



# UPDATES

Pennsylvania Envirothon Inc.

Fall 2012

## **DEP Awards Sole Source Grant to Promote Environmental Education—Envirothon**

The Department of Environmental Protection has awarded \$300,000 to support the Pennsylvania Envirothon which educates high school students about natural resources and environmental science through competitive events around the state.

“I’ve been to the Envirothon, and I’ve seen how it has a unique way of making learning fun through competition,” DEP Secretary Mike Krancer said. “These young adults are the promise for our future, and we are proud to support this effort, which promotes a future of conservation and protection of the environment.”

The Envirothon, originally called the Environmental Olympics, originated in Pennsylvania in 1979. In 1988, the program became known as the Envirothon, and Pennsylvania hosted the first national competition in Carlisle, Cumberland County. Since then, the Pennsylvania program has grown to include nearly 15,000 high school students from 700 schools in every county.

The competitions are focused on five areas: soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and a current environmental issue, which changes annually.

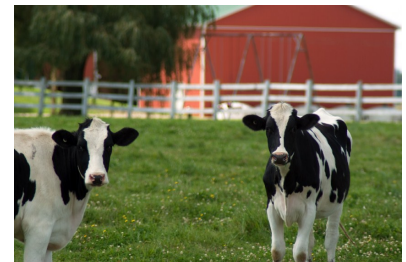
Envirothon teams are made up of five members and are led by volunteer advisors and teachers. The volunteers train the students in hands-on environmental problem-solving, with the goal of succeeding on the county, state, and national levels and winning awards, prizes, scholarships, and bragging rights.

The grant is being provided by DEP’s Environmental Education Fund and will be used through June 30, 2014, to develop regional workshops for Envirothon coordinators and educators; facilitate county, state and national competitions; and begin a mini-grant program for county conservation districts.

## **2013 Current Environmental Issue**

### **“Grazing livestock for improved herd health and land management”**

Privately-owned grazing land is an important landscape feature in Pennsylvania. Many people identify pastoral settings with animals grazing as good farming practices that also benefit the animals. Grazing and browsing animals are used to manage grasses, forbs, residues, and shrubs on pastures, crop fields, and forests. Well-managed pastures and hay fields provide valuable products, conservation of natural resources, and valuable wildlife habitat, making them assets not only to private land users but also to the greater agricultural and rural community.



In Pennsylvania, the overall number of farms increased by 9% between 2002 and 2007 (63,163). The total number of farm acres in the state is 7,809,224. Of that total, *permanent pasture* constitutes 732,275 acres, and *pastured cropland* constitutes 397,131 acres. The number of farms in Pennsylvania with cropland used solely for grazing or pasture in 2007 was 12,985 (20.6%). The average dollar value per acre of pasture is \$2,500.00 (Source for all information above- 2007 Ag Census, NASS). Additionally, there are 1.7 million acres of permanent hayland are managed by farmers in Pennsylvania produce grass or legume hay for feed, mulch, or solid biomass fuel.

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## **“Grazing livestock for improved herd health and land management”**

Major benefits realized from grazing lands include 1) provision of feed and forage for livestock production, 2) reduction in soil erosion, 3) seasonal protection for nesting birds and wildlife habitat, and 4) removal of excess nutrients and sediment affecting water quality. While grazing lands may have their own natural resource concerns conversion of short rotation cropland and hayland to a grazing system may present excellent opportunities for livestock producers to distribute nutrients away from concentrated areas and reduce fuel inputs needed to produce feed. Converting short rotation cropland to perennial grasses for producing cellulosic biomass also presents new opportunities for conserving natural resources.

In terms of planning, landowners incorporating pastures and grazing into their livestock operation have access to technical and financial assistance through USDA programs, but there is a need for increased management on the part of the producer which seems to be a prohibiting factor for overall success. While there is a reduced need for fuel and feed inputs, the producer needs to be able to rotate the livestock between pasture to ensure healthy plant growth. Grazing management is the key to healthy, productive pastures; and healthy, productive pastures are the key to healthy, productive animals. Working with technical partners such as USDA/NRCS, conservation districts, and Penn State Extension, landowners can get the help they need to get started. There are also professional grazing groups such as Pennsylvania Forage/Grazing Lands Coalition and Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative or local producer groups that can advise and address the training and education needs for producers.



