



BLUE AND GOLD

Pennsylvania FFA Happenings

Beyond the Blue

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CV Supports Trout Unlimited Riparian Buffer Project

TYLER SCHAEFFER

Secretary Cumberland Valley FFA

MECHANICSBURG, Pa. — Human interaction with the environment has notoriously tended to be a parasitical relationship. Throughout history, humans have taken a multitude of favorable things from the environment, yet often the only things that have been returned are pollution and destruction, some people want to change this. The Cumberland Valley Trout Unlimited (CVTU) wrote a grant to receive money to plant a 2.9-acre riparian buffer along the Yellow Breeches at Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission canoe launch site on Spangler Mill Road, Camp Hill, Pa. The Cumberland Valley FFA, in partnership with Cumberland Valley's Club Green, the Pennsylvania Fish and Game Commission, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and CVTU, has taken a step to right the wrongs that have been made in the past. This is to be through the construction of a riparian buffer site.

A riparian buffer is an area of land, located adjacent to a body of water, which provides a buffer zone against the synthetic and deleterious properties of civilization. The reason buffer zones are needed is because sometimes a body of water borders a piece of human infrastructure, such as a highway. This highway has the potential of expelling toxins, from automobiles, which could seep into the water. If toxins enter the water it could have



Students review the plans for the riparian buffer project.

a disastrous chain reaction by killing the fish, which in consequence could end up killing one or more of the fish's natural predators. A

riparian buffer prevents this from happening by creating a barrier between the two areas. It not only prevents this but it also reduces

the sound caused by automobiles. For these reasons, a riparian buffer is a great addition to the wildlife.

The Cumberland Valley agriculture department led this project by having students work on a design for this area. Groups of students, in the wildlife management class, worked on design plans for a predetermined area making use of Pennsylvania native plants. Ashley Spotts, representing the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, met with the students and went over the principles for establishing a riparian buffer. She also provided many valuable files to be uploaded on the agriculture department's internet research site. These designs, once completed, were presented to a panel of judges, which included representatives from Trout Unlimited, Pennsylvania Master Gardeners, and the Cumberland Valley Science department. They chose the design that they believed to be best fit for the project. The winning design was presented a little over week later to Scott Carney, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission who approved the project.

On Nov. 21, students in the Cumberland Valley FFA and Club Green volunteered their time to help plant over 80 trees at the riparian buffer site.

There are still more project work days to come, but not until next spring. More trees will be planted to further ensure that the area remains filled with wildlife. The project is ongoing and will hopefully be a huge success.

Celebrating FFA

FROM THE OFFICER'S STATION

It has been another awesome month for the State Officer Team. We have been keeping busy by doing a variety of events and conferences. A few officers attended the South Eastern Leadership Conference which was held at Twin Valley High School. The conference was a lot of fun with all the activities while learning about leadership. The team was then off to the State Capitol to attend the kick-off of Student Career and Tech Week. After getting pummeled by a few snow storms, we were able to hold ACES (Agriculture Cooperation Establishes Success). The conference had to be held on two different weekends once again because of the large attendance number. There were more than 1,100 FFA members, advisors, and guests at the conference, which set a new record. Thank you to all the advisers and guests who gave up their free time to bring all the FFA



BILLY SAYLOR

members to learn about leadership, meet other FFA members from around the state, and just have a great time.

National FFA Week is Feb. 21-27. Pennsylvania FFA is extremely

excited because Chase Rose, the Central Region Vice-President for the National FFA Organization, is coming to Pennsylvania for the week to see what all takes place in our Commonwealth during FFA Week. February 23 is Meet Your State Officer at Hoss's Night, where you can go to one of the selected Hoss's and have a great dinner with FFA members and FFA supporters. Quickly approaching is SLLC (State Legislative Leadership Conference) which is scheduled for March 13-16.

I am looking forward to the last few months that we have left to serve the Pennsylvania FFA.

Editor's Note: Billy Saylor is the 2009-2010 State Chaplain.



From left, Amelia Howe, Kellsey Turner, David White, Taylor Helbig, Damian Oswald, and Dr. James Howe at the USDA-NRCS offices in January.

National Winners Visit Washington

KELLSEY TURNER

Oley Valley FFA Reporter

OLEY VALLEY, Pa. — On January 6, 2010 four members of the Oley Valley FFA — Taylor Helbig, Amelia Howe, Kellsey Turner, and Damian Oswald; and their adviser, Dr. James Howe, traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with David White, the director of the USDA-NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service). The team was invited to Washington D.C. in response to their recent success at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis.

These four students made up the Environmental and Natural Resource (ENR) team that represented Pennsylvania at the National FFA Convention in October. At the Convention, these students spent two days competing against 36 of the other top ENR teams from other states. At the end of the competition, the Oley Valley FFA team walked away as the first place Environmental and Natural Resource team in the nation.

As a result, the USDA-NRCS, one of the primary sponsors of the national competition, invited the group of high school students

and their adviser to spend the day in Washington D.C. to learn more about the USDA-NRCS. While in Washington, the team was escorted to the USDA-NRCS by Kent Schescke, the senior director of partnership development for the National FFA organization. The team met with the director of the NRCS, David White, who gave the students a presentation on the responsibilities of the NRCS and discussed career opportunities with them. They spent the remainder of their day touring the NRCS and Washington D.C.

