



## Snyder County Conservation District

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### Ecology Field Day Held in Penns Creek

On the morning of Saturday August 13, 2011, an Ecology Field Day was held in Penns Creek at the New Berlin Commons. Despite the cloudy skies and showers, fifty-five participants, both adults and children, collected and learned about the water quality, insects, crayfish, clams, and fish that inhabit Penns Creek; and how the surrounding land use affects the creek ecology. The group was successful in collecting many species of animals including mayflies, crayfish, hellgrammites, dragonflies, beetles, water scorpions, and giant water bugs to name a few. Some ten different fish species were collected such as smallmouth bass, red-breast sunfish, margined madtoms, rock bass, cutlips minnows, and darters.

After the aquatic animals and fish were caught, the participants were able to study and identify them under microscopes furnished by Susquehanna University's Biology Department. This proved to be a highlight of the day as the participants were able to observe the various structures of the animals and handle the fish species. At the conclusion of the day, all animals were released back into the creek unharmed.

This Ecology Field Day was funded by PACD (PA Association of Conservation Districts, Inc.) through a grant initiated by the Snyder County Conservation District (SCCD) and awarded to Mike Bilger of EcoAnalysts, Inc., of Selinsgrove. Jason Winey, SCCD Watershed Specialist, and Shanon Burkland, Union County Conservation District Watershed Specialist, were on hand; as well as Dr. Carlos Iudica from Susquehanna University and his son Lucas, Janet Bilger of Snyder-Union Community Action Agency (CAA) and aquatic ecologist Erika Bilger Kratzer. Without their help, this project would not have been successful.





Since the demand to attend the Ecology Field Day was great, there are plans to conduct more sessions next summer if funding is available and interest continues.



*Above: Mike Bilger of EcoAnalysts, Inc., (standing wearing waders in center) speaks to those attending the Ecology Field Day along Penns Creek.*



*Below: Jason Winey, SCCD Watershed Specialist, (standing, wearing white shirt near center) helps collect aquatic life in Penns Creek during the Ecology Field Day.*



Questions about this event, the Lower Penns Creek Watershed Association (LPCWA), or other conservation district events, can be forwarded to [Jason Winey](mailto:Jason.Winey@lpcwa.org) at 570-837-3000, extension 112.

Information about the following supporting groups can be found on their respective websites:

EcoAnalysts, Inc.: <http://www.ecoanalysts.com>

Susquehanna University Department of Biology: <http://www.susquehanna.edu/academics/Biology.asp>

Snyder Union CAA: <http://www.union-snydercaa.org>

Snyder County Conservation District: <http://www.snyderconservation.org>

Union County Conservation District: <http://www.uccdpa.org>

PACD: <http://pacd.org>

*Note #1: Most of this material was supplied by Mike Bilger of EcoAnalysts, Inc., Selinsgrove, PA.*

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