

Middleburg Elementary 5th Graders Have Fun & Learn About Environment

The Snyder County Conservation District (SCCD) was invited to Middleburg Elementary School to coordinate an environmental education competition for their 5th graders. The event, called the “Fifth Grade Envirothon,” was held on May 18, 2016, at the school grounds. Students were assigned into teams of three to five. Approximately one hundred (100) participated.

Weeks before the event, the students and teachers were given materials to read, discuss and study regarding aquatics, forestry, wildlife, soils & agricultural conservation practices, and vernal pools.

Jason Winey, SCCD Watershed Specialist, coordinated the event by collecting materials, samples and educational handouts, and securing people to help out with the actual event. Several of his fellow SCCD colleagues and individuals from the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources’ (DCNR) Bureau of Forestry and USDA-Farm Service Agency (FSA) helped out with the event. Some study materials and testing station props were supplied by Susquehanna University, PA Game Commission and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Prizes from various organizations will be awarded to team members who scored the highest in each station during an end of school year picnic.



Above: Students at the aquatics station look over fish and other items to identify during the Fifth Grade Envirothon, while Lauren Maguire (standing, far left), SCCD/NRCS SWAT (Strategic Watershed Action Team) Member and Shippensburg University student, looks on.





Left: Fifth graders look over bark, wood, leaf and other samples at the forestry station during the competition.

Below: After the competition, John Portzline, DCNR Bureau of Forestry Assistant Forester, Rachel Naylor, SCCD Nutrient Management Technician, and Renee Swineford, SCCD Administrative Assistant (standing in back, left to right) go over the answers and review bird calls to the students.



SCCD has given presentations to young people in schools, at school sponsored events and at other events for many years. For more information regarding this event and other potential environmental educational opportunities for youngsters, call the Snyder County Conservation District at 570-837-3000 or email us at sccd@ptd.net.

Check what else we do by visiting our website at www.snyderconservation.org.

Note: A special thanks goes to those who helped out during the event, allowed us to borrow educational props or supplied educational information:

- *USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)*
- *John Portzline, DCNR Bureau of Forestry Assistant Forester, Bald Eagle Forest, Laurelton*
- *Gerald Hoy, DCNR Bureau of Forestry, Service Forester, Bald Eagle Forest, Laurelton*
- *PA Game Commission*
- *Mike Bilger, Aquatic Ecology Research Scientist, Susquehanna University*