

Critical Water and Agricultural Issues in Potter County and Tioga County Being Studied by a Local Leadership Team of Community Members.

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Westfield, PA – The survey results are in – the majority of respondents’ rate water quality in the Upper Cowanesque or Triple Divide Watersheds as "good" or "excellent" reported Local Leadership Team (LLT) member Erica Tomlinson.

The Potter-Tioga Local Leadership Team of the Water4Ag project has been meeting regularly. This local project is a partnership between Penn State Extension, several Potter and Tioga County agencies, service providers, community members, and farmers.

Pennsylvania is a central player in the water health of the Genesee, Pine Creek-Susquehanna, and Allegheny Rivers. And the seemingly endless mountains of north central PA provide pristine waters for residents, recreation, agriculture, and industry, to name a few. The Triple Divide and Upper Cowanesque watersheds are vitally important to this region and beyond. LLT member Kirsten Williams explained that local stakeholders are intimately involved making this genuinely a ‘community-led’ process – effectively empowering stakeholders with the resources and authority they need to lead efforts such as a water sampling study funded by the United States Geological Survey (USGS)



LLT member Earle Robbins said that this community group has been working to identify long-term solutions and implementing projects that address the Region’s most pressing water and agricultural issues. He mentioned that they have identified four areas of interest. They are:

1. Education – one-on-one, peer to peer, and group
2. Farm/Community Sponsored Event
3. Streambank Restoration
4. Roads, and their impacts to agriculture and water

Despite the interruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Local Leadership Team has been regularly meeting remotely to continue progress, most recently planning a survey of waters in the watershed. The responses of the recently conducted random sample survey of both farmers and non-farm residents gathering their ideas and perspectives related to water and agricultural issues have been summarized and will be made publicly available on the project’s website and press releases. These responses will provide the leadership committee with important insights as they continue to prioritize the effort’s plans and resources.

The other communities in the project include Mifflin County in central PA, two communities in Nebraska, and the Verde Valley in Arizona. “We wanted to work with each of these communities because they each have different types of agriculture and water issues and all have had a history of developing effective programs and partnerships to address agriculture and water issues” noted Extension Educator, Nicole Santangelo.

For additional information: visit our website at <http://water4ag.psu.edu>

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