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www.mcconservation.org



MONROE COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



Summer 2025 Newsletter

Volume 48 No. 2

More new changes on the way at Kettle Creek!

2025 is becoming a transformative year here at Kettle Creek and Monroe County Conservation District. In addition to new staff and management changes, we are also updating our building's entryway and our indoor and outdoor exhibits for your educational enjoyment!

The main entrance to the EE Center is still under construction but we are excited to unveil our new, unique design—including a new Pennsylvania Native Species pond with glass viewing window—once it is completed. We are looking at a potential July completion date. Our guest entrances are still limited to the top parking lot ramp along the left side of the building and our center lot entrance “technical services” downstairs entrance. We’ve also spruced up our wooden exterior with a fresh coat of stain.

Work has also begun on the construction of a new informational kiosk as an Eagle Scout project. We would like to thank Nelson Figueroa for taking on that task. The new kiosk is being constructed at the far end of our parking lot at the start of the trail that heads up to the Mattioli Pavilion and Lillian's Nature Discovery Area.



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Our Discovery Area will also be gaining a new element this summer—a hanging scale toy, so kids can strengthen their concepts of weight, balance, and cause-and-effect relationships while also gaining hand-eye coordination and estimating skills. Thank you to PA Water Environment Association for this!

Finally, we are eager to introduce some new indoor exhibits and elements in our EE Center. Our lobby area now includes “Science on a Sphere,” an interactive global projection screen display that can model hundreds of different ecological conditions and global phenomena, including climate change trends, migration patterns, disease outbreaks, and other natural and human impacts on our planet. And you can visit other planets too!

Our new colorful Critter Room features a Magnetic Ball Wall, a great STEM activity where children can build and experiment with pathways for balls to follow using magnetic components. These components, like tubes, ramps, and spinners, attach to the wall using magnets, allowing for creative ball routes and hands-on learning.

You may also recognize some of our older Critter Room elements that have since been updated, along with a new cozy reading-nook structure. And we still have some more new educational wall displays on the way so stay tuned!

Thanks for bearing with us as we enhance our Kettle Creek visitor experience!

Find us on Social Media!





Monroe County Conservation District Board of Directors

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 Brian Winot, *Vice-Chairperson*
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 Charlie Kelshaw, John Motz
Resource Conservation Specialists

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Environmental Education Coordinator

Brittney Coleman, Barrett Donna,
 Derek Lederer, Colleen Lidon
Environmental Educators

Iwona O'Connor
Finance Manager

Samantha Benway, Diana Flint
Office Assistant Seniors

Aaron Miller
Groundskeeper

Delaney Henasey
Groundskeeper/Assistant

The Board of Directors' monthly meeting is held at 10am on the third Thursday of each month at the District office. Work sessions are at 9am preceding the meeting.

Kettle Creek Environmental Fund Update

The Kiplinger Retirement Report recently provided information about charitable giving in the U.S. There are almost 1.5 million non-church charities in the United States, of which only 232,000 take in more than \$25,000 annually. This includes the Kettle Creek Environmental Fund (KCEF), which had an income in 2024 of \$95,500 (including some hefty one-time donations). Expenses for the Fund totaled approximately \$16,400; \$35,000 was donated to the EE Center. The remainder is currently being held in interest-bearing checking and savings accounts and Certificates of Deposits, to be distributed in the near future to the Center for programs and projects. The Conservation District and the EE Center make requests for funding as needed from the KCEF at its monthly meetings.

With all the charitable organizations in the U.S.—including many in our own county—the Board of Directors for the KCEF understands that you have many options for donating to worthy causes. We appreciate all the sponsors, donors, and grant contributors who include the Fund among the causes to which they contribute. Thank you!!

Look for your invitation soon to our Annual Fundraising Dinner in September. If you have not attended in the past and would like to attend this year, please contact Diana at the EE Center at 570-629-3061 to be added to our invitation list. Please remember the dinner is by reservation only and seating is limited.

