



HUNTINGDON COUNTY  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

*Conserving Natural Resources for Our Future*



July 1, 2021

To: Karen Molchanow, State Board of Education Board [ra-stateboardofed@pa.gov](mailto:ra-stateboardofed@pa.gov)

The Huntingdon Conservation District strongly urges the PA Department of Education to include the subjects of environment, ecology, and agriculture in its proposed science education standards. **We feel it is imperative for students of all ages to understand the importance of protecting our state's environment and our state's number one industry, agriculture.** Since the new proposed education standards eliminate all mention of "environment, ecology and agriculture" for some age groups we are concerned that teachers may not be able to engage students in meaningful natural resource discussions and relevant, real world learning.

Conservation Districts assist local school districts with this vital piece of students' education by bringing **educational programs that are aligned with the Environment and Ecology standards into our local school districts.** This may include field experiences, hands-on classroom activities, and the Pennsylvania Envirothon program. Conservation Districts have seen first-hand that adding these enriching approaches to education are invaluable to the students and teachers that we serve.

Very specifically, the proposed secondary science standards have four domains, and because none of them include the subjects critical to understanding Pennsylvania's ecosystems, middle or high school teachers may not include natural resource protection in their education curriculum. **The inclusion of specific standards for environment, ecology, and agriculture as a fifth domain would allow for the integration of meaningful natural resource educational experiences.** More importantly, PA needs to prepare our students for future careers in the fields of environment and agriculture, which may not happen as the proposed science education standards are currently written.

Again, the Huntingdon Conservation District is urging the PA Department of Education to include environment, ecology, and agriculture in all science education standards prior to publication in the PA Bulletin. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Celina Seftas  
District Manager  
Huntingdon County Conservation District

