

EARTH CONSERVANCY NEWS

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EC Accomplishments

- Reclaimed 1,046 acres since 1994 at a cost of \$23 million
- Planned for another 1,215 acres to be reclaimed at an estimated cost of \$54.7 million

2006 OUTSTANDING YEAR FOR EC RECLAMATION PROJECTS

2006 was marked by important endings for Earth Conservancy's reclamation work in the Lower Wyoming Valley. The year was highlighted by the completion of several projects that will make way for the reutilization of formerly mine scarred lands for uses suited to community needs.

Two major reclamation efforts were completed in the areas of Exits 1 and 2 of Route 29 in Hanover Township.

Projects completed around Exit 1 include the Sugar Notch residential development land reclamation, which will make 50 acres available for the development of single family homes in the near future. This project was funded through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Growing Greener Grant Program and EC.

Also planned for the site is a hiking trail that will run through the residential development and into the Greater Hanover Area Recreation Park, funded in part by Luzerne County Office of Community Development (LCOCD), Penn DOT and EC.

Huber I, and II banks, located on either side of Hanover



Earth Conservancy has completed several reclamation projects near Exit 1 of Route 29 in Hanover Township. From left to right are: Preston Bank, now home to a 250,000 SF flex building; Huber III, in the early stages of reclamation; Huber II and I, ready for business development; the Greater Hanover Area Recreation Park; and, Sugar Notch, soon ready for residential development.

Street leading to New Commerce Boulevard were also completed in 2006. Both parcels, 4.5 acres and 27 acres respectively, are now available for commercial development. EC funded both projects with assistance from Northampton Fuel on Huber II.

The previously completed 42-acre Preston Bank, located at the entrance to the recreation park, was sold to Verus Partners, who erected a flex building on the site.

The 63-acre recreation

(Continued on page 2 OUTSTANDING)

EC BEGINS FOUR LONG-AWAITED PROJECTS

Huber III, Bliss, Concrete City and Franklin Bank work to start

Last year marked the start of several important reclamation projects, including Huber III and Bliss Banks, Concrete City, and Franklin Bank.

The first major project, Huber III sits at one of two entrances to Hanover Industrial Park.

EC received a grant/loan

award for the Huber III bank reclamation, made through the Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) Business in Our Sites Program (BOS).

The BOS program is designed to assist organizations with enhancing project sites that have viable potential to

help a regional economy.

When reclaimed, this 80-acre site will be available for development adjacent to the industrial park, which is filled to capacity.

EC was the recipient of a nationally competitive U.S. Environmental Protection

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COALS INITIATIVE COMES TO LUZERNE COUNTY EC DONATES FUNDS TO HELP GET COUNTY PROGRAM STARTED

Illegal dump sites could soon be a bad memory thanks to a new program started by the DEP in partnership with area businesses, organizations and residents.

COALS, which stands for Clean Our Anthracite Lands and Streams, aims to identify, cleanup and monitor illegal dump sites across the state. The program was recently started in Luzerne County with \$10,000 and \$50,000 contributions made by EC and Mericle Commercial Real Estate respectively.

The multi-faceted initiative brings together financial support, cleanups, law enforce-



EC donates \$10,000 and Mericle Commercial Real Estate Services donates \$50,000 to help kick off the DEP's COALS program in Luzerne County. Pictured L to R are: Rep. John Yudichak, DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty, Pennsylvania Environmental Council Project Manager Janet Sweeny, EC President/CEO Mike Dziak, and Mericle COO Lewis Sebia.

ment, volunteerism, expanded recycling opportunities and community education to clean dump sites and prevent future dumping.

As identified sites are cleaned of garbage, they are then monitored to deter any

would-be dumpers from re-polluting the area. Illegal dumpers who are caught will be prosecuted, according to the plan. DEP has successfully prosecuted illegal dumpers in other counties with the COALS program in place.

In Luzerne County Pennsylvania Environmental Council Northeast Region

(PEC) office will coordinate the program. Currently, sites across the county are being identified and catalogued. Site cleanups are planned to begin in spring.

To become involved contact EC at 823-3445 or PEC at 718-6507.

(OUTSTANDING Continued from page 1)

park is completed with the exception of an irrigation system and fencing around the playing fields. Two multi-sport fields were donated to the Greater Hanover Area Recreation Park Commission in 2004. EC is seeking grant funding to provide these amenities for the site.

Another major area of reclamation work completed by EC is at Exit 2 of Route 29, the site of the former landfill used to hold debris from the Agnes Flood of 1972.

The 50-acre site is located on the north side of Middle Road at the end of the exit ramp, adjacent to the 300-acre Hanover Crossings industrial park being developed by the Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Business and Industry.

Funding was provided through the DEP's Growing Greener program. The reclaimed site is now available for commercial development.

EC's efforts went beyond physical reclamation in 2006 and into sound land use planning when it completed the Plymouth Township Land Use Feasibility Study.



