Time stands still for no one.

We can certainly make the case that this famous quote is often recited by someone who has been around for a while and is reminiscing about the past. There is no question that there is some truth in the statement. Think of all of the things in our personal lives that remind us of this daily. We correct ourselves when recalling something that happened “a couple of years ago” when realizing it’s actually been over a decade. Have you ever thought about someone as still being a child, when in reality they’ve graduated from college and are living on their own? How did that time go by so fast? Sometimes this fact of life is hard to wrap your brain around.

Time seems to move along just as fast in our professional lives too. It may seem like you were just hired yesterday, when you’ve actually been at your job for two decades. Co-workers come and go; programs and partnerships do just the same. So how do we fully utilize the time and opportunities we have to make a difference as an individual and also within our organizations? Didn’t we all choose the conservation field thinking we were going to really make a difference, be different, save the world? Years later, what do we have to show for it? Did we make a difference helping to protect or improve the environment? Did we positively impact someone’s life that may make a difference after our careers are over? Sometimes these can be tough questions to answer. Perhaps it’s beneficial to take a glance back in your own career and think about what motivated you to be successful and make a difference. Put even more simply, what can we do today to make a positive impact tomorrow? How can we do the little things on a daily basis that are the building blocks to a successful professional legacy?

As with most professions, change in conservation is imminent. People change, programs change, partners change, but do we still have the drive or passion that we came into this profession with to make a positive difference? Can we look back on our years and say “yes we made a difference?”

(In recognition of Bob Struble, Secretary/Treasurer of the Board of Directors at the Chester County Conservation District. Bob recently retired from his “day job” at the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance after 42 years, mostly in the capacity of Executive Director. Bob has demonstrated to me how a true professional can adjust to change, while still maintaining passion for the ideals with which he began his career. Great work Bob, and thank you for providing me and many of those around us with such a great example.)
### 2018 FINANCIALS

#### INCOME

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<tr>
<td>County Funding</td>
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<td>State Funding</td>
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<td>Federal Funding</td>
<td>$233,682.70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>Fees for Services</td>
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<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
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#### EXPENSES

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<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>$1,464,723.89</td>
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<td>Education</td>
<td>$13,527.81</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$3,813,896.32</td>
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- County Funding: 1%
- State Funding: 20%
- Federal Funding: 9%
- Grants: 58%
- Other: 6%
- Fees for Services: 6%
- Operations: 39%
- Grants: 61%
- Education: < 1%
The Agricultural Team experienced a year of transition in 2018. Two separate RCPP projects, sponsored by Stroud Water Resources Center and NFWF, began to wind down with all projects expected to finish in the first half of 2019. The District’s new RCPP project, “CCCD Partnership for Chesapeake Bay Water Quality,” kicked off, with projects expected to begin in 2019. This grant will bring $3.6 million to Chester County, with $2.5 million dedicated to BMP implementation. This funding also allowed the District to hire an agricultural engineer, which has been a long term goal. These efforts have required a considerable amount of time and effort from staff. In addition, staff was able to meet our goals associated with the other various programs we administer. Articles to follow will go into greater detail about our accomplishments in each of these programs.

Staff also transitioned – two Ag Team members were promoted to other positions at the District. The challenges during this transition were met by staff as responsibilities were shifted, and we prepare to bring on new staff in 2019.

In total, 136 BMPs were implemented by staff throughout the year. In addition, District staff assisted NRCS in the development of EQIP contracts for future project implementation. 109 farms were visited as part of the Chesapeake Bay program; 65% were found to have an adequate Ag E&S plan, while 70% had a completed manure management plan. This work has built a solid foundation for the work to come in 2019.

**NRCS - CTA Agreement**

This year we saw a big push for conservation planning work. In addition to writing contracts and conservation plans for EQIP, writing conservation plans for people who need a conservation plan written for other reasons has been an increased focus this year. There are many reasons why producers contact NRCS and CCCD for conservation plans, including compliance with Pennsylvania regulations, requirements for selling development rights, nutrient management plan requirements, intentions for future financial assistance need, or FSA and crop insurance requirements. This year ten NRCS CTA plans were completed.

Demand for EQIP funding was lower than usual this year, resulting in fewer contracts written; however more practices were installed and implemented from existing contracts still active from past years. This year, nine total EQIP conservation plans with contracts, totaling $412,595.48, were written for practices including manure storages, waterways, access roads, heavy use area protection, manure stacking pads, fencing, mushroom house collection systems, and cropland practices.

