

## BUCKS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

**NEWSLETTER**

of Community Conservation in Bucks County

**65 YEARS - BUCKS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

This April, the Bucks County Conservation District celebrates 65 years of service. Established in 1961, the District has worked with our community to promote the wise use and management of natural resources.

As Bucks County has transitioned from primarily agricultural land to more residential and commercial development—while facing changing weather patterns—our work has evolved. Legislative, planning, design, and management approaches have adapted to protect soil and water resources. We remain committed to clean water, clean air, and healthy ecosystems that sustain our community.

**NEW CLASS - MASTER WATERSHED STEWARDS**

You've probably heard of them - the live-staking, tree planting, pollinator garden-tending Master Watershed Stewards. They are active members of our conservation community and it's time to build the Class of 2027! The basic training course begins February 2027. Applications are being accepted through August 2026.

The Penn State Extension Master Watershed Steward Program—recipient of the Pennsylvania Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence—provides 40+ hours of training on water quality, stream health, native plants, habitat, groundwater, recreation, and more, based on current Penn State research.

## Certification requirements:

- 40 hours of training /
- 20 volunteer hours during the training year

## Volunteer opportunities include:

- Stream cleanups
- Riparian plantings
- Rain garden design, installation
- Rain barrel workshops
- Community science projects

[MORE  
INFO](#) 



**PennState Extension**

[APPLY  
HERE](#) 

# NEW FOR 2026

## ...A CONSORTIUM

**A new chapter in watershed collaboration is underway.**

The Neshaminy Watershed Association and the Bucks County Conservation District have partnered with six municipalities—New Britain, Doylestown, Buckingham, Warrington, Middletown, and Bensalem—to launch the Neshaminy Consortium. The group will start looking at the creek with an eye towards larger scale watershed health.



The Consortium provides coordinated support for 1) Public education and outreach, 2) Community engagement, and 3) Grant writing and funding applications. A key focus will be Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit compliance, while advancing projects that improve watershed health on both public and private lands. We look forward to sharing progress in 2026.

## ...A LAKE

It's been decades since we've seen the creation of a water feature based public park in the County. In an exciting development for the region, Solebury Township has secured funding to purchase the New Hope Crushed Stone quarry property on Phillips Mill Road. The 166-acre site includes a 60-acre lake ('Lake Solebury, for now' and will be transformed into a public park, EMS station, and dive training facility.

No new dams; instead, a former extraction site will become a lasting community asset. The lake is similar in surface in size to Lake Towhee in Haycock Township, but significantly deeper. [Learn more](#) about how Solebury Township got to this point and what's next. And a shout out to [Primrose Creek Watershed Association's](#) to ecological restoration in the watershed.

### COMING IN EARLY JUNE

(AN EARLY WEEKDAY EVENING)



Green and Growing 2026 - Community Conservation in Bucks County

This year marks the third annual **Green and Growing** event. First we gathered at Churchville Nature Center in 2024, then at a tabling event during Penn State Extension Native Plant Sale in 2025. This year, we are planning a Social Workshop style event – where we can gather to learn from local experts, share, and brainstorm approaches to fostering stewardship in Bucks County.

## ...A WATERSHED ASSOC.

Second in size to the Neshaminy Creek watershed which reaches into Montgomery County, the Tohickon Watershed is completely confined to Bucks County. With Lake Nockamixon at its center, the Tohickon is often broken down into the upper and lower reaches. No matter, rain that falls in headwaters north of Quakertown, flows to the Delaware River at Point Pleasant.



The origin story of the Tohickon Watershed Association (TWA) is best described as fast and enthusiastic. Since an initial public interest meeting in June 2025 to a member list of just over 100 people by January, it's now a 501 (c) 3 non profit.

The TWA has been awarded a grant from [the Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic, Delaware River Greenway Partnership](#) to kickstart projects this spring. Look for the TWA at the spring dam release and Earth Day event at Lake Nockamixon. Other projects are being planned and will benefit from your participation – look for them on social media and visit the [TWA website](#). The next meet up is March 18 (5:45 pm) at Dharma Bums in Point Pleasant. Learn about aqueduct, history, and meet up with TWA folks.

## EVEN MORE NEWS...

### MORE TREES, PLEASE!

If you are organizing a fall tree planting, consider adding your tree list to the Master Watershed Stewards' (MWSS) bulk tree order.

By combining purchases, participants:

- Reduce shipping costs
- Access expertise on species selection and planting practices
- Support MWSS watershed education and restoration efforts

For more information, contact Kathleen Connally at [kxc30@psu.edu](mailto:kxc30@psu.edu).



### SALT SNAPSHOT 2026

Since 2024, momentum has been building around [Stroud Water Research Center's Salt Snapshot and Cut the Salt](#) programs - in Bucks County and the southeast PA region. The Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards and the Neshaminy Watershed Association have supported an annual event that brings together community scientists and their water samples from streams across the county. The samples are analyzed on site for chloride salts and conductivity (a measure of dissolved minerals). This information is compiled by Stroud so that we can see where the salt 'hot spots' are. The community can then evaluate probable sources of excess salt and pursue remedies.

The winter of 2026 has not been friendly to the effort. Twice postponed, the snapshot is now scheduled for March 5. While we wait for 2026 data, take a look at [Stroud's Salt Snapshot Data](#) mapping and zoom in to your neighborhood. Learn more about the problem with road salts in our fresh water - [HERE \(Stroud\)](#)



### AND THE MONEY - GRANTS!

- [Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds \(FPW\)](#) - Average award \$20-25,000. Letter of Intent due March 20, Application Deadline April 16, 2026. Unspecified match required.
- [Amazon Bucks County Community Fund](#) - up to \$10,000, apply by March 30, 2026, register for [webinar on March 6](#). No match requirement noted.
- [National Foundation for Fish and Wildlife Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund](#) - minimum \$75,000; Scheduled Proposal labs through March 24, Applications due March 26, 2026. No match required but improves competitiveness.
- [PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grants](#) - \$50,000 - \$500,000; a variety of programs for a variety of projects!
- [PA DEP Growing Greener Plus](#) - Application period typically Earth Day through mid-June, \$25,000 - \$500,000. Lower 5% match requirement
- [Bucks County Conservation District Water Quality Fund - Mini Grant](#) - \$500 - \$10,000; 50% match, encourages collaborative water quality projects. Round II Applications accepted: May 1 - June 15, 2026
- [Watershed Restoration and Protection Program](#) - DCED - up to \$300,000; 15% match. Application period February 1st - May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026.
- [PA Coldwater Heritage Partnership](#) - up to \$50,000, 25% match, Apply until April 15, 2026