

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

January 16, 2006

Chase the Winter Blaas, Learn About Native Plants, Look for a New Job, And More

What better way to spend a cold January day than to curl up with your favorite computer and learn how you could use native plants in your garden or yard. This week's *Digest* is filled with these and other great stories.

Look for a new job, visit the 2006 Farm Show, learn more about clean, renewable fuels, register for workshops and conferences on a variety of subjects, read environmental clips from around the state and catch up on the latest news from the General Assembly.

Share your stories and photos of what you do to make a positive difference for the environment. Just send them to:

DHess@HolsonCrisci.com .

Enjoy this week's *Digest*!



PA Energy Harvest Display
Farm Show 2006

Session Schedule

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- Interest in Native Plants Growing for Nurseries Like Octoraro, *by Jon M. Casey, Country Folks Grower Newspaper*

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On the Hill

California Car Emissions Standards Subject of House Committee Hearing

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will hold a hearing February 8 on [House Bill 2141](#) (Geist-R-Blair) that would prohibit Pennsylvania from adopting California vehicle emission standards.

Scheduled to provide testimony are the Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the New York Department of Environmental Conservation and automakers.

The full House referred House Bill 2141 to the Committee for consideration before the holidays.

The House Committee is chaired by Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware) and Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield).

Zug Honored for Work on Chesapeake Bay Education Issues



This week the Chesapeake Bay Foundation honored Rep. Peter Zug (R-Lebanon) at an annual luncheon for Lebanon County teachers held in Myerstown.

Rep. Zug is being honored for his commitment to environmental education, and specifically his leadership on the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Education Program Act, drafted in partnership with the Department of Education and passed unanimously by the Pennsylvania General Assembly in December 2004.

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The legislation establishes a program within the Department of Education that will provide grants to schools to promote the teaching of watershed education and afford students the opportunity to participate in meaningful bay or stream outdoor experiences.

In July 2005, this program appropriated at \$300,000. The first round of these grants is due to be announced in January 2006.

“This program is not only a substantial stride toward meeting our state's obligations under the Chesapeake Bay 2000 agreement, but also demonstrates a commitment on behalf of the State to providing our students with authentic outdoor learning experiences and our teachers with professional development geared toward making them better stewards of our watersheds.” Comments Sally Clement, PA Susquehanna Watershed Education Program Manager.

The Chesapeake 2000 Agreement is a pledge made by regional government officials to remove the Chesapeake Bay from the Environmental Protection Agency's Impaired Waters list by 2010.

One of its key goals is to provide a meaningful Bay watershed experience for every student before high school graduation and to provide opportunities for students and teachers to participate in hands-on restoration and protection projects.

For more than 30 years, CBF's award-winning environmental education programs have been a cornerstone of CBF's efforts to improve water quality across the watershed and the ecological integrity of the Bay itself.

House Committee Meeting Helps Clarify Global Warming Issues

House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee chairman Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware) said this week's informational hearing on the effects of greenhouse gas emissions and global warming was important in answering questions.

"This was an important meeting that provided valuable information to members of the committee on an issue that affects not only Pennsylvania or the United States, but the entire world," said Rep. Adolph. "We learned a great deal about what other states and governments are doing that could perhaps slow the progression of global warming. What we learned today will definitely be taken into consideration when creating a statewide energy plan for Pennsylvania."

Those testifying at the committee meeting were Dr. Richard Alley from the Department of Geosciences at Pennsylvania State University; Dr. Adam Rose from the Department of Geography at Pennsylvania State University; and Joy Bergey, project director for Pennsylvania Interfaith Climate Change Campaign.

Testifiers emphasized the impact of global warming, such as stronger storms, rising sea levels, the loss of certain habitats, flora and animal species, and the impact to agriculture – to name a few.

Experts congratulated Pennsylvania on adopting an advanced energy portfolio standard that encourages clean, renewable and efficient energy production from the state's own resources.

"Pennsylvania is a leader in progressive energy strategies and we will continue to improve our methods and standards in the future," said Adolph. "The information gathered from this meeting will serve us well as we move forward on creating an energy plan. I look forward to further discussion on this and other energy issues."