**Manure Management Workshops**

Our Manure Management workshops were a success once again this year! We had 35 farmers attend our full day workshops to work on writing their plans. At the workshops, hosted in Lower Oxford and West Fallowfield Townships, attendees were educated on Chapter 91 Manure Management regulations, record keeping requirements, and how to write a plan for their own operation. These completed plans covered more than 1,892 acres. For the farmers who were unable to attend workshops, there were 64 on-farm planning visits made during the 2018 calendar year. We are happy to help our local farmers work through these plans to get their operations into compliance and to work to improve our county resources! Thank you to all who attended last year and thank you to our townships for continuing to host these workshops!
Chesapeake Bay Reboot Inspections

For the second year in a row, Chester County Conservation District has completed its required 100 inspections of agricultural operations to check compliance with Chapter 102 and 91 planning requirements. 103 inspections were conducted at various operations, through primarily focusing on small scale and equine operations, for the DEP reporting year 2017/2018. Between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018: 55 farms were visited in West Fallowfield Township; 17 in Upper Oxford; 10 in Highland; 6 in West Sadsbury; 5 each in Londonderry and Lower Oxford Townships; 4 in West Caln; and 1 inspection in Penn Township. Follow up is still ongoing with some operations. Roughly 85% of visited farms had required plans or were able to complete plans within the required timeframes.

RCPP
Regional Conservation Partnership Program

With 2018 in the rearview mirror, we wrap up another meaningful year of conservation project implementation using the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). In 2018, CCCD, in coordination with NRCS and private partners, completed numerous projects and continued work on others. A large majority of the work completed took place in the targeted northern and southern ends of the county, maximizing the environmental benefit that these projects provide, not only to the Brandywine, Red and White Clay Creeks but also to the Delaware River Watershed as a whole.
The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) offers opportunities to leverage public and private resources for water quality protection and brings together stakeholders, conservation partners, and agricultural producers to harness innovation, expand the conservation mission, and demonstrate the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation. In Pennsylvania, partnerships between the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), CCCD, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), Stroud Water Research Center, and private consultants resulted in many successful projects within the mushroom farming community in the Delaware Bay Watershed. Locally, the Red and White Clay Creek Watersheds were priority areas due to identified impairments, such as high nutrient and pathogen levels. As of the end of 2018, more than $1 million dollars has been dedicated to 11 mushroom farms in those watersheds for the installation of conservation practices to protect and improve water quality. Private consultants such as TeamAg, Inc. and Mowery Environmental, LLC assisted with planning, engineering, and implementation of some practices.

Below are some pictures of the conservation practices that were installed through RCPP.
In August, CCCD staff and local farmers had the opportunity to attend an educational boat trip offered by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. We started our 5-hour tour at the Baltimore Aquarium dock and discussed the effects that rivers and tributaries have on the Chesapeake Bay. We continued our journey to test water turbidity (clearness) and dredge the bottom of the Harbor for sediment samples and oysters. Our tests showed that turbidity was favorable that day, but lack of diversity among aquatic animals determined that the local habitat was inadequate.

While aquatic species are slowly returning to the Bay area, oysters remain at 2% of their original population. They are a primary filter of sediment and other suspended toxins, however excess sediment and nutrients from as far as Pennsylvania and New York can cause habitat loss of Bay oysters and the species that benefit from them. Overall, we had an enlightening day learning how what we do upstream affects downstream waters.
Watershed Coordinator Update

2018 was a year of transition for the Watershed Coordinator position. Zack Stepan left the Conservation District in August to begin the next phase of his life in New Mexico. Cori Trice moved from the Agricultural Team into the position; she plans to continue the work of the previous Watershed Coordinators and take on new challenges to help improve watershed health in Chester County.

This year, some of the key accomplishments of the Watershed Coordinator position include:

**Tree Plantings**
- TreeVitalize - 2,500 Trees and Shrubs on 18.5 acres
- CREP - 8,400 feet of fence, 12.5 acres for riparian forest buffer, and 1.5 acres of riparian herbaceous cover

**Partnerships with District Representation**
- Valley Creek Restoration Partnership
- The Christina Watershed Taskforce
- The Octoraro Source Water Collaborative
- Christina Watershed Municipal Partnership
- Master Watershed Stewards with Penn State Extension

District Engineer Update

2018 was a busy year for Post Construction Stormwater Management reviews, which continues to be the primary role for the District Engineer. 182 NPDES reviews were conducted encompassing completeness reviews, technical reviews, and reviews of minor revisions or corrective action, including several large projects and applicants utilizing our emergency review option. In addition to plan reviews, the District Engineer participated in over 120 meetings for NPDES permitting with designers, applicants, and municipalities. The District Engineer also coordinates with PA DEP Southeast Region (SERO) to stay current with updated policies and work through permitting challenges. There were many updates from the DEP Central Office in Harrisburg in 2018, and the District Engineer worked with CCCD staff and PA DEP SERO to adapt to these changes.

