for
\$91,003.00

Jay Township: Spring Run Road for
\$100,000.00



Church Run Culvert Replacement

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The Elk County LVR (Low Volume Roads Program) along with the Forest Service, Western PA Conservancy, and Millstone Township replaced a failing culvert where Church Run flows under River Rd in Millstone Township. The failing/undersized crossing was replaced with a new bottomless arch culvert that will not only handle high water events drastically better, but also allows for aquatic and terrestrial passage up stream. This will allow organisms to travel from the Clarion River all the way to the headwaters of Church Run.



Before



After



Funding for this project was obtained through:

USDA Forest Service, Allegheny National Forest, Millstone Township, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Elk County LVR , Elk County -Act 13 Marcellus Shale Impact Fee Grant

CONSERVATION, CRAFTS, AND COCOA

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St. Marys, PA— On Tuesday, December 17th, The Elk County Conservation District held an event called Conservation, Crafts and Cocoa, where families could enjoy an evening of conservation minded activities! Children in attendance listened to a reading of “Stranger in the Woods”. After hearing the story the group split in two and participated in nature themed crafts. At one station, kids made pinecone birdfeeders with peanut butter and birdseed. At the other station, children made a “field guide” full of images of birds and other creatures they might find enjoying their birdfeeders.





Adult attendees had their own craft to complete! Using hemlock boughs participants put together evergreen door swags for the holiday season.

As part of this, they also had the opportunity to learn about Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, an invasive insect that is killing Hemlock trees in Pennsylvania. After seeing a mock example of what the insect looks like on an infected branch, they'll be able to identify this insect if they see it in their own neighborhood!

Many thanks who participated and made this event a success! Happy Holidays to all!



Multi County Contractor Workshop

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Clarion, PA—On November 9th the Elk County Conservation District joined Armstrong, Indiana, Jefferson, Clarion and Venango Counties in providing a contractor workshop for interested companies and businesses.

During the workshop, District staff and representatives from Penn DOT and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection presented on topics pertinent to contractors conducting earth moving activities. Topics such as Chapter 102: Erosion and Sediment Control regulations, Chapter 105: Stream and Wetland permitting regulations, Act 167 Stormwater regulations and information on compliance and enforcement actions were provided. The workshop was free to contractors, and put on by the Districts to raise awareness and educate local contractors about state regulations.

Thanks to all the contractors who took time out of their busy schedules to attend this workshop!



Left: Elk County Resource Conservation Technician, Victoria Challingsworth, presents on Chapter 105 regulations

Above: An example of a properly installed E&S BMP

Getting the Most Out Of Your Christmas Tree

When the Holidays have come and gone, you'll be left with an undecorated Christmas tree, that you aren't sure what to do with. What better way to get rid of that old tree than to put it back where it came from—outside! Did you know your Christmas tree can have new purposes that benefit wildlife? Keep reading to find out ways to reuse your Christmas tree!

Fish Habitat

Christmas trees make great habitat for fish and aquatic species. A cement block can be tied to the tree to help sink the tree to the bottom of a lake or pond. The tree provides overhead cover for the fish in the pond, while also providing a food source for macroinvertebrates. These macroinvertebrates, or aquatic bugs, then serve as a food source for larger aquatic organisms such as fish. Always check with local officials prior to placing trees in ponds or lakes if they are not on your property.

Bird Habitat

Old Christmas trees provide a great nesting opportunity for birds. Placing your tree next to or under your birdfeeder provides cover from predators and resting opportunities for the birds using your feeder. If you want to add extra food sources for the birds, you can make suet cookies to hang on your tree! These can be made by adding additional birdseed to suet, rolling it out onto a covered surface, and using cookie cutters to cut the suet into shapes.

These are firmed up by placing them in the freezer. Then they can be placed on the tree for the birds to enjoy. Another option is to make garland out of bird-friendly foods, such as popcorn and cranberries, that can be



Conservation Highlight: Eternally Christmas at Poplar Island

Poplar Island, located in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay, was an island of more than 2,000 acres in the 1600s. Rapid erosion occurred, decreasing the size of the island to less than 10 acres by 1990.

The Port of Baltimore was not losing land, but rather gaining it. This is problematic because the port needs to remain deep enough for the ships to travel through. As a result, this excess sediment is being used to create wildlife habitat on Poplar Island.

