



West Pikeland Township

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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March
2022
Edition

Environmental
Advisory Council
(EAC)

Mission:

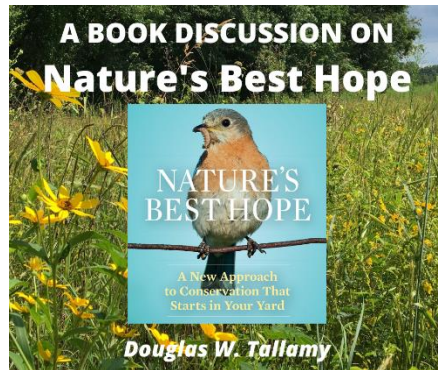
To advise the West Pikeland Township Board of Supervisors and other West Pikeland Township committees on matters dealing with the protection, conservation, management, promotion and use of natural resources located within West Pikeland Township.

EAC Members:

Bryan Maher, Chair
Linda Reichert, Co-Chair
Janet Parry, Secretary
John Matthews
Richard Pomeroy
Donna Switzer
Glenn Wenger

EAC Meetings are open to the public and held the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the township building.

[Find us at WestPikeland.com](http://WestPikeland.com)



Chester Springs Library Book Discussion April 22, 2022 @ 5:00pm

Join Chester Springs Library and the West Pikeland Township Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) in an important and fascinating discussion about how we can transform our environment – one backyard at a time – and make our planet a better and more beautiful place to live.

Library Director Nancy Niggel will lead the conversation, based on Douglas Tallamy's new book "Nature's Best Hope". You can find the book in the Chester County Library System, or call Chester Springs Library at 610-827-9212.

Held outside on the library's lawn or inside if it's raining. Bring a lawn chair to sit on.

Find out how we can contribute to a livable world by participating in the [Homegrown National Park](https://homegrownnationalpark.org/) movement. Stay tuned for a special Homegrown National Park guest speaker!

<https://homegrownnationalpark.org/>

Spring Tree Planting in Pine Creek Park

On April 8, 9, and 10, 2022, a partnership between the West Pikeland Township Parks and Rec, West Pikeland Township EAC, Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership, and Master Watershed Steward, Sarah Newman, will bring new plantings to Pine Creek Park (see photo on page 2). As part of the EAC's mission to "Identify and pursue grants and other opportunities that provide for the study and improvement of natural resources within WPT" an initiative to add over 300 new trees and shrubs to the park was proposed and then accepted by the Board of Supervisors in November 2021.

Pine Creek, which feeds Pickering Creek, is classified as a High Quality-Trout Stocking stream by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and serves as a valuable asset to our township. In recent years, heavy rainstorms and flooding events have eroded some of the streambank within the park, threatening the quality of the stream. The planting in April will not only enhance the natural diversity in Pine Creek Park but also work to maintain the high quality of the water by retaining stormwater runoff. There are many volunteer opportunities. Please access township website for dates and times to sign up.

<https://www.westpikeland.com/post/tree-planting-pine-creek-park>

EAC In Review

May 2021: The EAC continued bringing speaker events to the Township with a zoom presentation on improved recycling practices.

Summer 2021: The EAC partnered with the Chester Springs Library to bring Community Conversations to West Pikeland about the transition to renewable energy.

September 2021: The EAC partnered with PennDOT's Adopt-A-Highway program and held two roadside cleanups with volunteers from the community along Route 113.

November 2021: The EAC drafted a solar power ordinance for consideration by the Board of Supervisors.

February 2022: Mike McGrath from NPR's "You bet your Garden" hosted a discussion on pesticide-free organic gardening and lawn care.

Future Programs:

- March 26: Free paper shredding event at Township building
- April 8, 9, 10: Tree planting at Pine Creek Park
- April 22: Book discussion at Chester Springs Library

What is a Riparian Buffer and Why Should We Care?

A riparian buffer is a permanent strip of land that directly borders the bank of a stream, lake, or wetland that contains vegetation designed to protect the water from adjacent land use. Some of the ecological benefits of a riparian buffer include:

- floodwater mitigation
- anchoring the stream banks against erosion
- filtration of runoff pollution such as fertilizers, pesticides and sewage
- habitat for native wildlife
- shading to regulate stream temperature which is necessary for the health of the stream and native fish
- food for stream macro invertebrates (aquatic organisms such as crustaceans and insects), which in turn provide food for native fish

According to a PA Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) stormwater management document, a 35-foot riparian buffer is a minimum width recommended by the PADEP designed to provide streambank stabilization. A wider buffer of up to 200-feet would play a key role in increasing water quality in our community and contribute to flood control.

Pickering Creek, the waterway that runs through the Township, is presently classified by the PADEP as High Quality Waters with Trout Stocking (HQ, TSF). Several environmental organizations in our area are petitioning the PADEP to reclassify our Pickering Creek as an Exceptional Value (EV) stream. EV is the classification given to streams that have the cleanest and highest water quality and require protection by state regulation. In order to obtain an EV designation a water way must meet water quality standards related to the absence of toxic substances, the presence of healthy biology, and have exceptional ecological significance.

Currently, the West Pikeland Zoning Ordinance restricts new structures being constructed within 50-feet of a waterway. However, as stated earlier, a wider riparian buffer is critical in protecting water quality and providing flood control. We are hopeful that to support the exceptional value classification, West Pikeland will consider a 150-foot buffer ordinance in the future, to align with neighboring townships that also protect Pickering Creek.

Community Conversations – Renewable Energy

During the summer of 2021, Chester Springs Library, in partnership with the EAC, held three broad-ranging community conversations about renewable energy: what it is, why it is important right now, and how it can be used to create a sustainable future for the township. The activities were funded by a grant from the American Library Association, as part of their "Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries" program.

These conversations, masterfully led by Librarian Nancy Niggel, featured experts in the field and covered a wide range of renewable energy subjects, including: power grids, local renewable energy suppliers, electric vehicles, obtaining a home energy audit, and how to advocate locally and regionally for policies that will help communities reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, Ms. Niggel led a lively community book discussion on two seminal publications in the field of climate change: *How to Avoid a Climate Disaster*, by Bill Gates and *The Future We Choose: Surviving the Climate Crisis*, by Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac.

Grant funds also allowed the library to purchase these and other books on renewable energy and climate change, for adults and children.

Local participants in this series on renewable energy were enthusiastic about and inspired by the conversations and events, as information and ideas were shared by all.

The EAC and the Chester Springs Library look forward to working together on future projects!

Resources:

PA Dept of Natural Resources:

<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

PA Stormwater Management Manual:

http://www.stormwaterpa.org/assets/media/BMP_manual/chapter_6/Chapter_6-7-1.pdf

PA Code of Regulations, Chapter 93 Water Quality Standards

Penn State University Extension:

<https://extension.psu.edu/>

Green Valleys Watershed Association:

<https://www.greenvalleys.org/>

Delaware Riverkeeper Network:

<https://delawareriverkeeper.org/>

Audubon Pennsylvania

<https://pa.audubon.org/>