Beginning in August of 2018, the District Engineer began an additional supervisory role of providing oversight to CCCD’s new Agricultural Engineer. She also takes full advantage of the opportunity to inform and engage the community on various water resources topics. A presentation was given to the regulated community on CCCD and Chapter 102 Updates, and a Stormwater BMP tour was given by district staff to West Chester University students as part of their stormwater management class.
URBAN TEAM

In 2018, the Urban Team continued to rise to the challenges of Conserving Soil for Clean Water – Chester County Conservation Districts’ mission statement. The Urban Team continued to have a positive influence on the regulated community through outreach, inspections, plan reviews, and responses to compliance issues. We saw a steady pattern of growth in infrastructure with an increase in construction activities and issued almost double the amount of general NPDES permits compared to 2017. In addition, there was a 15% increase in pre-construction/engineer meetings from last year. In total, 246 plan reviews were completed by the team in 2018.

As most of us know, this was the second wettest year on record and Chester County was no exception. Field presence in 2018 was maintained mostly on a complaint basis with 514 field inspections with an additional 78 non-permitted complaint investigations.

The Urban team remained fully staffed in 2018 and worked efficiently through the delegated process of the DEP. We continued to use the Practice Keeper III (PK) database software system for tracking purposes and had several PK outreach events for other districts and DEP offices to showcase the benefits of the program.

2018 Urban Plan Review Types

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Plan Reviews:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completeness:</td>
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<td>New Plan Reviews:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revised Plan Reviews</td>
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<td>Preconstruction/Engineer meetings:</td>
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<tr>
<td>General NPDES Permits Issued:</td>
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<td>Individual NPDES Permits Issued:</td>
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<td>Compliance Notices:</td>
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<td>Complaint inspected/investigated:</td>
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<td>Total Chapter 102 District Fees:</td>
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<td>Total Chester County District Service Fees:</td>
<td>$697,594.00</td>
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Silt Sock Perimeter Control
Chapter 102 Updates

PA Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) provided several documents this year, including frequently asked questions and approved alternative Best Management Practices (BMPs) for both Erosion and Sediment Control (E&S) and Post-Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM). CCCD staff has attended trainings, worked with PA DEP Southeast Region (SERO), and disseminated this information via the CCCD website and through pre-application meetings. All of the updated information can be found on PA DEP’s E&S Resources website, and, as always, CCCD strongly encourages pre-application meetings for all new projects as well as for permitted sites with proposed changes.

PA DEP uploaded the Chapter 102 Permit Amendments Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document in October. This provides guidance on what constitutes field changes, minor amendments, and major amendments for permitted sites, as well as examples to improve understanding for the regulated community and DEP/CCD staff.

The list of Alternative E&S and PCSM BMPs was updated in December, which includes several newly approved E&S and PCSM BMPs, notably the Managed Release Concept (MRC) as an approved BMP for sites (or portions of sites) that cannot infiltrate. MRC is a PCSM BMP that includes collection, storage, and filtration of stormwater runoff, typically vegetated, and includes a release of a portion of the runoff through an underdrain. In addition to the guidance document, PA DEP has also posted a taped webinar for the MRC on the E&S Resources website.
The Chester County Conservation District and the Chester County Facilities and Parks conducted the Chester County Envirothon at Hibernia County Park. This annual environmental, educational event drew students in grades 3 – 12 from public, private, parochial, and home schools throughout the county. These five student teams studied all year long to compete in Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, Outdoor Safety, Wildlife, and the Current Issue of Grassland and Pasture Management.

The two-day Chester County Envirothon competition was held on May 2-3, 2018 at the Chester County Hibernia Park, with 400 students from across the county in competition. There were 15 teams and one exhibition team from 12 high schools, 23 teams from 13 middle schools, and 38 teams from 18 elementary schools involved along with over 90 volunteers! Because of the generous support of our sponsors, students received an Envirothon tee shirt and winning teams received prizes and trophies. The senior winning team had expenses paid to compete at the Pennsylvania State Envirothon.

