



Northampton Notes

Northampton County Conservation District

Fall 2025

Volume 26 Issue #4



Check out our website for our expedited review policy!

Teachers and District staff during the Teacher Workshop (page 4)

Educational Presentations

Northampton County Conservation District staff are available to give educational presentations to your classroom, municipality, or professional group!

Looking for technical information? Our staff is available to give presentations and talks to various groups about watersheds, water resources, MS4, agriculture, or more specific conservation topics tailored to your needs.

Interested in having us come out? Visit our [website](#) and contact us for more info!

This is an interactive pdf! If you see text underlined with the [link](#) symbol, you can click for more information.

Manager's Message

Northampton County Conservation District continues to settle in as an independent agency. We are wrapping up some internal renovations to our new building which will improve the space to better suite our needs as an office, and as a public space. We look forward to finishing up external renovations in the first half of 2026, and sharing the final results with the public! The



staff has been working diligently through these shifting conditions, and as you will see in the articles within, they are as busy as ever.

Speaking of busy staff, we have been working to ramp up our educational and agricultural programs. Several educational workshops have already been funded, planned, or completed, including topics like lawn meadow conversion, as well as our annual Teacher Workshop which is detailed later in this edition. We have also partnered with PACD and local agricultural planners to help fund conservation plans for farms in the County. We look forward to continuing to build our program capacity and better serve the citizens of Northampton County!

NPDES Notice of Termination (NOT)



The Pennsylvania DEP's NPDES Notice of Termination (NOT) process involves specific, updated instructions and forms for closing out Chapter 102 permits. Projects require full site stabilization, completed post-construction stormwater management (PCSM) controls, and long-term O&M plans with responsible parties before submission to Northampton County Conservation Districts (NCCD). Recent updates emphasize the need for professional certification and as-built documentation for PCSM BMPs. Key changes from previous forms focus on ensuring the permanence of stormwater controls and assigning long-term responsibility.

Key Forms & Guidance

- NOT Form: Use the current 3800-PM-BCW0229b (Form) and its accompanying 3800-PM-BCW0229a (Instructions) and checklist.
- PCSM SCM Certification: Form 3800-FM-BCW0271j for certifying construction of structural PCSM controls.
- Property Owner Notification: Form 3800-FM-BCW0271i for new owners of property with PCSM SCMs.

Major Changes & Requirements

- Permanent Stabilization: Submit the NOT only after earth disturbance is permanently stabilized and temporary E&S BMPs removed.
- PCSM O&M: Must have O&M Plans, record drawings, and designated responsible parties in place for long-term maintenance.
- Professional Certification: A licensed professional must certify PCSM SCM installation (Form 3800-FM-BCW0271j).
- As-Built Documentation: Record changes to reflect as-built conditions, submitting proof of recording with the NOT.

Visit the PA DEP [E&S Resources](#) page (Notice of Termination) or the [DEP eLibrary](#). Fill out forms accurately, using extra sheets if needed, and ensure all sections (especially PCSM O&M/as-builts) are done. Email documents or link for documents to NCCD at northamptoncd@northamptoncd.org.