## **Teaching Tips for Envirothon topics**

The Envirothon station partners have many materials available for educators. Most are fortunate to have volunteers who also provide services and training sessions for educators. Visit the following web sites to learn about available educational opportunities and resources.

Soil/Land Use—U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service—<http://soils.usda.gov/education/>

Aquatic Ecology — PA Fish & Boat Commission Learning Center for Educators: [www.fishandboat.com/edind.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/edind.htm) or for Envirothon [www.fishandboat.com/education/envirothon/envirothon.htm](http://www.fishandboat.com/education/envirothon/envirothon.htm).

Forestry—PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry—[www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/ei.aspx](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/ei.aspx)

Wildlife—PA Game Commission—[www.pgc.state.pa.us](http://www.pgc.state.pa.us)

Watershed Management—PA DEP Bureau of Watershed Management—[www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/watershed\\_management/10593](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/watershed_management/10593)

Bureau of State Parks—PA DCNR Bureau of State Parks—[www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/stateparks/)



## **2013 Envirothon Resources**



The Pennsylvania Envirothon Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the 2013 Envirothon resources will be available by mid-November. Teachers and students can review and download most of the information needed to prepare for the 2013 Envirothon competitions. Visit: [www.envirothonpa.org](http://www.envirothonpa.org) and click on the sidebar category “Station Training.”

Or...

The 2013 Teacher Resource Packets and new study resources will be delivered to your county’s Envirothon Coordinator by mid-November. If you do not receive them, please contact your county Conservation District office or the Pennsylvania Envirothon office.

## Introducing the Pennsylvania Envirothon Board of Directors



2012/13 PA Envirothon Board of Directors, left to right — Row 1: Greg Reineke, Karen Books, Bob Sweitzer, Bill Kahler; Row 2: Corey Richmond, Mary Ann Bower, Jan Hampton, Craig Bingman; Row 3: Cheryl Brobst, Donna Hays, Celina Seftas, Renee Swineford; Row 4: Teddi Stark, Jackie Ritko, Jason Winey, Vince McCollum, Andy Patterson, Irvil Kear. Missing from the photo, Rick Stumpf and Erica Smith.

The Pennsylvania Envirothon program would like to thank the county conservation districts, the PACD, and the SCC for supporting the involvement of staff members and representatives to serve as its directors and associate directors.

The annual Pennsylvania Envirothon competition has been one of the state's largest natural resource education competitions made available to high school students. Volunteer directors have helped the program reach almost a half-million students. After nearly 30 years, we are now reaping the benefits of the Envirothon by having past participants become crucial decision makers, community leaders, as well as individuals who change the natural resource philosophy of upcoming generations.

The continued success of the Envirothon program reflects the commitment of these individuals. Each one shares his/her expertise to make the Envirothon a quality educational program, and each plays an integral part in the day-to-day business of the program by making decisions that affect program administration, updating rules and regulations, carrying out fundraising activities, applying for grants, attending monthly board meetings, and participating in committee meetings.

Their role in the Envirothon program is not only seen at the state level, but at the county level where many organize or assist with county competitions for which they also are to be commended.

Each director and associate director is a valued asset to the Envirothon program and is greatly respected by their peers. The Envirothon is very fortunate to have such loyal members who are willing to do whatever is needed.

A huge "Thank You" to the Cambria County Conservation District, Cameron County Conservation District, Centre County Conservation District, Clinton County Conservation District, Columbia County Conservation District, Cumberland County Conservation District, Franklin County Conservation District, Fulton County Conservation District, Huntingdon County Conservation District, Indiana County Conservation District, Juniata County Conservation District, Mifflin County Conservation District, Snyder County Conservation District, Sullivan County Conservation District, PA Association of Conservation Districts, PA State Conservation Commission, and PA Department of Environmental Protection.

