

# 2021 MWEE Award Winners



Meaningful Watershed  
Educational Experience

## 2021 MWEE SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

### Abington Friends School “AFS Outside (AFS Outdoor Scholarship, Initiative, Discovery and Exploration)”

The Abington Friends School is being recognized for their outstanding MWEE implementation through their AFS Outside program (AFS Outdoor Scholarship, Initiative, Discovery, and Exploration). With funding from the Department of Environmental Protection and the Friends Council on Education AFS became the first K-12 certified school arboretum with over 300 tagged trees. Students regularly upload photos, poems, and information about the trees on campus to the arboretum website through their science, art, and English classes. Their partnership with the Tookany Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership (TTF) was the catalyst for the project, including over 200 students planting a riparian buffer along over 500' of streambank, the installation of two raingardens, and the design of a bioswale to capture runoff.

The watershed work is leading the way for environmental justice work through the Upper School's Environmental Action and Justice Club that works hard to educate the community on environmental justice issues. The outdoor curriculum has been expanded to include food equity and sustainable farming including several pollinator gardens with bees to be added in the spring. It's normal to see many different groups of students out on the campus, doing various activities. There might be a Farm Ex group outside building raised beds, Middle School students doing a cleanup and planting along the stream, an English class writing poetry along the stream, a photography class taking pictures of the trees, and Lower School students releasing Monarch butterflies and studying the structure of flowers. AFS Outside has certainly been a gift to the community!



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## 2021 MWEE PARTNER OF EXCELLENCE AWARD



### PA State Parks Penn State Extension Potter County Conservation District Pennsylvania Game Commission Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission "4-H Regional Wildlife Field Day"

The 4-H Regional Wildlife Field Day held at Sinnemahoning State Park is recognized for the outstanding MWEE partnership between Penn State Extension, PA State Parks, Potter County Conservation District, the PA Game Commission, and the PA Fish and Boat Commission. The systemic, organized learning framework of MWEE provided a common ground for these cooperating agencies to conduct this one-day learner-centered experience that gives students ages 8-18 the opportunity to investigate local watershed conditions, study data on a hypothetical environmental problem, and plan and carry out a project to address the problem. Professional instructors from county and state agencies worked together to present unbiased information and assist students with their research and exploration.

The program was structured to address the four essential elements and four supporting practices of the MWEE model. Presented with a hypothetical incident report and driving question students then participated in indoor and outdoor observation and data collection activities involving the local watershed and the wildlife that live there. Activity stations included stream health and stream walk, food chains and biomagnification, forests and watersheds, soils and erosion, macroinvertebrate sampling, and chemical testing of stream water. Students worked in small groups to answer the driving question and deduce through meaningful discourse some ways the environmental incident may have been caused and how it may have been prevented.

In closing, students were challenged to create posters to increase public awareness of environmental issues and solutions. The 4-H Regional Wildlife Field Day program supplements and supports students' formal academic learning and the lessons were aligned with NGSS standards. The 4-H Regional Wildlife Field Day team looks forward to an in-person event in 2022.

