



## Pennsylvania Envirothon

2013  
Annual Report

ACCEPT THE NATURAL CHALLENGE!

*"Pennsylvania is the Founder of North America's largest high school natural resource education competition, the Envirothon."*

## **Our Mission**

The Pennsylvania Envirothon educates high school students in 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 learning objectives emphasize awareness, knowledge, and attitudes through outdoor hands-on applications while addressing the complex natural resource concerns facing today's world as well as the challenges of tomorrow.

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## **Board of Directors**

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Renee Swineford – Administrative Assistant, Snyder Conservation District

## **Staff**

Lorelle Steach – Program Coordinator

## Message from the Chairman

*It's about challenging our youth!* The future of the Earth depends on the youth of today. Soon they will be making decisions about what kind of car to drive, what detergent to buy, and whether to use paper, plastic, or cloth bags at the store. All of these decisions affect the environment and prompted the need for such education.

Pennsylvania Conservation Districts created North America's largest natural resource education program/competition – The Envirothon – in 1979. Every year, volunteers for the Envirothon program work together to deliver natural resource education to more than 15,000 high school-aged students across the Commonwealth. Thanks to the Envirothon, students in Pennsylvania have the opportunity to participate in hands-on learning activities and receive educational training in the areas of soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and current environmental issues.

The Envirothon program is now offered to students in more than 47 states and nine Canadian provinces. The winning team from this year's State Envirothon represented Pennsylvania at the 2013 North American Envirothon held August 4 - 9 at Montana State University, Bozeman. Pennsylvania continues to lead the nation in the number of competitions won, with eleven of twenty-six North American titles, and placing among the top five ninety percent of the time.

For over thirty years, the Pennsylvania Envirothon has been preparing the Commonwealth's youth to live in a conservation minded manner.

Envirothon partners provide station resources, learning objectives, and tests for the Envirothon – as well as their expertise, support, and enthusiasm.

Envirothon sponsors offer financial means for a quality educational program, to organize a worthwhile event, and to sustain a program coordinator.

Our partners and sponsors make the Envirothon possible. A sincere congratulations and thanks are extended to everyone who helped make 2013 a successful Envirothon year.

*William Kahler*, Chairman  
Pennsylvania Envirothon Board of Director

## The Envirothon Experience

For over thirty years, high school teachers have been recognizing the value of the Envirothon experience. The Envirothon is the only competition in the nation that challenges students to think critically about the natural world and about their role in it.



It's also the only competition that helps students develop the critical thinking skills they will need for a lifetime of finding balanced solutions to complex issues, such as how to encourage economic development and still preserve open space.

With such pressing long-term issues as water quality and quantity, sustainable energy, watershed management, and agriculture, to name a few, the Envirothon shows tomorrow's leaders the positive and negative effects that individual actions have on the environment. Understanding the difference between renewable and nonrenewable resources, realizing environmental interactions and interdependencies, and becoming conscious of how each of us contributes to the overall quality of life are all part of the Envirothon experience.

The Envirothon is comprised of five areas on which students focus their study. As a team, written questions are answered in the subject areas of: soil/land use, forestry, aquatic ecology, wildlife, and current environmental issues (2013 – range and pasture land management). A discovery station (non-testing) provides an opportunity for students to learn about other disciplines.

Team answers are evaluated by practicing natural resource professionals – foresters, aquatic and wildlife biologists, soil scientists, and conservationists – who themselves deal with similar complex issues every day.

The team that scores the greatest number of points wins its respective county competition and moves on to the state Envirothon. The winning team of the state competition moves onto the North American Envirothon, North America's largest natural resource education competition for high school students.

# Envirothon at a Glance



# Aquatic Ecology



# Current Issues



# Soil/Land Use



# Envirothon at a Glance



## Forestry



## Wildlife



## Oral Component

## 2013 Competition Summary

In 2013, more than 300 high-school students representing 64 counties participated in the thirtieth Pennsylvania Envirothon. The event was held on May 21 and 22 at Juniata College, Huntingdon.



The state Envirothon is the outcome of 66 county competitions that take place during the months of April and May and involves more than 15,000 teenagers throughout the Commonwealth.



Awards were presented to the top ten high scoring teams. For the past six years, the Envirothon awarded scholarships totaling over \$9,000 for fifteen students on the top three teams. The scholarships are sponsored by Pennsylvania's

County Conservation Districts and the Pennsylvania Envirothon. To date, we have awarded over \$78,000 in scholarships to more than 130 students.



## Pennsylvania's Top Ten Envirothon Teams

First – York County – York County Homeschool

Second – Luzerne County – MMI Preparatory School

Third – Delaware County – Penncrest High School

Fourth – Lebanon County – Palmyra Area High School

Fifth – Greene County – Carmichaels Area High School

Sixth – Clinton County – Sugar Valley Rural Charter School

Seventh – Indiana County – United Jr. Sr. High School

Eighth – Berks County – Oley Valley High School

Ninth – Clarion County – Redbank County High School

Tenth – Lehigh County – Parkland High School

## 2013 Current Issue Theme

### “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.

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.