The Academy at West Fallowfield Christian School was awarded the overall Champion of the Chester County Envirothon. Along with 15 other high school teams and one exhibition team, they were tested on five environmental stations and became this year’s overall winner! They represented Chester County in the Pennsylvania Envirothon at Susquehanna University and Camp Mount Luther on May 22 and 23rd 2018. This year, The Academy at West Fallowfield Christian School A was the overall winner in three of the stations: Aquatics, Forestry and Wildlife. Downingtown East came in second overall and Great Valley A came in third with the highest score in the Current Issue station. The highest station score in Soils was earned by Conestoga A.

Seniors – Grades 9-12
First Place – The Academy at West Fallowfield Christian School
Second Place – Downingtown East
Third Place – Great Valley A

Middle School – Grades 6-8
First Place – Hopewell A
Second Place – West Fallowfield Christian School A
Third Place – Penns Grove B

Elementary – Grades 3-5 Station Winners
Aquatics – Hopewell A
Wildlife – Nottingham B
Forestry – Nottingham A
Current Issue – Hopewell A, Hopewell B, Nottingham A, Octorara B
Thank You to the 2018 Envirothon Sponsors!

Event Champions ~ $1,000 and above

- Pennsylvania American Water
- Francis & Raymond Iacobucci Builders and Developers
- AAUW Chester County Harriet Jarosh Environmental Education Fund
- D L Howell & Associates Inc./Howell Kline Surveying LLC
- J Loew & Associates Inc./Southdown Homes LP

Partners ~ $500 - $999

- Cedar Knoll Builders
- Chester County Water Resources Authority
- Chester Delaware County Farm Bureau
- Pennsylvania Envirothon Inc.
- Willowdale Town Center

Friends ~ $1 - $499

- Brandywine Red Clay Alliance
- Della Penna Engineering Inc.
- Edward B Walsh & Associates Inc.
- Friends of Hibernia
  - Herr’s
- Howett’s Custom Screen Printing Inc.
- Longwood Gardens
- Kurtz Fish Hatchery
- Mowery Environmental LLC
- Octoraro Native Plant Nursery
- Wegmans Food Markets Inc.
- Willowdale Town Center
  - Winterthur
- Your Conservation Connection
New Conservation District Staff

**Agricultural Engineer**

Hello, my name is Lisa Walsh, and I just graduated in May 2018 from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a Bachelor's in Biological Systems Engineering with an emphasis on natural resources. Growing up around the Wisconsin dairy industry, I have always had an interest in agriculture and wanted to pursue a future in it. I have enjoyed my time exploring the area since moving here, and as my first postgrad job, am thrilled to begin my career as an agricultural engineer with Chester County Conservation District.

**Resource Conservationist**

Hi! My name is Melissa Murdock, and I recently graduated from West Chester University with a degree in Geoscience. I am currently enrolled at Johns Hopkins for a Master of Environmental Science and Policy. After interning with the Conservation District over the summer, I decided to pursue a career in conservation - which coincidentally brought me back here! I am so excited to start my career with the Chester County Conservation District as their new Agricultural Resource Conservationist!

**Administrative Support**

Hi! I’m Caitlin Betts, and I most recently worked for a Behavioral Health company as part of their Support Staff. In that job and my position before it, I gained a lot of good experience in the admin world that I am looking forward to using within my role at the Conservation District. I grew up in Coatesville so I’m very excited to begin this new journey within an office that serves the place I’ve grown up. I can’t wait to learn and grow with the new challenges and adventures that will come from working here at the District.

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Christian E. Strohmaier, Managing Director
Annette Ives, Assistant Administrator
Tammy Cairns, Publications Coordinator
Paige LaDuca, Conservation Program Representative
Corinne Trice, Watershed Coordinator
Caitlin Betts, Administrative Assistant

Gaye Lynn Criswell, Urban Team Leader
Donna Leddy, NPDES Permit Coordinator
Joe Sofranko, Urban Resource Conservationist
Jim Demchak, Urban Resource Conservationist
Gordon Roscovich, Urban Resource Conservationist
Shana Stephens, Urban Resource Conservationist

Dan Miloser, Agricultural Team Leader
Benjamin Drover, Agricultural Resource Conservationist
Pam King, Agricultural Resource Conservationist
Michael Zuk, Agricultural Resource Conservationist
Jeff Griffiths, Agricultural Resource Conservationist
Laurell Bostdorf, Agricultural Resource Conservationist
Melissa Murdock, Agricultural Resource Conservationist

Molly Deger, PE, District Engineer
Lisa Walsh, Agricultural Engineer

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