Thank you to all in our community who support the Kettle Creek Environmental Fund! ☀

How to contact KCEF:

Address: 8050 Running Valley Road, Stroudsburg, PA 18360
 Phone #: 570-629-3061
 Email: kettlecreekfund@gmail.com

**- Dr. Elaine Rogers,
KCEF President**



**ENJOY A DELICIOUS
BUFFET DINNER
FOR A GOOD
CAUSE! →**

KCEF Board Members



Dr. Elaine Rogers, *President*
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 Dr. Ian Foster
 Kara Klaus-Major
 Jim Lambert
 Brianna Strunk
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Kettle Creek Environmental Fund Annual Fundraising Dinner

Save the Date

SEPTEMBER 18, 2025

Enjoy games, raffles, and prizes!

Trout Lake Retreats, Stroudsburg, PA





Around Kettle Creek

Summer is here and so are more opportunities to interact with our educational programs at Kettle Creek! We had a wonderful Spring filled with school field trip groups, immersive experiences at the bog including our popular kayak trips, and a selection of exciting public programs where participants explored a variety of topics including flowers, pond critters, and birding.

This summer, join us for a guided walk through the Tannersville Bog! We offer walks each Wednesday morning throughout the summer in addition to walks on select weekend days. For even more adventure, join us on a sunset walk, on select dates, to explore the bog during the golden hour! It's a great opportunity to practice your photography skills.

If you haven't already, be sure to check out our summer camp options—we still have openings in our Get in Touch with Nature Day Camp for ages 7-10 and our overnight Conservation Camp for ages 14 - High School Graduate. You won't find a more affordable week-long overnight camp anywhere else! And in case your teenager needs more convincing—we always hear great feedback about the food! Don't miss these amazing opportunities for your kids to meet new friends, learn new skills, and enjoy the outdoors this summer.

We are also excited to bring back Kettle Creek For Kids in the month of July. Four dates are available—bring your young explorers to one or all sessions. See page 10 for details. Remember to call to sign up!

Whether you come for a guided program or an independent hike on our trails, we hope you find something to get excited about outside at Kettle Creek this season! While you're here, we would love for you to come check out our new displays inside the EE Center too! ☀

-Carol Luthar, Environmental Education Coordinator



Celebrating 50 years of CONSERVATION CAMP!

There are still spots available (July 19-26)!

Find the camp application on our website:

www.mcconservation.org



Above: Some of our beautiful discoveries made via kayak during the Bog Paddling trips on Cranberry Creek: a baby painted turtle and some blooming sheep laurel. Below: Trail camera captures of otters and a bobcat in the bog.





MONROE COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT



DELAWARE RIVER:
2025 PENNSYLVANIA
RIVER OF THE YEAR

Program Guidelines

Pre-registration is required for all programs offered unless noted otherwise by calling 570-629-3061.

Cash or checks made payable to MCCD only.

Refunds will be given only if notification is made at least one week prior to the trip/program.

Building hours are Mon-Fri 8am-4:30pm, and some Saturdays 9am-1pm.

Kettle Creek
Environmental Education Center
8050 Running Valley Road
Stroudsburg, PA 18360
(570)629-3061
www.mcconservation.org

2025 Summer Public Programming



Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, June 18th – 10am

Join us at 10am at the Bog parking lot and take a 2 ½ hour guided journey into the unique Tannersville Cranberry Bog. Along the way, our environmental educators will explain the Bog's formation, its interesting plant and animal life, and the role the local Preserve Committee and the Nature Conservancy play in its continued protection. Please wear appropriate footwear. **Pre-registration is required. Meet at the Tannersville Bog parking lot. Cost: \$6 per person.**

River of the Year Festival

Wednesday, June 18th – 2-8pm

The Delaware River has won the title of **Pennsylvania River of the Year** for 2025, and we are celebrating! Join us in recognition of our beloved local river and its rich history, natural beauty, and ongoing efforts to protect and preserve this incredible resource for future generations. The festival will also highlight 30 years of the annual Delaware River Sojourn.

