



# Pennsylvania Envirothon

2015  
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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Corey Richmond – Watershed Specialist, Sullivan Conservation District

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Karen Books – Water Program Specialist, PA DEP/SCC

Teddi Stark – Watershed Specialist, Juniata Conservation District

Jason Winey – Watershed Specialist, Snyder Conservation District

Maryruth Wagner – District Manager, Columbia Conservation District

Cathy Yeakel – District Manager, Bradford Conservation District

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Craig Bingman – District Manager, Snyder Conservation District

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Andy Patterson – District Manager, Huntingdon Conservation District

Jackie Ritko – Resource Supervisor, Cambria Conservation District

Jan Hampton – District Manager, Cameron Conservation District

Renee Swineford – Administrative Assistant, Snyder Conservation District

Christy Thomas – Administrative Assistant, Clearfield Conservation District

Terry Fisher – PA Association of Conservation Districts

Cheryl Brobst – Volunteer, Columbia County

Irvil Kear – Volunteer, Schuylkill County

## **Staff**

Lorelle Steach – Executive Director

## 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 – 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/territories.

For more than 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 exams for the Envirothon as well as offer their expertise, support, and enthusiasm.

Envirothon sponsors offer a financial mean, which enables us to offer a quality education program, organize a worthwhile event, provide training measures and tools, and sustain an Envirothon staff person.

Our partners and sponsors make the Envirothon possible. A sincere congratulations and thanks are extended to everyone who helped make 2015 a successful Envirothon Year.

*William Kahler*, Chairman

Pennsylvania Envirothon Board of Directors

## 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 (2015 – urban and community forestry). A discovering energy 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.

## 2015 Competition Summary

In 2015, more than 300 high-school students representing 64 counties participated in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Pennsylvania Envirothon. The event was held on May 19 and 20 at University of Pittsburgh Johnstown and Windber Rec Park.



The state Envirothon is the outcome of 67 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 seven years, the Envirothon has awarded scholarships totaling over \$10,000 to the fifteen students on the top three teams. The scholarships were sponsored by Pennsylvania's County Conservation Districts and Shell Oil Company.



## Pennsylvania's Top Ten Envirothon Teams

First – Delaware County – Penncrest High School

Second – Lebanon County – Palmyra Area High School

Third – York County – York County Homeschool Association

Fourth – Greene County – Carmichaels Area High School

Fifth – Chester County – Downingtown East High School

Sixth – Schuylkill County – Blue Mountain High School

Seventh – Bradford County – Troy High School

Eighth – Berks County – Oley Valley High School

Ninth – Monroe County – Pocono Mountain East High School

Tenth – Bucks County – Neshaminy High School

## Envirothon at a Glance



## Aquatic Ecology



## Current Issues



## Soil/Land Use





# Envirothon at a Glance



## Forestry



## Wildlife



## Oral Component



## **2015 Current Issue Theme**

### **“Urban and Community Forestry”**

It is mostly a matter of size that determines whether you use the term urban forestry or community forestry where you live. Small, rural-oriented municipalities may not relate well to the word “urban”, so community forestry is the preferred term. In large towns and cities, urban forestry is entirely appropriate. To cover all bases in a single expression, urban and community forestry is widely used. Urban and Community Forestry can be defined as the planting and care of amenity, or landscape, trees, collectively, in human settlements. Urban and community forests broadly include urban parks, street trees, landscaped boulevards, public gardens, river and coastal promenades, greenways, river corridors, wetlands, nature preserves, natural areas, shelter belts of trees and working trees at industrial brownfield sites.

#### **Benefits of Urban Forests:**

Urban forests are dynamic ecosystems that provide needed environmental services by cleaning air and water helping to control stormwater, and conserving energy. They add form, structure, beauty and breathing room to urban design, reduce noise, separate incompatible uses, provide places to recreate, strengthen social cohesion, leverage community revitalization, and add economic value to our communities.

The value of trees in our community is often overlooked but trees make human habitats more liveable. As we busily go about our days, we don’t always stop to think about how trees soften the many harsh aspects of our built environment.

#### **Current Environmental Issue Station Award**

## Pennsylvania Envirothon Board of Directors



**Pictured L to R:** Corey Richmond, Bob Sweitzer, Jan Hampton, Teddi Stark, Renee Swineford, Erica Smith, Christy Thomas, Lorelle Steach, Celina Seftas, Jason Winey, Karen Books, Vince McCollum, Cathy Yeakel, Mary Ann Bower, Greg Reineke, Maryruth Wagner, Bill Kahler, Craig Bingman, Cheryl Brobst, and Irvil Kear.

## Thank You

Pennsylvania's county conservation districts have made a commitment to organizing and hosting county level competitions as well as assisting with the state level competition. Thank you, Conservation Districts, for staff time, financial contributions, and endless hours of preparation and training. Your dedication has made the Envirothon one of the state's top natural resource education programs.

## **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  
Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council  
Penn State Extension Crawford County

### **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**

The National Energy Education Development (NEED) Project

## Financial Sponsors



*FRIENDS OF ENVIROTHON*  
PENNSYLVANIA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICTS  
ANDY PATTERSON

## Financial Report

Funding for the Pennsylvania Envirothon is provided through a public/private partnership. Program administration and one staff position are supported through an environmental education grant received from the PA Department of Environmental Protection. Special projects are funded through grants sponsored by Shell Exploration and Production, Weis Markets, PPL, Marcellus Shale Coalition, The Hershey Company, PA Trappers Association, and PA Outdoor Writers Association. Additional private/corporate contributions are used to cover event costs. This report reflects the income and expenses needed to hold a two-day event.

### 2015 Financial Report - reported by Ritchey, Ritchey & Koontz CPA

#### Revenue

Donations	104,624.00	
Government Grants	100,452.00	
Fundraising	3,155.00	
Interest	56.00	
Registration	<u>23,463.00</u>	
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$231,750.00</b>

#### Expenditures

Event Expense	35,389.00	
Outreach Expense	5,357.00	
Donations	8,600.00	
Grant expenses	30,453.00	
Depreciation	550.00	
Program Administration	<u>115,343.00</u>	
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<b><u>(195,692.00)</u></b>

Change in Net Assets	(36,058.00)
Net Assets, January 1	<u>213,028.00</u>
Net Assets, December 31	249,086.00

## **2016 Envirothon Events**

The 33<sup>rd</sup> annual Pennsylvania Envirothon will be held at the Susquehanna University and Camp Mount Luther on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 24 and 25, 2016.

The current issue focus for the 2016 Envirothon events will be “Invasive Species.”

The 28<sup>th</sup> NCF - Envirothon (North American Envirothon) will be held at the Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario July 24 - 29, 2016.

## **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

**Pennsylvania Envirothon Inc.**

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