### PENNSYLVANIA ENVIROTHON BOARD OF DIRECTORS

William Kahler, Chairman—SCC  
Vince McCollum, Vice-Chair—Cumberland CCD  
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Richard Stumpf, Treasurer—Indiana CCD  
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Craig Bingman—Snyder CCD  
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Renee Swineford—Snyder CCD

\*CCD—County Conservation District

## Canon Envirothon 2012

**“There’s nothing better than this.”**

“There's nothing better than this,” was the consensus of this year’s Canon Envirothon hosted by the Pennsylvania Envirothon July 22 through 26 at the Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove. Teams from across 44 states, nine Canadian provinces and one Canadian territory came together to celebrate 25 years of Envirothon and to determine North America’s leading high school natural resource conservationists.

On Sunday, July 22nd, Pennsylvania welcomed 54 five-member teams to Susquehanna University. The teams were introduced as they flew their school flags during the traditional opening ceremony’s parade of flags. During the trading session, students shared and bartered with each other for goods that represented their region.



One of the first official orders of business was to acclimate the teams to the Northeast region of the U.S. Students received trainings about Pennsylvania’s soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forest ecology, wildlife habitats, and nonpoint source pollution and low impact development at R. B. Winter State park.



As part of the education day, students were also given the opportunity to learn about and enjoy some of Pennsylvania’s natural resource highlights such as: fly fishing, Atlatl, backwoods hiking, watersheds, falconry, geocaching, and the elk reintroduction program.



## Canon Envirothon 2012

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Field testing took place at the PPL Montour Preserve located in Danville. PPL is a longtime partner and sponsor of the Pennsylvania Envirothon. The Montour Preserve was a picturesque area, where the five testing stations were set up with hands-on experiments and field evaluation scenarios to complete the testing.



For the final segment of competition, teams received an explanation of the oral presentation scenario from several planning and natural resource professionals in order to prepare a 20-minute presentation which was delivered to panels of judges.



Upon completion of the presentations and after the scores were tallied, the students put on their best dress to attend the semi-formal banquet held in the Susquehanna University Field House. Teams and guests listened to encouraging words shared by Envirothon alumni, Steve Gettle and Michelle Henry, Mr. Bunji Yano, Canon U.S.A., and many other special guest speakers.



At stake for each team was a share of \$120,000 in scholarships and Canon products. The top Envirothon award was presented to Pembroke High School in Kansas City, Missouri.

Check out more 2012 event photos!  
[www.envirothon.org](http://www.envirothon.org)

**A huge “Thanks” to our volunteers, sponsors, partners, competitors, advisors, and the Canon Envirothon Committee for helping us to make this one of the best Canon Envirothon events while celebrating 25 years of Envirothon.**

## **Canon Envirothon 2012 — THANK YOU SPONSORS AND PARTNERS**

Canon U.S.A., Inc.  
Canon Canada  
Canon Envirothon  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection  
Section 319 of the Clean Water Act  
The Hershey Company  
Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds  
Talisman Energy (USA)  
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts  
State Conservation commission  
U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service  
National Conservation Foundation  
National Association of Conservation Districts  
NACD Presidents Association  
U.S. Forest Service  
PPL  
Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture  
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission  
Pennsylvania Game Commission  
Pennsylvania Sea Grant  
Pennsylvania Trout Unlimited  
R. B. Winter State Park  
R. B. Winter and Lloyd Wilson Chapters of Trout Unlimited  
Susquehanna Chapter of Trout Unlimited  
Stroud Water Research Center  
Selinsgrove Ford  
Land Studies  
American Planning Association, Pennsylvania Chapter  
Susquehanna University  
Pennsylvania's County Conservation Districts  
Aramark  
Van Wagner  
Snyder County Commissioner Joseph Kantz  
Glen Waldeck and The Herd of Turtles

## Luzerne County—MMI Preparatory School earns 15th place at 2012 Canon Envirothon

A five-member team of students from MMI Preparatory School located in Freeland, Luzerne County earned the honor to represent Pennsylvania in the 2012 Canon Envirothon by winning the Pennsylvania state competition.

The team respectively placed 15th out of 54 teams that represented 44 states, nine Canadian provinces, and one Canadian territory. The team received Canon cameras and printers.