Enjoy a day of community, live music, vendors, exhibits, delicious food from local food trucks and engaging educational activities. There will be special guests and plenty of fun for all ages! Rain or shine, this event is sure to be a memorable experience. This **FREE** festival will be held at Minisink Park in Smithfield Township near Delaware Water Gap from 2-8pm.

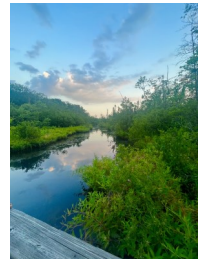
Thursday, June 19th—Building Closed—Holiday

Sunset Bog Walk

Thursday, June 19th – 7pm

Explore the beauty of the bog during the golden hour just as the sun sets. Please wear appropriate footwear.

Pre-registration is required and limited. Meet at the Tannersville Bog parking lot. Cost: \$6 per person.



Saturday, June 21st—Building Closed

Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, June 25th – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.



TAP-Talk & Rain Barrel Giveaway

Friday, June 27th – 6-8pm

This event will be held at Blue Ridge Winery in Saylorsburg. See details on page 8.

Meet the Artist: Nancy Hopping "Living with Wildlife in the Poconos"

Saturday, June 28th – 11am-1pm

Nancy's show is a photo collection capturing the lighter side of wildlife in the Poconos. She will be giving a video presentation which includes her (often humorous) videos of local wildlife from 11am to 1pm. Nancy's art will be on display all of July. **There is no charge.**

Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, July 2nd – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.



KC for Kids: Water Engineers: Design a Frog Float

Thursday, July 3rd – 10am

This one-hour program is for children 3-6. See page 10 for details. **Cost: \$7/child.**

Friday, July 4th—Building Closed—Holiday



Saturday, July 5th—Building Closed



Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, July 9th – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.

KC for Kids: Nature Scavenger Hunt

Thursday, July 10th – 10am

This one-hour program is for children 3-6. See page 10 for details. **Cost: \$7/child.**

Sunset Bog Walk

Thursday, July 10th – 7pm

Explore the beauty of the bog during the golden hour just as the sun sets. Please wear appropriate footwear.

Pre-registration is required and limited. Meet at the Tannersville Bog parking lot. Cost: \$6 per person.



BugFest!

Saturday, July 12th – 9:30am-12pm & 12:30pm-3pm



Displays, activities, games, crafts, live insects, insect safaris, and presentations all day, all about insects! Your passport to BugFest will guide you to stations such as our insect zoo, build-a-bug craft, free face painting, make-your-own-antennae, our outdoor insect safari, live butterfly tent and much more! At the end of the session, turn in your stamped passport to receive a special prize. Join us for the morning or afternoon session. This fun-filled day will conclude with the release of the Monarch and Painted Lady butterflies from our butterfly tent.

Come dressed as your favorite bug and receive a discount of admission price!

Pre-registration is required and limited; call the EE Center to reserve your spot. Cost: \$5/child ages 3-12.

Parents can attend for free.



Sunday Bog Walk

Sunday, July 13th – 11am

Join us at 11am at the Bog parking lot and take a 2 ½ hour guided journey into the unique Tannersville Cranberry Bog. Along the way, our environmental educators will explain the Bog's formation, its interesting plant and animal life, and the role the local Preserve Committee and the Nature Conservancy play in its continued protection. Please wear appropriate footwear. **Pre-registration is required and limited.**

Meet at the Tannersville Bog parking lot. Cost: \$6 per person.



Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, July 16th – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.

KC for Kids: Nature's Neighborhoods: Habitat Exploration

Thursday, July 17th – 10am

This one-hour program is for children 3-6. See page 10 for details. **Cost: \$7/child.**

Saturday, July 19th—Building Closed



Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, July 23rd – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.



KC for Kids: Busy Bees!