Change in Senate, House Budget Hearing Schedule

There's been a slight change to the budget hearing schedule. The Senate hearing on the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is now March 2 at 10:30. Here's a revised list—

February 7 -

Governor's Budget Address

February 23 -

3:00 p.m. – House Budget Hearing: Department of Conservation & Natural Resources

February 27 -

2:30 p.m. – House Budget Hearing: Department of Environmental Protection

February 28 -

1:00 p.m. – House Budget Hearing: Department of Agriculture

March 1 -

1:15 p.m. – Senate Budget Hearing: Department of Agriculture

March 2 -

10:30 a.m. – Senate Budget Hearing: Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

March 9 -

1:15 p.m. – Senate Budget Hearing: Department of Environmental Protection

In Other News

Enzi Will Expedite Confirmation Hearing for Head of Federal Mine Safety Agency

U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY) Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, this week announced a January 31 hearing on the confirmation of former Pennsylvania Deep Mine Safety Director Richard Stickler as head of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration.

“In light of the urgent need to thoroughly examine the cause of this (West Virginia) tragedy and to ensure that similar accidents are never repeated, I will expedite the confirmation process for the President’s nominee, Richard Stickler, which is pending before the HELP Committee,” Enzi said. “The challenge of protecting workers in the mining industry while running an investigation into the Sago tragedy requires a full time administrator at the helm of MSHA.”

Stickler is the former Director of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Deep Mine Safety, and has extensive experience in the mining industry spanning 37 years. His tenure as Director of Pennsylvania Bureau of Deep Mine Safety included the successful rescue in July 2002 of nine miners trapped for 77 hours in a coal mine near Somerset, PA.

Farmland Preservation Funds, Alternative Fuels Promoted at Farm Show

At the state Farm Show this week, Gov. Rendell announced the availability of an additional \$100 million for farmland preservation, \$65 million of which is from Growing Greener II funds, and promoted initiatives to produce energy from farm products.

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(Download the special photo feature on the 2006 Farm Show at the end of this article.)

Pennsylvania has preserved 314,719 acres on 2,746 farms since the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program started in 1989. Since that time, Pennsylvania has allocated \$556 million for farmland preservation.

Currently, 55 counties have approved easement programs, contributing \$218million toward the program.

"Although we are preserving 64 acres a day, about 300 acres fall to development every day," Gov. Rendell said.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation applauded the announcement of additional farmland preservation funding noting well-managed farmland is a preferred land use, essential for good water quality and the replenishment of aquifers.

"CBF works collaboratively with government agencies and local farmers to preserve and enhance farmland throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed," said CBF Pennsylvania Executive Director Matt Ehrhart. "We support Pennsylvania's farmland preservation programs and encourage lawmakers to continue funding to protect one of our most valuable natural resources – our farmland."

Gov. Rendell also joined executives from AGRA Biodiesel Inc. at the state Farm Show to announce the new biodiesel fuel production facility in Middletown, Dauphin County.

The facility is the first of 11 plants the company plans to build in the Commonwealth over the next five years, creating as many as 3,000 new jobs. Each facility will use virgin soybean oil – primarily from Pennsylvania farmers – to create the renewable fuel.

To meet production demands, AGRA will also use feedstock from other states shipped to the facility via rail. Once all 11 plants are operational, the process will result in increased soybean demand for farmers, and higher prices per bushel.

NewsClips: [Rendell Announces Availability of Farmland Preservation Funds](#)
[Rendell Welcomes First Biodiesel Production Facility](#)
[Farmers Energized](#)
[Renewable Energy Touted at PA Farm Show Exhibit](#)

Click On: [Special Photo Feature of Farm Show 2006 - PDF](#)

State Treasurer Funds Low-Rate Loans For Homeowner Energy Savings



A new statewide initiative to promote energy conservation and reduce home heating bills was unveiled this week by State Treasurer Robert P. Casey, Jr. that would invest \$20 million in the [Keystone Home Energy Loan Program](#).

Under Casey's plan, the Treasury Department will invest up to \$20 million to help homeowners throughout Pennsylvania borrow money at low interest rates to purchase energy efficient heating systems and to make other

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ENERGY STAR improvements to their homes that will conserve energy and reduce heating and cooling costs.

"This program helps families gain control of their energy costs in the face of skyrocketing fuel bills," Casey said. "It's a phenomenal opportunity for middle class homeowners who want to reduce their fuel costs, but who are unable to get a home equity loan or charge a \$5,000 furnace on a high-interest credit card."