In 2005, the Christmas tree project began, adding 250 old Christmas trees to the island for wildlife habitat. If you're interested in reading more about Poplar Island, click [here](#).

Always make sure your tree is undecorated, meaning items such as tinsel, lights, and ornaments are removed prior to using your tree for habitat uses.

HO-HO-HOLIDAY FACTS

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Q: What do you get when
Santa goes down a
chimney with a lit fire?
A: Crisp Cringle!

Did you know the worlds tallest
snowman was higher than a 12
story building!



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Is the year of the first written
record of a decorated
Christmas tree. In the 1800's
settlers from Germany
brought the Christmas tree
tradition to the U.S.

Q: What's a
snow mans
favorite cereal?
A: Frosted Flakes



Santa's name
comes from the
Dutch version of
Saint Nicholas,
Sinter Klaus



Top Christmas Tree Producing States

1. Oregon
2. North Carolina
3. Pennsylvania
4. Michigan
5. Washington

The U.S. Postal
Service processes
more than *3 billion*
Christmas Cards in
the mail every year

Yeah, We Recycle That!

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People are always amazed to find what a large and diverse number of items the **Elk County Community Recycling Center** takes for recycling. With such a wide variety, aside from the traditionally thought of plastics and aluminum, we want to feature an item each edition to educate our community about all the incredible services available to them!

At Christmas we have all sorts of new and different things around the house that we don't normally have and may leave us wondering are these recyclable? To help out, we put together the Christmas Recycling Naughty and Nice List! Nice items are recycling friendly and can be brought to the Elk County Community Recycling Center. Items on the Naughty list aren't recyclable and should be thrown away or re-used.

Nice

- ♦ Wrapping Paper & Tubes
- ♦ Tissue Paper
- ♦ Packing Peanuts
- ♦ Air pods & Bubble Wrap
- ♦ Gift Boxes



Naughty

- ♦ Bows
- ♦ Foil and Coated Wrapping Paper
- ♦ Lighted Trees
- ♦ Ribbon

The **Elk County Community Recycling Center** is located at:

850 Washington Street

St. Marys 15857

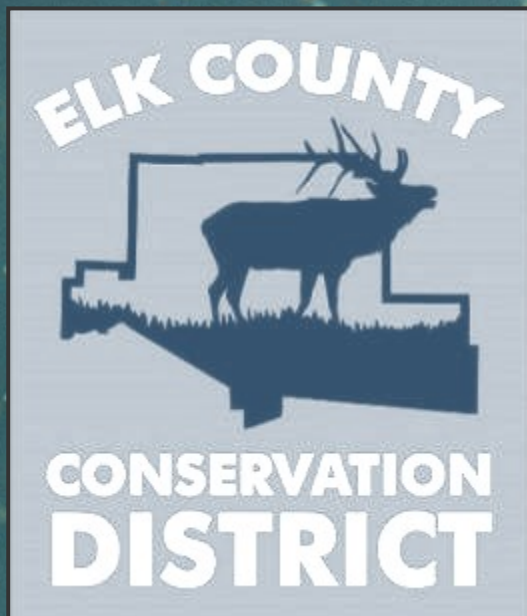
Ph.: (814) 776-5373

Hours of Operation:

Monday: 10-2

Wednesday: 12-7

Friday: 10-2



Elk County Conservation District

Elk County Community Recycling Center

850 Washington Street

Saint Marys, PA 15857

(814) 776-5373

Directors

Russ Braun- Chairman

Mike Hovatter- Vice-Chairman

Joe Daghir- Commissioner

Ray McMinn- Farmer Director

Andy Sorg- Farmer Director

Joe Labant- Public Director

Chris Smith— Public Director

Jerry Olson— Associate Director

Jim McCluskey- Associate Director

Staff

Kate Wehler, CPESC —District Manager

Ryan Grimm—Resource Conservation Technician

Maddie Stanisch—Resource Conservation Technician

Victoria Challingsworth—Resource Conservation Technician

Micaela Lefever—Watershed Technician

David Stubber—Solid Waste Enforcement

Carole Johnson—Secretary



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Elk County (PA) Conservation District