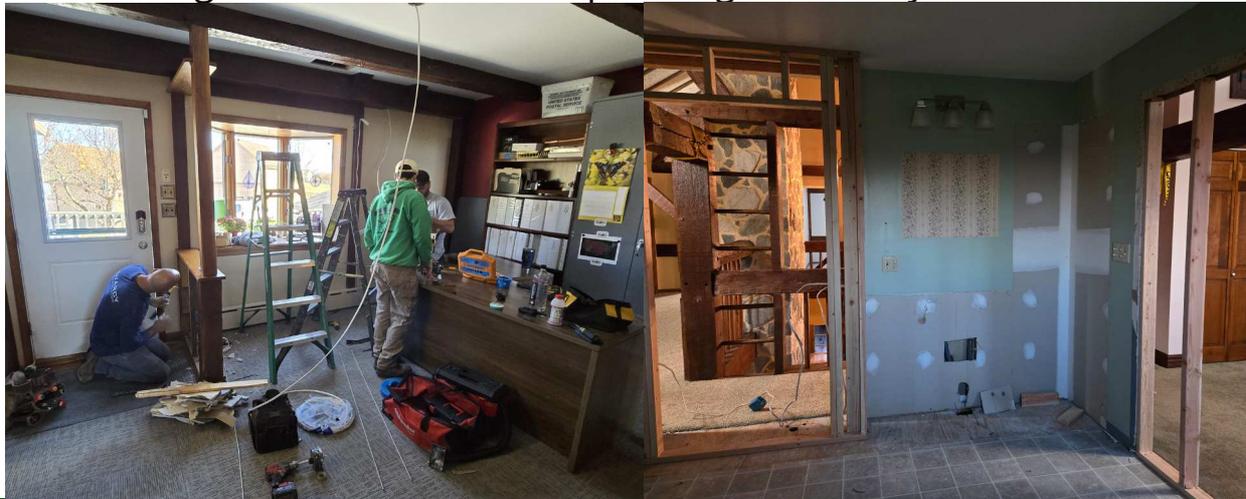
Important: Do not submit old forms (pre-Sept 2020 revision); use only current versions. The permittee remains responsible until written NOT approval is received.

NCCD Office Construction Update



The Northampton County Conservation District office is currently undergoing renovations to the interior. Modifications are being made to the downstairs restrooms, upstairs offices, and flooring throughout to ensure that the building is up to ADA regulations and Township zoning and safety codes. There are also

improvements being made to the HVAC system, electrical and plumbing. The bid was awarded at a special Board of Director's meeting in July with construction scheduled to complete in late December.





Kara's Conservation Corner

What is a Forest Management Plan?

Winter is a great time to meet with a Forester to discuss any woodland on your property and have them take an inventory of your forest. If you already have a forest management plan, Winter may be the time to complete tree felling and brush clearing activities, based on your Forester's guidance. If you have never heard of a forest management plan (FMP), or do not know what it entails, this article will provide you with the basic components and goals of a plan.

A forest management plan is a 10-to-20-year forest stand prescription based on what the forest composition is, what a healthy forest of that type should be composed of, and what the needs and objectives of the landowner are. An in-depth stand-level resource inventory, assessment, and analysis are completed by an Approved Forester and used to create management options for the landowner.

Forest management plans also include forest stand inventories which summarize each stand in the forest. A stand is an area of the forest that has similar composition and characteristics; Foresters divide the forest into stands which require similar treatments and break up their management recommendations into focused areas in a stand to address each year.

The stand summary includes forest type, basal area, trees per acre, percent stocking [rate], average tree diameter, species composition, and a stand/stocking table showing the distribution by species, and the observed stand health. Additionally, the Forester should mention how the forest



Person measuring tree diameter, or DBH-Diameter at Breast Height
(photo credit: dukeforest.duke.edu)

is used by the landowner for recreation. Soil and site descriptions, slope, topography, and hydrology are noted in the plan. Finally, any historic use that may impact stand quality and a list of threatened and endangered species that may potentially be found at the site are documented for reference and avoidance measures are provided.

The forest and natural resource inventory in the plan are then utilized by the Forester to create recommendations for how to manage each stand. The prescription should

meet the objectives of the landowner while addressing the needs of the forest ecosystem and supporting sustainable utilization of the forest as a renewable resource.

USDA-NRCS can support landowners in obtaining a forest management plan and implementing the plan by providing financial assistance. If you have questions about FMP's or financial assistance, please contact the District or your local USDA-NRCS office.

The Pennsylvania Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has area service foresters available to provide technical assistance for those interested in managing their forestland. The regional service Forester covering Northampton County is John Nissen. John may be contacted at jnissen@pa.gov or by phone at (610) 582-9666.



Community Roots: Fall Highlights and Staff Updates



Some may think that with winter approaching, there is not much hands-on work to do for conservation, but there is always an opportunity for education!