Examples of ENERGY STAR purchases and home improvements that are eligible for KeystoneHELP loans include: furnaces and boilers, heat pumps, thermostats and controls, central and window air conditioning units, dehumidifiers, ventilation systems, insulation, siding, windows, skylights, doors, ceiling fans and lighting equipment and controls.

The \$20 million investment in the Keystone Home Energy Loan Program will provide working capital for AFC First Financial Corporation of Allentown to offer unsecured loans with a 10-year repayment period at 7.99 percent interest to finance the purchase of ENERGY STAR heating and cooling systems or other energy efficient products. Low-income homeowners will be able to obtain loans at an even lower rate of 5.99% interest.

"In 2005, the average household will have spent nearly \$1,900 on home energy bills. The KeystoneHELP program provides a win-win opportunity for Pennsylvanians. Not only are they able to make immediate and affordable energy-efficient upgrades to their homes, they will continue to realize the economic benefits of these upgrades through lower utility bills in the future," said Ellen D. Lutz, Director, U.S. Department of Energy Mid-Atlantic Regional Office.

KeystoneHELP was developed by AFC First and the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund as a pilot program in central Pennsylvania. To expand this program statewide, Casey partnered with the Pennsylvania sustainable energy funds (created in 1998 as a result of electric deregulation); the Rendell Administration; the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority; Pennsylvania regulated energy utilities and petroleum suppliers; the Senate Democratic Caucus, led by Senator Vincent Fumo, chair of the Senate Democratic Appropriations Committee; and Representative Dwight Evans, chair of the House Democratic Appropriations Committee.

The special interest rate of 5.99 percent for low-income homeowners is made possible by voluntary contributions from Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Gas Works, PPL electric and gas utilities, and three Pennsylvania FirstEnergy companies - Metropolitan Edison Co., Pennsylvania Electric Co., and Pennsylvania Power Co.

"We are pleased to have worked with our members and Treasurer Casey's office in connection with the development of the Keystone Home Energy Loan Program. This loan program, available to all Pennsylvanians, provides a real opportunity for working families to make home improvements which will conserve energy and lower energy costs," said Donna M. J. Clark, Vice President and General Counsel of the Energy Association of Pennsylvania.

The following Pennsylvania utilities and petroleum marketers are providing significant marketing support for KeystoneHELP: Allegheny Power; Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania; Dominion Peoples; Duquesne Light Company; Equitable Gas Company; National Fuel Gas Distribution; PECO Energy Co.; PG Energy; Philadelphia Gas Works; PPL Electric Utilities and PPL Gas Utilities; Wellsboro Electric Company; UGI Electric

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Utilities and UGI Gas Utilities; Citizens' Electric Co.; Valley Energy, Inc.; and three Pennsylvania FirstEnergy Companies - Metropolitan Edison Co., Pennsylvania Electric Co., and Pennsylvania Power Co.

The West Penn Fund, the MetED/Pennelec Sustainable Energy Fund and the TRF Sustainable Energy Fund have also approved significant grants to AFC First for marketing support to publicize and promote KeystoneHELP.

For more information, log on to www.KeystoneHELP.com.

NewsClips: [New Program Help Homeowners More Energy Efficient](#)
[PA Has Low-Interest Loans for Energy Saving Work](#)

Workshops Help Homeowners Learn to Save Energy, Save Money in Northwest

The Department of Environmental Protection will hold two workshops in Meadville, Crawford County, to help homeowners learn about ways to conserve energy and save money this winter.

The workshops will be held from 9 a.m. until noon on January 19, and January 24, at the Lew Davies Community Center, 1034 Park Ave., Meadville.

DEP will present information on energy conservation and will be joined by staff from the Department of Public Welfare's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Department of Community and Economic Development's weatherization program.

Staff will be available at the center throughout the three-hour period and interested residents can drop by at any time that is convenient for them.

For more information, visit the [Stay Warm PA website](#).

PA Issues Record Number of Oil, Gas Well Permits in 2005

The Department of Environmental Protection announced this week it issued nearly one-third more oil and gas drilling permits during 2005 than the year before.

The department issued 6,046 permits in 2005, a 32.4 percent increase over the previous record of 4,567 permits in 2004.

