



## *"The Dirt"*

# *A Resource for Local Conservation*

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### **MCCD Welcomes New Staff**

**Alyssa Linker - Part-Time Administrative Assistant** - MCCD welcomes Alyssa Linker, a Penn State student majoring in Business and Foreign Language Studies, with administrative and secretarial work experience. Alyssa was born and raised in Philadelphia, and now resides in Lansdale, Montgomery County. Alyssa is an avid reader and particularly enjoys military/espionage history and historical fiction genres. Other hobbies include many outdoor activities such as bird watching, hiking, fishing, competitive shooting, horseback riding, and natural crystal collecting. Alyssa also enjoys the calm catharsis of drawing and painting. Much of her artistic muses are subjects found in nature.

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### **Perkiomen Creek Habitat Improvement Project & "Trout in the Classroom" Event**

In April 2018, Montgomery County Conservation District (MCCD) staff partnered with volunteers from Perkiomen Valley Trout Unlimited (PVTU) and 35 students from Upper Perkiomen High School (UPHS) to remove invasive multiflora rose and install native willow and dogwood live stakes and whips along streambanks of the Perkiomen Creek at the American Legion Post in East Greenville. The streamside buffer enhancement activities were conducted as part of a larger, post-dam removal stream habitat improvement project, in which several streambank stabilization and fish habitat improvement structures were installed in October 2017. The project is being funded through grants from the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund and Penn State Extension's Master Watershed Steward Program.



MCCD provided 32 additional students from UPHS with an educational tour of the project in May 2018, as part of a larger "Trout in the Classroom" environmental education and trout release event organized by retired UPHS teacher Jim Coffey, and PVTU member Tom Smith. After releasing Brook Trout that they raised in the classroom, students enjoyed hands-on opportunities to learn about source water protection, freshwater ecology, waste water treatment, non-point source pollution, fly fishing and fly tying while rotating through a series of educational stations hosted by staff from AQUAPA, Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Department, PVTU, MCCD, Upper Montgomery Joint Authority and Montgomery County Division of Parks, Trails and Historic Sites.

MCCD continues to monitor this project to ensure that native plantings become established and that in-stream structures continue to function as designed. Special thanks again to all our project partners!

*Brian J. Vadino, MCCD Watershed Specialist*



**Invasive Species removal with assistance from students at Upper Perkiomen High School**

**Educational signage installed on-site explains the goals of the project and acknowledges project funders and partners.**

## Pest Spotlight: Spotted Lanternfly *It's egg mass scraping time!*



**Female Spotted Lanternfly laying egg masses in the fall**

Most everyone in our county is familiar now with the Spotted Lanternfly. This invasive pest is expanding its range throughout southeast PA and as we enter into fall, will begin laying egg masses that will over-winter and hatch in the spring. We can expect to see the adults die off after a hard frost this fall, yet scraping of egg masses is critical, to reduce the number of nymphs that will hatch in the spring.

Beginning late September, the Spotted Lanternfly lays eggs in brown, mud-like masses of 30-50 eggs on trees or any other outdoor surface. These egg masses over-winter and will hatch in the spring.

The Spotted Lanternfly, native to Asia, is an invasive pest of significant concern due to its potential to greatly impact the viticulture (grape), tree fruit, plant nursery, and timber industries. The Spotted Lanternfly feeds on the sap of many tree species, leaving weeping wounds.

**MCCD plans to host informational sessions in the coming months. "Like" our Facebook page to see the current events!**

*Jessica Buck - District Manager*

**Spotted Lanternfly Management for Homeowners**

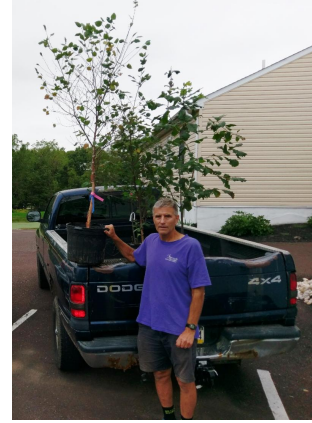
## PPL Community Roots Tree Programs

MCCD acquired and distributed 150 trees to 11 entities in September, including schools, municipalities and a watershed organization, thanks to PPL Electric Utilities and its Community Roots program. Community Roots provides free trees to county and municipal parks,

environmentally-focused groups and schools.

These trees will be among thousands of trees that are being distributed and planted across the PPL service territory in central and eastern Pennsylvania this year. Trees provide many benefits including soil and water protection, wildlife and pollinator habitat, reduced air pollution, and shade and aesthetic benefit.

If your organization is interested in a tree planting project, reach out to MCCD Watershed Specialist, [Brian Vadino](#).



## Project Spotlight: Fisher Road, Upper Frederick Township *Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads Improvement Grant Program*

MCCD in conjunction with Upper Frederick Township funded a gravel road improvement project, through Pennsylvania's *Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads* grant program. The program provides funding to eliminate stream pollution caused by runoff and

sediment from the State's comprehensive network of unpaved and low volume public roads.

A stream crossing culvert on Fisher Road was replaced through this grant, providing Deep Creek improved conveyance through the structure, reduced streambank erosion, improved aquatic habitat and passage, and a much safer and drivable roadway.

Municipalities interested in participating in the grant program are encouraged to contact Program Administrator, [Jessica Buck](#).

## Proper Soil Testing for NPDES Permitted Projects

Proper soil testing is one of the most critical aspects of designing a good post-construction stormwater management plan for new earth disturbance projects. Appendix C of the Pennsylvania Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual (BMP Manual) describes how soil testing should be conducted when developing plans for NPDES Permitted projects. The BMP Manual states that "soil evaluation and investigation should be conducted early in the preliminary design of the project so that information developed in the testing process can be incorporated into the design." The BMP Manual recommends using soil test data to determine where infiltration BMPs would be suitable before full site layout is done. Per the BMP Manual, "full build-out of areas suitable for infiltration BMPs should not preclude the use of BMPs for volume reduction and groundwater recharge." ...*(continued)* [Click here to read the article.](#)

*Eric Konzelmann, CPESC, CPSWQ - Assistant District Manager*

## Species Spotlight: Eastern Redbud

Eastern Redbud is a beautiful ornamental tree native to our area. It typically grows to a height of 20–30' and a spread of 25–35' at maturity. It does best in full sun or partial shade, and

moist yet well drained soils. This tree is known for its plentiful pink blossoms in April, as well as heart shaped leaves and brown seed pods that remain on the plant through winter. The early blossoms provide nectar for pollinators. The Eastern Redbud makes a great ornamental landscape tree for homeowners, while providing benefit to pollinator species. Native trees are the best option when selecting plants for your property, as they are adapted to the landscape and climate conditions of the area.



*Jessica Buck - District Manager*

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