## North American Envirothon

A five-member team of students from York Homeschool located in York County earned the honor to represent Pennsylvania in the 2013 North American Envirothon by winning Pennsylvania's state competition.



The team respectively placed 9th out of 57 teams that represented 44 states, nine Canadian provinces, and one Canadian territory. Each team member received a Canon U.S.A. scholarship in the amount of \$1,100.



The York Homeschool team was made up of: Michael Renga, Collin Inners, Morgan Staub, Jessica Picone, and Mariah Henry.

The Mount Academy of Esopus, New York won the 2013 North American Envirothon. Sponsored by Canon U.S.A. and local conservation districts, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of Conservation Districts, the Envirothon is North America's largest high school natural resource education competition. This year's competition was held at Montana State University from August 4 – 9, where 57 teams competed for a share of \$175,000 in scholarships, host grants, and Canon products.

The North American Envirothon tests teams on the knowledge of soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and a current environmental issue. Each team's knowledge is tested under the supervision of foresters, soil scientists, wildlife specialists, and other natural professionals. Teamwork problem-solving, and presentation skills are evaluated as each team offers a panel of judges an oral presentation with recommendations for solving a specific challenge that presented during the competition.

For more information and photos, visit the North American Envirothon website at [www.envirothon.org](http://www.envirothon.org).

## **Partnerships and Sponsorships**

The Pennsylvania Envirothon is very fortunate to have a group of environmentally sensitive partners and sponsors who provide the wherewithal to provide a sound educational program for thousands of high school-aged students.

### **Partners**

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources,  
Bureau of Forestry and Bureau of State Parks

Pennsylvania Department of Education

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Pennsylvania Game Commission

U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service

### **Program Sponsors**

Pennsylvania's sixty-six Conservation Districts

Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission

Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts

### **Tent/Station Sponsors**

Cargill and the Conservation Fund

Dwight Lewis Lumber

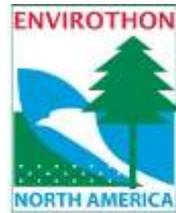
The Hershey Company

Lewis Lumber Products

### **Advisor Forum**

Juniata College

## Sponsors



### *EITC* CONTRIBUTORS

PPL

PHILADELPHIA INSURANCE COMPANIES

### *FRIENDS* OF ENVIROTHON

PENNSYLVANIA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

ANDY PATTERSON

ROBERT SHANNON

## Financial Report

Funding for the Pennsylvania Envirothon is provided through a public/private partnership. Program administration and one staff position are supported through grants received from the PA Department of Environmental Protection and PA Department of Community and Economic Development. Special projects are funded through grants sponsored by the PA Department of Agriculture/State Conservation Commission, PA Fish and Boat Commission, and North American Envirothon. Private/corporate contributions are used to cover event costs. This report reflects the income and expenses needed to hold a two-day event with an oral presentation component.

### **2013 Financial Report - reported by Ritchey, Ritchey & Koontz CPA** *(Most recent financial report)*

#### **Revenue**

Donations	47,051.00	
Government Grants	190,246.00	
Fundraising	4,588.00	
Interest	41.00	
Other	737.00	
Registration	<u>13,195.00</u>	
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$255,858.00</b>

#### **Expenditures**

Event Expense	26,887.00	
Outreach Expense	5,530.00	
Donations	8,100.00	
Program Administration	<u>159,594.00</u>	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<b><u>(200,386.00)</u></b>

Change in Net Assets	55,472.00
Net Assets, January 1	<u>171,272.00</u>
Net Assets, December 31	226,744.00

## **2014 Envirothon Events**

The 31<sup>st</sup> annual Pennsylvania Envirothon will be held at Susquehanna University and PPL Montour Preserve on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 20 and 21, 2014.

The current issue focus for the 2014 Envirothon events will be “Sustainable Agriculture/Buy Locally.”

## **How to become involved with the Envirothon**

The Pennsylvania Envirothon welcomes new sponsors and partners to become involved with the state competition. Whether funding a specific component of the event (i.e. one of the three meals, awards for the oral component, the teachers’ training session, or a specific testing station) or volunteering to help at the event, we invite you to join us to educate our high school students about the environment and environmental issues. The Pennsylvania Envirothon also needs volunteers to assist with conducting the state event – and possibly with county events. The Envirothon continues to grow each year in Pennsylvania, and our partners, sponsors, and volunteers are critical to making the program the successful environmental competition that it is today.

If you would like additional information, please contact the Pennsylvania Envirothon office.

The Pennsylvania Envirothon is recognized as a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service. In addition, the program is an approved organization by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development office to receive corporate contributions under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program

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