"Oil and gas drilling activity is at record levels due to high natural gas and crude oil prices," DEP Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty said. "The energy industry has responded to market demands by re-visiting Pennsylvania's oil and gas fields, creating homegrown energy solutions that reduce our need to import fuel.

DEP's Southwest Regional Office issued 3,002 permits last year, up from 2,248 in 2004. The Northwest Regional Office issued 3,044 oil and gas permits, up from 2,319 in 2004.

DEP's Northwest Regional Office also set an all-time high of 333 drilling applications in November 2005 – the largest number of applications ever received by the department in any one-month period since the Oil and Gas Act of 1984.

NewsClips: [Demand Punches Up Gas Drilling](#)
[High Gas Prices Fuel Boom in Drilling for Oil, Natural Gas in PA](#)

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\$8.5 Million for Clean Energy Projects Announced

The [Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority](#) this week approved financial assistance for 25 projects totaling \$8.5 million that will leverage an additional \$144 million in private investment.

The energy output from the projects will generate 3.5 million megawatt hours, enough to power about 437,000 Pennsylvania homes. Another 526,225 megawatt hours will be conserved. The projects also have the potential to produce 45 million gallons of biofuel.

The 25 projects will receive financial assistance in the form of grants or loans for a variety of clean electricity projects using sources such as wind, solar, biomass, waste coal and recycled energy. The funding also will finance comprehensive redevelopment plans and technological innovations using Pennsylvania fuels.

In June, PEDA awarded \$6.5 million to finance 16 clean energy projects.

The PEDA projects were evaluated on a variety of criteria, including their ability to promote Pennsylvania's indigenous energy resources, encourage energy diversity and enhance energy security. The projects were judged on their potential to create jobs and stimulate investment in the commonwealth. Potential environmental benefits, as well as technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness, also were considered.

[The full list of projects funded is available online.](#)

For more information, visit the [Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority](#) webpage.

\$116,000 in Energy Efficiency, Pollution Reduction Grants for Small Business

The Department of Environmental Protection this week announced the award of 19 grants totaling nearly \$116,000 to help small business increase their energy efficiency and reduce pollution through the [Small Business Advantage Grants Program](#).

Small Business Advantage grants provide a 50 percent match of up to \$7,500 for equipment or processes that reduce energy consumption and promote pollution prevention while increasing profitability. The program, which Governor Rendell launched in July 2004, has been extremely popular, awarding more than \$1 million to more than 400 recipients across the state.

The program is expected to reopen July 1.

[A list of grant recipients is available online.](#)

For more information, visit the [Small Business Advantage Grants Program](#) webpage.

January 19 Forum: Water Trading – Reducing Costs and Pollution

The January 19 Rachel Carson Forum on the Future of the Environment will examine the potential of pollution trading programs to make improvements in water quality at lower costs.

The forum will be held from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the Rachel Carson Building Auditorium, 4th and Market streets, Harrisburg.

The speakers will be Scott Van de Mark of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Dr. James Shortle from Penn State University.

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The primary objective of trading is to achieve nutrient pollution reduction goals cost-effectively by allowing pollution sources with high control costs to meet their regulatory obligations by purchasing environmentally equivalent pollution reductions from sources with lower costs.

This talk will explore the theory and practice of nutrient trading. The program will also review nutrient trading experience in Pennsylvania on the Conestoga River.

Questions about the Forum should be directed to Don Brown at brownd@state.pa.us.

Master Well Owner Network Sets Training Session for March 11

[Penn State's Master Well Owner Network](#) will hold another in its series of training programs on March 11 in Lewisburg, Union County.

Residents that rely on a private water system for their home drinking water supply are encouraged to attend this free training on the proper construction, management, and testing of private water wells.

For more information or to register, contact the Master Well Owner Network at 814-865-2250 or send email to mwon@psu.edu or visit the [Master Well Owner Network webpage](#).

Pennsylvania Rural Water Association 2006 Annual Conference March 21-24

The Pennsylvania Rural Water Association will hold its 2006 annual conference on March 21-24 at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center, State College. PRWA is also still accepting nominations from members for its awards program.

The Conference will have several tracks—water, wastewater, management and certification. Eligible certified operators can earn up to 19 DEP contact hours toward their continuing education requirements.

To register and for more information visit the [PRWA website](#).

