

High School Students Test Their Knowledge in Local Envirothon

Thirty-eight (38) teams involving almost 200 students from fourteen (14) schools in five central Pennsylvania counties arrived at the Shikellamy State Park Marina for the annual Susquehanna Valley High School Envirothon held on April 30, 2024. (The Marina is located near Sunbury, PA on Packers Island.)

Topics that the students were tested in were wildlife, forestry, aquatics, soils, and a specific current issues topic that changes yearly. The current issue topic for this year is “Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future.”

Several cooperating agencies helped with the event. They were: PA Game Commission (*Wildlife station*), PA (Department of Conservation & Natural Resources) DCNR-Bureau of Forestry (*Forestry station*), PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) (*Current Events station*), and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (*Soils station*).

Staff members from the five conservation districts oversaw planning, coordination, and logistics of the Envirothon, as well as the Aquatics station.



Each conservation district awarded medals to the highest scoring team from its county. This year, the Snyder County winners were from Susquehanna Valley Homeschoolers. The team (above photo) consisted of Alex Trojan, Ben Battenburg, Ezra Carr, Kera Bentz, and Isaiah Creeger. They were the top team in the Wildlife and Forestry stations and the top team in the overall competition. The team advisor (not in photo) was Karen Carr.



During the event, students stopped at a station where they are not tested for their knowledge but listened to an educational presentation given by Joshua Green, Director of Education from Trees for Graziers (treesforgraziers.com). This non-government organization promotes agroforestry, specifically silvopasture, “the deliberate integration of trees and grazing livestock operations on the same land” as defined by the U.S. Forest Service.

Each student who participated in the local Envirothon received a T-shirt. Sponsoring businesses and organizations gave financial donations for the event. (Contact one of the five supporting conservation districts for a complete list of donors.)

Winning teams from each participating county advance to the 2024 PA Envirothon. This year’s PA Envirothon will be a combination of:

- A. An online oral component (taking place on May 14 through May 17) in which all teams make a presentation and answer questions, and
- B. An in-person component onsite at Camp Mount Luther west of Mifflinburg on May 22 where teams will compete in five stations (aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and renewable energy).



The winning PA team qualifies for the (National Conservation Foundation) NCF-Envirothon competition scheduled for July 28 to August 3, 2024, Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York. They will meet winning teams from similar Envirothons held throughout many US states and Canadian provinces and territories. (In 2023, competing teams also came from the People’s Republic of China and the Republic of Singapore.)

If you would like more information about or would like to volunteer to help with these local, state, or international educational events, contact your local conservation district office or check these websites listed below:

Columbia County Conservation District: 570-317-9456
Montour County Conservation District: 570-271-1140
Northumberland County Conservation District: 570-495-4665
Snyder County Conservation District: 570-837-3000
Union County Conservation District: 570-524-3860

PA Envirothon: <http://www.envirothonpa.org>
North American Envirothon: <http://www.envirothon.org>

PA Envirothon Mission & Vision Statements (taken from PA Envirothon website): “The mission of the Pennsylvania Envirothon is to provide students with the knowledge and tools necessary to address the natural resource challenges facing today’s world as well as the challenges of tomorrow.

“The Pennsylvania Envirothon educates high school students in natural resource and environmental sciences. The program emphasizes the importance of environmental sensitivity while stressing a need to achieve a social, ecologic and economic balance in life. The learning objectives emphasize awareness, knowledge, attitudes and application.”

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