Thursday, July 24th – 10am

This one-hour program is for children 3-6. See page 10 for details. **Cost: \$7/child.**

Saturday, July 26th—Building Closed

Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, July 30th – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.



Meet the Artist: Pocono Mountains Art Group
“Pocono Mountains Art Group Members Art Exhibit”

Saturday, August 2nd – 11am-1pm

The Pocono Mountains Art Group is the oldest organized art society in the Pocono Region, dating back to 1933. They are a community of artists and art enthusiasts, focused on education, display, and furtherance of art. Come meet this Artist collective and see their works from 11am to 1pm. Their show will be on display all month long. **There is no charge.**

Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, August 6th – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.



Saturday, August 9th—Building Open

Saturday Bog Walk

Saturday, August 9th – 2pm

Join us at 2pm at the Bog parking lot and take a 2 ½ hour guided journey into the unique Tannersville Cranberry Bog. Along the way, our environmental educators will explain the Bog’s formation, its interesting plant and animal life, and the role the local Preserve Committee and the Nature Conservancy play in its continued protection. Please wear appropriate footwear. **Pre-registration is required and limited.**

Meet at the Tannersville Bog parking lot. Cost: \$6 per person.

Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, August 13th – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.



Saturday, August 16th—Building Closed

Overnight Delaware River Paddling Trip

Tuesday, August 19th—Wednesday, August 20th

Join us for a leisurely 20-mile canoe-camping trip along the Delaware River! This trip is great for individuals, couples, and small family groups and includes canoe or kayak rental, 4 meals, transportation, river interpretation, and a fun time! Camping gear, snorkels, and dry bags also available. Call the EE Center for details.

Cost: \$160/paddler, \$50 for non-paddling children under 12 (minimum age 8).

Wednesday Bog Walk

Wednesday, August 20th – 10am

See listing on June 18th for details.



Sunset Bog Walk

Thursday, August 21st – 6:30pm

Explore the beauty of the bog during the golden hour just as the sun sets. Please wear appropriate footwear. **Pre-registration is required and limited. Meet at the Tannersville Bog parking lot. Cost: \$6 per person.**



Saturday, August 23rd—Building Closed

Fungi at the Bog

Saturday, September 6th – 2pm

The Bog is home to some fascinating species of fungi that are both colorful and interesting. **Pre-registration is required and limited. Cost: \$6 per person.**



2025 Envirothon Results



Monroe County's winning team, "Peeping Toms"

Pleasant Valley High School once again took the top three spots at Monroe County's Envirothon Competition this year. Third place went to the **Sculpin Squad**, an all freshman team, while second place went to the **River Rascals**. The first place finishing **Peeping Toms** went on to compete at this year's state competition at Windber Park where they finished 9th out of 64 teams with a score of 426.7 out of 600. Delaware County took first place at the state competition, with a score of 551.3 points. Kettle Creek and Monroe County are very proud of our high school students and their consistent high-scoring teams year after year!

We would also like to acknowledge the achievements of our Junior Envirothon participants this year. Monroe County students from 5th - 8th grade were tested on their knowledge of local animals, trees, pond life, and climate change. Our winners for the 5th & 6th grade competition were **Moss Bosses** from Tobyhanna Elementary Center. The 7th and 8th grade competition resulted in an exciting *three-way tie* between two teams from Pocono Mountain West Junior High School and a team from Pleasant Valley Middle School. The tie breaker resulted with **Prickly Pine Cones** from Pocono Mountain West Junior High School coming out on top. The staff at Kettle Creek would like to acknowledge all the teams who participated this year for their hard work and dedication to learning about the natural world. We hope that the Junior Envirothon continues to inspire young learners to stay curious and keep exploring! ☼



The "Prickly Pine Cones," the 7th & 8th grade winners



The "Moss Bosses," the 5th & 6th grade winners

DISTRICT NEWS

The past few months have been an exciting and energizing time for our tech team! We've had a season full of meaningful work, new connections, and hands-on environmental stewardship. From welcoming two new Erosion and Sediment Control technicians to participating in statewide webinars and Agricultural Conservation Conferences in Harrisburg, we've been quite busy!