Philadelphia Urban Sustainability Forum January 19

The [Academy of Natural Sciences](#) is hosting an Urban Sustainability Forum in Philadelphia on January 19 that will focus on the issues of high energy costs, traffic congestion, fractured communities, pollution and sprawl in and around Philadelphia.

The Forum, part of a series that will run through June, will include a special presentation by Jaime Lerner, former Mayor of the “Worlds Most Sustainable City” -- Curitiba, Brazil.

The program is open to the public and will run from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm and will be held at The Academy of Natural Sciences auditorium, 1900 Ben Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia.

The forums are being sponsored by the Delaware Valley Green Building Council, The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Pennsylvania Resource Council and the Department of Environmental Protection.

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The series is made possible, in part, by funding provided by the Richard Lounsbury Foundation and the Environmental Associates of The Academy of Natural Sciences.

For detailed information about the series, visit the [Sustainable Philadelphia webpage](#) or contact Roland Wall at 215-299-1108.

PA Environmental Professionals Annual Conference May 17-19

Mark your calendars! The [Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals](#) will hold their annual conference on May 17-19 in State College and the theme this year is “[Career Development for Pennsylvania’s Environmental Professionals](#).”

The conference features tracks for: Career Development, Regulatory Updates, Pollution Prevention/Energy Efficiency, and Endangered Species.

The Conference Keynote Speaker will be Edwin Pinero, President Bush's Federal Environmental Executive and the former Deputy for Pollution Prevention and Compliance Assistance for the Department of Environmental Protection.

A new feature of this year’s program will be "Traveling Workshops" that include site visits to the I-99 Acid Rock Drainage Remediation Site, a first hand look at the cutting edge stormwater BMPs in place at Penn State's new Visitor's Center, and a tour of the Penn State Nuclear Research Reactor.

For more information, visit the [PAEP 2006 Conference webpage](#).

Trout Unlimited Youth Fishing Camp Applications Due March 15



Applications for the 12th annual [Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp](#) being held June 18 –23, 2006 at the Allenberry Resort in Boiling Springs, Cumberland County are due March 15.

The purpose of the camp is to educate students in the importance of coldwater conservation.

The college-level classes include: principles of ecology, hydrogeology, aquatic vertebrate and invertebrate sampling, hydrology, trout behavior, trout stream entomology, the biology of pollution, acid deposition, and the politics of conservation and the effects of humans on the Chesapeake Bay.

In addition, the camp provides hands-on classes such as fly tying, fly casting, streamside ethics, angling literature, the evolution of an angler, wader safety and survival, and streamside botany. The students will also participate in a watershed project to repair habitat in a stream.

The camp is limited to 32 selected, qualified students, aged 14 to 17. The student must have been born between June 23, 1988 and June 18, 1992 to qualify. The camp selection committee will choose students based upon each candidate’s qualifications and their desire to attend as stated in the required essay.

For the first time this year campers who are working toward achieving either a fishing merit badge or a fly fishing merit badge with the Boy Scouts may complete the requirements for those badges at the camp.

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For more information or to receive an application, go to the [Rivers Conservation Camp website](#) or contact Mike Klimkos at 717-243-3056, or send email at klimkos@epix.net ; or Rod Cross at 717-263-0365.

Free EPA Software Tool Helps Schools Protect Kids' Learning Environment



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week announced the release of a new tool – [HealthySEAT](#) -- to help schools identify and prevent health, safety and environmental

problems before they arise, building on the agency's voluntary school indoor air quality program.

Using a holistic approach to school health, EPA's new Healthy School Environments Assessment Tool (HealthySEAT) is a free software tool that school districts can customize to assess potential issues such as mold, asbestos and lead paint, then evaluate and manage information on conditions at each school.

HealthySEAT is voluntary and helps school districts track all of their environmental, health and safety information in a single database. The program includes a complete checklist of EPA recommendations and regulatory requirements on dozens of health and safety issues.

Schools can download a free copy of [HealthySEAT](#) and learn more, by visiting the [Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools Program webpage](#).

New Director of State Environmental Education Center Named

Kathleen Cowles Paul was named the Director of the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education at Slippery Rock University.

Ms. Paul was Director of Continuing and Professional Education at Penn State's Shenango Campus and holds a BS in Environmental Education from Michigan State University and an MA in Adult and Community Education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Ms. Paul was selected as a result of a nationwide search that resulted in a field of 32 applicants.

The Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education has four primary functions: using the Internet and new technologies to disseminate environmental education materials and programs; providing technical assistance for pre-service teacher preparation in the field of environmental education; providing opportunities for professional development and promoting partnerships with educators, schools, local officials, county conservation districts, business, industry, nonprofit and citizen environmental education organizations.

For more information, visit the [PCEE website](#) and its extensive environmental education resources and click on the popular "Question of the Week."

March 3 Deadline for Next Round of Watershed Restoration Grant Applications

Just a reminder, the deadline for the next round of [Growing Greener Watershed Restoration Grants](#) from the Department of Environmental Protection is March 3.

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For the upcoming grant round, DEP will invest in projects that seek to address nonpoint source pollution, such as comprehensive watershed plan implementation; legacy sediment and stream restoration; nutrient and sediment trading; long-term operation and maintenance for watershed projects and mine drainage treatment systems; urban and agricultural runoff; and upgrades to on-lot sewage systems.

Eligible projects also could include reducing nonpoint source pollution in watersheds where streams are impaired; designing practices and activities that support water quality trading initiatives; integrating stormwater management and flood protection into watershed management; encouraging the beneficial use of abandoned mine pool water; and integrating air deposition controls and management with mitigating water quality problems.

Applications must be postmarked no later than March 3 and if hand delivered, the package must be received by 4:30 p.m. on March 3. Late submissions will not be considered.

For more information, visit the [Growing Greener webpage](#).

International Panel Concludes U.S. Has Improved Environmental Performance



The United States has significantly improved its environmental performance in the last eight years even as its economy and population have grown substantially, according to a report from the Environmental Performance Review Program of the [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's](#) .

The OECD also concluded the United States needs to take a more active role in global environmental issues.

The report documents that from 1996-2005, the United States reduced pollution during a period when there was a 10 percent increase in the size of the U.S. population and a 30 percent increase in the nation's gross domestic product.

OECD's Environmental Performance Reviews program assists member countries in improving their environmental management performance by assessing progress, promoting a policy dialogue among member countries, and stimulating greater accountability from governments towards public opinion.

This is the second review of the United States, with the first review completed in 1996.

The report commends the United States for being a pioneer in market-based solutions, innovative policies, and partnerships for an improved environment. Noting this progress, the review commends the United States for "decoupling" environmental pressures from economic growth and details progress in a number of key areas:

- Emissions of major air pollutants declined;
- Drinking water standards have been strengthened;
- Overall quality of the water supplied by public systems improved;
- Extensive system of national conservation areas was further expanded;
- Ecosystem management approaches have been introduced to improve management of many sensitive areas; and

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- Environmental justice considerations and cooperation with tribal authorities concerning environmental conditions has increased substantially since the 1990s.

The review also includes 51 specific recommendations for the United States to continue its leadership in the field of environmental protection, such as expansion of the role of market-based instruments and continued promotion of environmental education and awareness, especially at state and local levels.

This U.S. review was based on a series of more than 700 interviews conducted by OECD's review team during a two-week visit to the United States in the summer of 2004. The peer review team included members from Australia, Japan, Norway, and the United Kingdom, together with OECD Secretariat staff.

OECD superseded the previous Organization for European Economic Cooperation, founded in 1948 to coordinate the post-war Marshall Plan for European economic recovery. Thirty member countries work together to promote economic expansion and world trade.

[The recommendations and conclusions in the report](#) are available online.

For more information, visit the [OECD website](#).

McDonnell Named DEP Policy Director, John Dernbach Returns to Weidner

DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty this week announced the appointment of Patrick McDonnell as Director of DEP's Policy Office. McDonnell replaces John Dernbach who has returned to Widener University School of Law to continue his tenured professorship.

Most recently, McDonnell assisted DEP's Special Deputy Secretary and was responsible for coordinating the review of the department's regulatory revision initiative. In this position, he also provided support to the Governor's Growing Greener II initiative, coordinated the negotiation of the Commonwealth's Performance Partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and participated in the development of the department's performance measures.

Previously, McDonnell directed the Bureau of Environmental Sustainability. Before this, he served as Executive Assistant in the Department's Office of Pollution Prevention and Compliance Assistance where he began as a Program Analyst. He is a former Pennsylvania Management Associate.