On October 23, the Conservation District held its' 11th annual Teacher Workshop. The topic this year was School and Backyard Conservation. 14 teachers from across the county joined District staff on field trips to learn about stormwater and green infrastructure, they had a composting presentation over lunch, and a rain barrel workshop in the afternoon. NCCD teamed up with the Penn State Extension Master Gardeners and Master Watershed Stewards for the afternoon activities and presentations. Even better, each teacher got to take their own rain barrel for home or at their school! Also, thanks to our generous community, staff was able to receive donations from The Home Depot and Wawa to support the activities of the day. Teachers and staff had a great day filled with learning, networking, and brainstorming projects to better educate the students in Northampton County.

District staff are also gearing up for next year's annual Envirothon competition! This year's Current Issue is Non-Point Source Pollution: It begins at home! Stay tuned for more details as we approach our county's competition dates in April!

Kara and Paige also attended Cheston Elementary school on October 30 for their fourth-grade class Career Day. The students learned about what conservation professionals do on a day-to-day basis and got a chance to model their own watershed with wax paper and washable markers. All of the fourth graders were very concerned about the safety of wildlife and how the animals are being protected.

Lastly, On November 12, NCCD partnered with the Monocacy Creek Watershed Association to offer a workshop to inform local landowners about a grant opportunity for lawn conversion. The grant is through the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts and is for establishment of meadow or riparian buffer habitat on public and private property. To learn more about this grant opportunity, please contact Paige Strasko at pstrasko@northamptoncd.org or 484-895-8406.

Thank you to our teacher workshop partners!



Master Watershed
Steward Program



Master
Gardeners
PennState Extension



PennState Extension

Winter Water Conservation Tips and Tricks



As temperatures drop and winter weather settles in, it's a great time to think about how our cold-weather habits impact local streams, groundwater, and drinking water supplies. Snow and ice may blanket the landscape, but simple steps at home can protect our waterways all season long.

Smart Water Use Indoors

Winter often means more time spent inside — and more water use. A few small habits can help conserve water without sacrificing comfort:

Fix leaks early. Even slow drips add up quickly, especially from faucets or running toilets.



Shorten showers. Cutting just two minutes can save gallons each day.

Run full loads. Wait until dishwashers and washing machines are full to make each cycle count.

Use cold water when you can. Modern detergents work well in cold water and save energy too.

Rethinking Winter Deicing

Road salt keeps sidewalks and driveways safe, but excess salt washes directly into storm drains and local streams, where it can harm fish, plants, and soil health. Try these alternatives for small areas around the home: Shovel early and often. Removing snow before it compacts reduces how much deicer you'll need.

Use sand or grit for traction. These don't melt

ice but help prevent slips without adding chlorides.

Try calcium magnesium acetate (CMA). Effective at lower temperatures and less harmful to vegetation. Apply sparingly. A single coffee-cup amount of salt is enough for a standard driveway—more won't melt faster.

Road salt has been a recurring discussion topic in the conservation community recently. Many of our local watershed associations work with the Stroud Water Research Center to sample for chloride in our waterways throughout the year. To learn more about what Stroud and our watershed groups are doing, and why we should think about reducing winter salt, visit the Stroud's [website](#).

Eco-Friendly Winter Habits

Even after the holidays, there are plenty of ways to make the season a little greener:

Recycle real Christmas trees. Many municipalities collect them for mulch or habitat structures.

Choose LED lighting. If decorations are still up, LEDs use up to 75% less energy.

Avoid dumping wood ash or leftover snowmelt into storm drains. Both can carry pollutants into local waterways.

Plan ahead for spring. Winter is the perfect time to browse native plant lists or explore lawn-conversion programs.

Every Season Counts

Water conservation isn't just for summer droughts. Winter choices play a big role in maintaining healthy watersheds year-round. By taking a few extra steps during cold weather, we can protect our local streams, reduce pollution, and support resilient communities. Check out the resources listed below for more information.