Behind the scenes, we've been hard at work inspecting and reviewing construction sites to protect local ecosystems, all while planning a variety of public events and long term projects like the River of the Year Festival, the 2025 Monroe County Water Quality Study, a Tap-Talk at Blue Ridge Winery (see right), and several adult education programs focused on conservation.

Spring also saw us out in the field—quite literally—planting over 400 native trees across state game lands and

wildlife refuges. And we rolled up our sleeves for a day of removing invasive knotweed in Smithfield Township parks, helping to restore the health of our local green spaces.

Don't forget about the River of the Year Festival on Wednesday, June 18th at Minisink Park. Rain or Shine, it's gonna be a GOOD TIME! ☀

DELAWARE RIVER OF THE YEAR FESTIVAL
WEDNESDAY JUNE 18
2-8 PM
MINISINK PARK
E. Stroudsburg, PA
rain or shine

FREE COMMUNITY FESTIVAL!



CELEBRATING COMMUNITY, THE RIVER & 30 YEARS OF THE DELAWARE RIVER SOJOURN

SPECIAL GUESTS | LIVE MUSIC | FOOD TRUCKS | FACE PAINTING | FLY CASTING | INFLATABLE ARCHERY



Above: Volunteers at Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge Spring Tree Planting. Below: Taking a break from the hard but valuable work of removing invasives in Smithfield Twp. Parks



TAP -TALK at Blue Ridge Winery



RAIN BARREL GIVEAWAY!
(Limited Quantities Available)

What's On Tap?

- ✓ Benefits of Environmentally Friendly Habits
- ✓ Learn from local Environmental professionals
- ✓ Food and beverage from Blue Ridge Winery



JOIN US

Event Details:

- 📅 June 27 2025
- 🕒 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- 📍 239 Blue Ridge Rd
Saylorsburg, PA 18353

📞 570-629-3060

🌐 mcconservation.org



In Partnership with

PennState Extension

Save the Date Engineering the Environment

**REGISTRATION OPENS
JULY 14th STAY TUNED
FOR DETAILS**

About the Event

Join us for our annual NPDES Engineers Workshop. Each attendee will receive Professional Development Hours and have an opportunity to network and check out industry vendors. AM refreshments and lunch included.

What You'll Learn

- Upcoming NPDES Permit Changes
- PCSM Design Updates
- Chapter 102 Enforcement Protocol
- Chapter 105 Basics

27 AUGUST 2025

SKYTOP LODGE
1 SKYTOP DR, SKYTOP, PA 18357

ENTRY FEE
\$150



Pike County
Conservation District

Proudly Introducing our New Resource Conservation Specialists:



Lena Campisi and Geoff Ioannidis



Working in the resource conservation industry can be a very demanding endeavor. We at the Monroe County Conservation District feel very fortunate to attract such high-quality people to fill these sometimes underappreciated positions—people willing to go above and beyond to ensure we protect Monroe County’s valuable natural resources to the best of our ability while balancing the need for necessary growth and sustainable development within the county. We asked our two new District technical staff to share a little bit about themselves and why they choose to do this vital work.

Lena



Geoff



“I’m so excited to join the incredible team at Monroe County Conservation District as a Resource Conservation Specialist!

A natural passion for the environment and curiosity about how the world works led me to pursue a bachelor’s degree in Earth and Environmental Science from Wilkes University, with a focus in paleoclimatology and geochemistry.

I’ve been involved in environmental resource protection through work as an environmental contractor and pursued my passion in education prior to entering a master’s program. During my master’s, I was a big advocate for community involvement and community-building within my department, particularly for others in the LGBTQ community. Most recently, I was an education assistant with New York States Division of Lands and Forests and was responsible for developing outreach materials to better inform landowners about stewardship and the history of indigenous land management practices to dispel misinformation about the effects of forestry practices.