MMI Envirothon advisor Michael Mele said, "The entire experience was engaging and immersive, and our team representing MMI and Pennsylvania did an amazing job. The Canon event created the perfect scenario to educate and learn by stimulating all the senses in the field, and allowed the groups to demonstrate what they have learned about 'low-impact development' via the oral component. I am honored to work with a truly motivated, focused, and dedicated group. I am very proud of my team and my co-advisor, Jessica Polashenski, for their dedicated effort, passion, and grace, and I look forward to working with them to give it another try in 2013!"



MMI's teams was made up of (pictured right): Michael Mele (adviser), Anjni Patel, David Polashenski, Brianna Nocchi, Rebecca Noga, and Farrah Qadri. Not pictured, co-advisor, Jessica Polashenski.

## Envirothon Offers Mini-Grants to County Conservation Districts

The grant funding provided by the DEP has enabled the Pennsylvania Envirothon to develop a Mini-Grant program that will award up to \$600 to county conservation districts. The funding provided through this program must be used to directly benefit a conservation district's High School Envirothon program.

The mini-grant funding can be used towards projects such as: outreach efforts (presentations to other groups, state education meetings, state environmental education association meetings, etc.); advisor training workshops (i.e., mileage to county/state sessions); purchase of additional Envirothon resource material/teaching tools (Biltmore sticks, Identiflyers, etc.); development of an exhibit or brochures to promote Envirothon; awards (i.e., trophies, T-shirts); team travel to the competition (county and/or state); registration for competition (county and/or state); costs to cover substitute teachers for Envirothon advisors. Other suggested projects will be considered upon PA Envirothon Board approval.

Mini-Grant applications will be available by October 26 and are due no later than December 31, 2012. Funding is provided on a reimbursement basis at the completion of the project. To receive mini-grant reimbursement, all final reports and supporting materials must be received by the Pennsylvania Envirothon office no later than June 1, 2013. For additional information, please contact the Pennsylvania Envirothon office.

## 2013 Keystone Exams Calendar

Beginning in 2012-2013 the Algebra I, Literature, and Biology Keystone Exams will replace the 11th grade Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) tests in mathematics, reading, and science for purposes of satisfying No Child Left Behind (NCLB)/Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements. Therefore, all students in grade 11 must participate in the Algebra I, Literature, and Biology Keystone Exams.

County Envirothon Coordinators, in order to avoid conflicts with exam schedules, check with your advisors when scheduling county Envirothon events.

Subject	Dates
Algebra 1, Biology, Literature	May 13–24, 2013

## Sponsorship Opportunities Available

Your gift helps support Pennsylvania Envirothon and its natural resource conservation education efforts, scholarship program, and education and training programs. With your help, Pennsylvania Envirothon will continue to promote a future of conservation and protection of the environment.

### CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION FORM (All contributions are 501(c)(3) tax deductible.)

Thank you in advance for your generous donation. It will make a difference.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 2,001 – 5,000 – Gold Sponsor     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100              |
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Check Payable to: **Pennsylvania Envirothon, Inc.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Upcoming Events at a Glance

### October–November 2012

- Coordinators begin contacting and recruiting Envirothon teams.
- 2013 Teacher Resource Packets will be available by mid-November.
- Envirothon Coordinator meetings scheduled for:
  - October 30—Sullivan CCD
  - October 31—Cabela's (Berks County)
  - November 7—Forbes State Forest (Westmoreland County)
  - November 8—Jefferson CCD

### April–May 2013

County Envirothon events sponsored in Pennsylvania's 67 counties.

### May 21 & 22, 2013

Pennsylvania State Envirothon — Juniata College, Huntingdon County.

### August 4–10, 2013

North American Envirothon — Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana.

### 2014

North American Envirothon — Georgia.



Mark your calendars!

## Pennsylvania Envirothon Mission

The Envirothon is an environmental education program made available to Pennsylvania Conservation Districts in partnership with related state and federal agencies and other organizations. The Envirothon program is designed to test high school students' knowledge of Pennsylvania's natural resources and environmental sciences. The program emphasizes the importance of environmental sensitivity while stressing a need to achieve a social, ecological, and economic balance. The Pennsylvania Envirothon provides future generations with the ability to be better equipped to address the complex natural resource concerns facing today's world as well as the challenges of tomorrow.

For more information:

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website: [www.envirothonpa.org](http://www.envirothonpa.org)

Program Coordinator: Lorelle Steach