

High School Students Test Their Knowledge in Local Envirothon

Forty-two (42) teams involving almost 200 students from fifteen (16) schools in five central Pennsylvania counties arrived at the Shikellamy State Park Marina for the annual Susquehanna Valley High School Envirothon held on April 28, 2026. (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 “Non-Point Source Pollution: It Begins at Home!” Example sources of non-point pollution are earth disturbance from excavation sites, farm fields and agricultural animal production sites.

Several cooperating agencies helped with the event. They were as follows: 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 (Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union Counties) 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 (listed alphabetical order) Peter Duperon, Oden Pheasant, Abigail Simpkins, Brianna Simpkins and Claire Simpkins. (Susan McNally and Kara Simpkins were team advisors). This year’s overall winning team came from Benton Area High School.



During the event, students stopped at a station where they are not tested for their knowledge but listened to an educational presentation on Lyme Disease, given by DEP staff and Ryleigh Faust, Union County Conservation District Mosquito-Borne Disease Program Coordinator.

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 2026 PA Envirothon. This year's PA Envirothon will be a combination of:

- A. An online oral component (taking place on May 14 and May 15) in which all teams record a presentation and answer live questions, and
- B. An in-person component onsite at Camp Mount Luther near Mifflinburg on May 20 where teams will compete in five stations (aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and this year's current issue).



The winning PA team qualifies for the (National Conservation Foundation) NCF-Envirothon competition scheduled for July 19 – 25, 2026, at Starkville, Mississippi, Mississippi State University. They will meet winning teams from similar Envirothons held throughout many US states and Canadian provinces and territories. (In recent years, 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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