Patrick earned his bachelor's degree in Politics from DeSales University and his master's degree in Political Science from Lehigh University.

Candidates for Boating Seat on Fish & Boat Commission Sought

The Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation this week announced it is looking for a qualified candidate to serve as the at-large boating commissioner on the board of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

Applications are due by February 3.

Of the 10 seats on the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, two of them are charged with representing boating interests.

The at-large boating seat is presently filled by Commissioner Paul J. Mahon of Clarks Green, Lackawanna County, whose term expires next month.

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Candidates will first interview with the fish and boat subcommittee of the advisory council and will be rated not only on responses, but also on past volunteer experience with water and boating safety, as well as water conservation and restoration. Gov. Rendell will select the final candidate. Upon Senate confirmation, the successful candidate will serve an eight-year term.

All commissioners serve without compensation, but do receive travel reimbursement.

Individuals interested in applying should send a resume and detailed cover letter to Robb Miller, Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., 7th Floor, P.O. Box 8767, Harrisburg, Pa. 17106-8767.

Help Wanted – Four Organizations Looking for Good People to Fill Positions

The Three Rivers Ecological Research Center, PA Resources Council, PA Environmental Council and the PA Institute for Conservation Education are all looking for good people to fill challenging positions.

Three Rivers Ecological Research Center Director

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission is accepting applications for the Three Rivers Ecological Research Center Director. Applications must be postmarked by February 16.

This position is responsible for the operation, management, and direction of the Fish and Boat Commission functions of the 3RERC. This includes developing, maintaining, and implementing a collaborative research association for the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio Rivers and their watersheds to benefit ecosystem function and societal values such as critical habitat, diverse species, and public appreciation of these resources including compatible business enterprises as well as fishing and boating.

Minimum Requirements are a B.S. in fisheries, aquatic sciences, or related field; M.S. or Ph. D. preferred; and four years of experience in progressively responsible and varied fisheries management work in public or private organizations; or equivalent combination of experience and training.

Experience with lotic systems, especially large-river ecosystems, coordination and management of multiple projects; Successful candidate demonstrates excellent verbal and written communication skills; grants management and strong administrative skills.

Salary Range: \$43,893 - \$66,700 (Annually; depending on experience)

How to Apply: You must submit your [Personal Data Sheet](#) and resume to: Carol Myers PA Fish and Boat Commission P.O. Box 67000 Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000.

PA Resources Council Litter Education, Writer

The Pennsylvania Resources Council is seeking individuals to fill two positions: an Environmental Program Specialist for anti-litter and beautification programs and a Technical Writer. Both positions are at Ridley Creek State Parks in Delaware County.

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Environmental Program Specialist: Seeking candidates for a six-month, 40 hour/week program specialist position in its regional office at Ridley Creek State Park. Duties include implementing anti-litter and beautification programs in five-county Philadelphia area; conducting community outreach events (some weekend work required); and scheduling and assisting with Litterbug mascot appearances (schools, towns, community fairs, events, etc). Successful candidate must have good public speaking, organizational and writing skills, be physically capable of lifting 30 pounds, setting up event displays and working both in and out-of-doors and have own transportation. Must be able to work with diverse groups, ranging from business/community leaders to small children. B.S./B.A., Environmental Science, Ecology, Business Management, or related program preferred. Job could develop into a full time position with benefits.

Technical Writer/Administrative Assistant: Seeking candidates for a full time position in its regional office at Ridley Creek State Park. Duties include maintaining membership database, serving as primary writer/editor of newsletters, press releases and reports, and updating recycling information in yellow pages for over 150 regional directories. Additional duties include serving as event coordinator for annual fundraiser dinner, assisting with public relations, and scheduling/organizing PRC events. Successful candidate must have BS/BA degree in business, communications, marketing or related field and excellent organizational, writing and communications skills. Computer expertise includes MS Word, MS Excel, MS Access, QuickBooks, PageMaker (In Design). Must be physically capable of lifting 20 pounds and setting up event displays. Attractive benefits package provided.

Please submit a cover letter and resume for these positions to: B. Van Clief, Pennsylvania Resources Council, Inc., 3606 Providence Rd., Newtown Square, PA 19073, or vanclief@prc.org No phone calls please!