I’m passionate about keeping our lands healthy and protecting the integrity of our one and only home for future generations and all living things. Getting to help people understand how they can protect our shared resources is particularly rewarding and I’m looking forward to serving my community through future outreach opportunities.

Outside of work I enjoy hiking and camping, foraging, reading, tending to my garden, fostering dogs, and finding events that build community in my local area.” ☀

-Lena Campisi, Resource Conservation Specialist

“My name is Geoff Ioannidis and I grew up in the Poconos, attending Stroudsburg High School. I have spent many years living and traveling throughout the Pacific Northwest, while residing in eastern Washington state and working in Denali National Park in Alaska.

I attended East Stroudsburg University, graduating with a bachelor’s and master’s degree in environmental science biology, focusing on ecological studies. Specific interests within my studies include bat ecology and conservation, herpetology, and stream ecology.

In recent years, I have had the privilege of working with the USDA on spotted lanternfly research alongside the Forest Pests Methods Laboratory on biological control agents for spotted lanternfly management in invaded regions.

Working with the conservation district is a special opportunity for myself to contribute towards protecting the extraordinary land of the Poconos and its valuable resources. Resource conservation protection is fulfilling work, as the people and wildlife of Monroe County depend on clean waterways.

Some of my favorite hobbies include hiking, kayaking, performing music and oil painting. I am excited to become a part of the Monroe County Conservation District and looking forward to my time working here!” ☀

-Geoff Ioannidis, Resource Conservation Specialist



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 MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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 WEBSITE: mcconservation.org

Conserving Natural Resources for Our Future

**Monroe County Conservation District's
Annual Photo Contest**

In an effort to support the conservation of our county's natural resources, we feel it is important to allow the public an opportunity to showcase what they feel are Monroe County's finest natural resources.

12 Winners will be Chosen
Each winner will receive maple syrup and a calendar!

For full rules and how to submit a photo visit www.mcconservation.org



**The Gallery at
*Kettle Creek***



July
 Nancy Hopping
 "Living with Wildlife in the Poconos"
 Nancy's show is a photo collection capturing the lighter side of wildlife in the Poconos. She will be giving a video presentation which includes her (often humorous) videos of local wildlife on Saturday, June 28th from 11am to 1pm.

August
 Pocono Mountains Arts Group
 "Members Art Exhibit"
 Come meet this collective of Artists and see their works on Saturday August 2nd from 11am to 1pm.

September
 Derek Lederer
 "An Adventure Through Nature's Lens"
 This collection of nature and wildlife photography from across the U.S. is a personal look at the peace and beauty found in wild places, and an invitation to pause and appreciate the world around us. Meet the Artist on Saturday, September 20th from 11am to 1pm.

KETTLE CREEK FOR KIDS

It's summer so let's explore! Programs are at 10am on select Thursdays for ages 3-6. Parent/guardian must attend with their child. Please dress for the weather. Cost: \$7 per child, cash or check only. Payable day of program. Registration is limited, call to sign up!

July 3rd 	Water Engineers: Design a Frog Float - Have you ever seen a pond animal relaxing on a floating log and wondered how it stays above water? Explore and test natural objects to find out which materials float and which ones sink. Then, use what you've learned to team up with your grown-up and engineer a design that helps a frog float on water!
July 10th	Nature Scavenger Hunt - Explore the outdoors in new ways and hone in your observation skills while we hunt for specific items in nature. Then we will build or create art with our findings! Prizes will be awarded.
July 17th	Nature's Neighborhoods: Habitat Exploration - Ever wonder which wild friends live where, and why? Join us on a fun-filled exploration of Kettle Creek's habitats. With hands-on play and nature crafts, curious young explorers will learn all about habitats in the most exciting backyard of all—nature!
July 24th 	Busy Bees! - Summer is beesness time. Buzz on over to Kettle Creek to see how the bees keep busy during the warmest months of the year. Weather permitting we will head outside to look for bees in action.