[Penn State Extension](#)

[Master Watershed Stewards](#)



Winter Runoff Controls

Even though vegetation is dormant and many outdoor projects slow down, winter remains a critical season for erosion and sediment control (E&S). Whether you're maintaining your property, planning a spring project, or managing an active construction site, proper winter controls help protect local waterways from sediment pollution — one of the leading impairments in Pennsylvania streams.

Why Winter Increases Erosion Risk

Winter conditions create a unique combination of stressors:

- Frozen ground reduces infiltration. When soils freeze, meltwater and rain are more likely to run off the surface rather than soaking in, increasing the potential for erosion.
- Vegetation is dormant. Without actively growing roots and ground cover, soils are less stable and more exposed to wind and runoff.
- Frequent freeze-thaw cycles. These cycles weaken soil structure, causing sloughing on slopes and along streambanks.
- Unexpected rain-on-snow events. As winter temperatures fluctuate, rapid snowmelt combined with rainfall can generate significant runoff.

These conditions mean that even small disturbances can lead to sediment-laden runoff entering storm drains and nearby creeks — impacting aquatic habitat, clogging infrastructure, and reducing water quality.

Make sure to keep disturbed areas covered with wood chips rather than straw or mulch because it doesn't move as easily in the winter winds. An example of proper winter stockpile protection includes covering exposed soil with plastic or geotextile and installing a compost filter sock around the base to prevent sediment runoff during snowmelt, shown in the photo above.

Winter is also an ideal time to plan spring stabilization! You can plan ahead by ordering native seed mixes and erosion control products early, schedule site assessments or design consultations before the spring rush, and review permit requirements if you anticipate new earth disturbance for spring projects.

Effective winter erosion control protects local waterways, reduces spring cleanup costs, and keeps construction sites in compliance with state regulations. Whether you're managing a work site or maintaining your yard, small steps during the cold months make a measurable difference in watershed health. If you have questions about winter erosion and sediment controls on your property or construction site, please contact our staff for educational guidance and support.



Conservation Trivia:

Which Pennsylvania animal stays active all winter and plays a key role in aerating soil under the snow?

- A) Woodchuck
- B) Red Fox
- C) Eastern mole

Answer on the next page!



Upcoming Events

Pennsylvania Farm Show

The Pennsylvania Farm Show is scheduled to take place from January 10-17 in Harrisburg. PACD will have a joint booth with NRCS. Visit their [website](#) to learn more.



2026 Annual Envirothon



Save the date! Next year's Envirothon will be held on April 16th at Louise Moore Park. This year's current issue is "Non-Point Source Pollution: It starts at home!" Our staff will be available to work with teachers and students to help prepare for the competition, please [contact us](#) for more information and to schedule a study session!

Conservation Trivia Answer

C) Eastern Mole!

Moles remain active year-round, tunneling beneath the frost line.

For more fun facts and trivia questions like this, check out our Facebook page [here](#) and give us a Like and Follow!



District Directors

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Brian Fulmer, Vice Chairman
Jeffrey Keifer, Farmer Director
Will Carpenter, Treasurer/Public Director
Richard DiFebo, Farmer Director
Jeff Warren, County Council Director
Rich Budihas, Public Director

Associate Directors

Positions open!

District Staff

Nate Pritchard, District Manager
Meara Hayden, PE, District Engineer
Jonathan Fox, 102 Program Coordinator
James Lawrence, Conservation Specialist
Nick DiPaolo, Conservation Specialist
Walter Stremouchow, Conservation Specialist
Alexis Krukovsky, Conservation Specialist
Paige Strasko, Watershed Specialist
Kara Hasko, Agricultural Conservation Specialist
Carrie Cevicelow, Clerical Specialist

[District Board meetings](#) are open to the public and are being held virtually and in person on the second Tuesday of each month at the Lower Nazareth Township Building Suite 110, 623 Municipal Drive, Nazareth PA.

Conservation District office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4 pm