The lands located at Exit 2 of Route 29 shows another of EC's major reclamation areas. Pictured above is the '72 Agnes Flood Landfill site, sitting adjacent the Hanover Crossings industrial park. The former landfill has been reclaimed for use as a commercial property.

Funded by LCOCD and EC, the purpose of the study was to explore the best potential options for 350 acres EC owns in the township.

The site is located in the West Nanticoke section of Plymouth Township.

The study was overseen by a steering committee comprised of township supervisors and other elected officials, representatives of Luzerne County's Planning Office, area realtors, other stakeholders and experts in land use planning.

The study took a comprehensive look at the current state of the township and potential best uses for the acreage.

The completed study includes a detailed market analysis and master plan that could be used for understanding growth patterns in the area, identifying economic drivers, and evaluating potential for the site's future development.

The study is available on EC's website, www.earthconservancy.org.

COALS is PA's first statewide effort to stop illegal dumping, cleanup sites and prosecute offenders.

EC WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR

EC welcomed Marleen Troy, Ph.D., P.E. to its board of directors for a three-year term that began in January.

Dr. Troy is Chair of and Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences at Wilkes University. She has been at the university since 1997 and in 2004 received the Outstanding Faculty Award.

Dr. Troy is an environmental engineer with a specialty in environmental management and biological treatment techniques for remediation.

Her professional affiliations include the American Society for Civil Engineers, the American Society for Microbiology, the American

Society for Engineering Education, the Northeast Pennsylvania Pollution Prevention/Energy Efficiency Roundtable, Riverfront Parks, and the Environmental Law Institute.

Dr. Troy received her B.S. degree from Drexel University, as well as an M.S. and Ph.D. in Civil Engineering. She also received an M.S. in Microbiology from the University of Rhode Island.

Dr. Troy filled a vacancy made by the departure of Joseph Gilmour, Ph.D., President of Wilkes University. Dr. Gilmour served on the board for five years, during which time he



Marleen Troy, Ph.D., P.E.

contributed his management expertise to the revision of EC's vision and mission statements. Dr. Gilmour played an important role in maintaining EC's focus on achieving its established goals and objectives.

IN OTHER EC NEWS

Throughout 2006, there were a number of EC projects that continued to see progress but were not completed.

— Ashley Planes Heritage Park is in the final planning and permit stage. Construction of the project will be funded by Penn DOT and is expected to begin mid-year. Plans were funded by the DCNR, LCOCD and EC.

— The Sugar Notch Trail planned

for the Sugar Notch residential development is awaiting final permits. Also funded by Penn DOT, construction of the trail is expected to begin in summer. The trail will traverse through the development with trail heads in both the Greater Hanover Recreation Park and in Sugar Notch Borough. Plans were funded by the LCOCE and EC.

— Both the Mocanaqua Loop

Trail and the Penobscot Ridge Mountain Bike Trail sustained significant damage during the July 2006 flood. EC is seeking grants to perform repairs. Both trails will remain open during the repairs. However, the Penobscot trail has been temporarily turned into a loop trail using one trail head and a section of trail are being repaired.

(BEGINNING Continued from page 1)

(EPA) Brownfields Cleanup Grant to remove a silt pond on the grounds of its Concrete City site.

However, cleanup work could not begin until Penn DOT and its Project Advisory Committee (PAC) made a final decision about the alignment of the planned South Valley Parkway, a project suggested in EC's 1994 Land Use Plan.

A tentative final alignment has been determined, so reclamation of Concrete City has moved into the planning phase. Work is expected to begin later this year on the 25-acre site.

EC's Franklin Bank reclamation project also received funding through the EPA Brownfields program. The 13-acre site, located

in the Newtown section of Hanover Township, was used as repository of mine waste from past mining activities. EC is now working with the EPA to determine reclamation alternatives.

The Bliss Bank project will be another major reclamation effort. The project site is located in Newport Township, off Middle Road near Luzerne County Community College.

Funded through the PA DEP's Energy Harvest Grant Program, this cleanup involves removing 125,000 tons of culm to a co-generation facility, which will



Reclamation of Bliss Bank is being funded through the DEP's Energy Harvest Program.

convert the material into approximately 20,000 megawatts of electricity. EC will partner with Northampton Fuel to complete the project.

The award to EC was the largest grant given since the inception of the Energy Harvest program in 2003.

*Find real estate listings,
project updates,
environmental info and
links to useful sites at
www.earthconservancy.org*

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101 South Main Street
Ashley, PA 18706
Phone: (570) 823-3445
Fax: (570) 823-8270

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Earth Conservancy is a non-profit, 501 (c) (3) corporation. Board meetings are open to the public and are generally held on a quarterly basis at 8 a.m. at the Earth Conservancy office, 101 S. Main St., Ashley, PA 18706. Call the office at 570-823-3445 for more information on meeting dates and times.