PA Environmental Council Seeks Administrative/Dev. Assistant

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council is seeking a full-time experienced administrative/development assistant to support the statewide operations of the President Office, Finance and Development Departments in Harrisburg.

This position provides administrative support to the President, Chief Operating Officer and Director of Development and Communications including meeting planning, scheduling, copying, filing, etc.

You must be proficient in MS Office with understanding of fundraising databases and possess excellent communication, interpersonal and multi-tasking skills. A Bachelors degree or some college is preferred with 2-3 years' nonprofit fundraising and general office experience. Salary commensurate with experience.

Please send resume with salary requirements to Renny Magill, via e-mail to rmagill@pecpa.org with job title in the subject line.

Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)

Program Coordinator, PA Institute for Conservation Education

The [Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education](#) is looking for a self-motivated, well organized and energetic individual to coordinate and administer all facets of the PA Wildlife Leadership Program, a residential summer program for teenaged youth ages 14-17. Applications are due February 15.

The Program Coordinator will provide leadership, expertise, organization and commitment to a nationally recognized youth residential and educational program in its startup while envisioning opportunities for program growth. As a member of the education team of the PICE, this person will be involved in the administration and leadership of other programs throughout the year.

Please send letter of interest, resume, and names of three references to: Michele Richards, PA Institute for Conservation Education, 1 D Teaberry Road, Bloomsburg, PA 17815. You may also fax above information to 570-458-5227 or email to naturecorp@enter.net .

Feature

Interest in Native Plants Growing for Nurseries Like Octoraro

by Jon M. Casey, [Country Folks Grower Newspaper](#)



Jim MacKenzie
Octoraro Native Plant
Nursery

“We go to great lengths to provide our customers with the best native woody plants they can find,” says Jim MacKenzie, President and Operations Manager of [Octoraro Native Plant Nursery](#).

“I believe that’s why we have grown to be one of the largest native plant nurseries in the region in the last fifteen years. We offer some of the heartiest plants available.”

“We specialize in trees and shrubs and do most of our production work by hand,” says MacKenzie. “While that might seem somewhat antiquated, it offers us the ability to care for our plants more effectively. Each plant gets personal attention. We

have four full-time employees, three seasonal part-time employees, two part-time drivers, and approximately two dozen Amish women who deliver that personal care every day.”

MacKenzie says that he is in a unique position.

“We have developed a close personal and working relationship with the surrounding Lancaster County Amish population,” he says. “We are able to provide jobs for more than two dozen Amish women who are looking to help support their families with income away from the farm. The young women come from a strong agricultural background and they understand plants. They also have a strong work ethic and they work well with our plants,” he says.

“Our Nursery Manager, Diane Bennett has been here since the founding of Octoraro Native Plant Nursery, and she has developed a wonderful relationship with all our Amish friends and coworkers.”

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“Our driver transports the workers to and from their homes every day,” he explains. “We have made accommodations for them in our production areas as well, so that their working conditions match their capabilities. Worktables are at heights that emphasize safety and comfort for them. We want them to enjoy their work and to do it in a safe way. They aren’t asked to do any heavy lifting without assistance from others. We have a symbiotic relationship with them here at the nursery and we work well together.”

Container Grown Plants

MacKenzie says that he and his partner and company founder, Mark Gutshall made the decision to offer plant stock in containers exclusively, from the beginning.

“We found that we could offer customers better results when they transplant our seedlings and plants if the young stock was grown in containers,” says MacKenzie. “We do not offer bare root plants and determined that we did not want to offer balled and burlapped plants as well. We chose to focus on producing high quality, container-grown plants that will get off to a great start when they are transplanted. We believe we have accomplished that.”

“Our container seedlings are grown in SP4 containers and sold in flats of 25 plants,” says MacKenzie, pulling out a hearty, two year old plant to show us the root system.

“We prefer the larger 9-inch long by 3-inch square containers because there is so much more root system available with the larger size. We like the open-bottomed air pruning containers,” he says. “We grow them on elevated benches so that they get good circulation underneath and so that we can take full advantage of air pruning.”

MacKenzie says they transplant their trees that they want to grow to a larger size into an in-ground “Cellu-gro™” unit where they are nurtured until they are transplanted into #7 containers and placed in Octoraro’s Pot-in-Pot section for further growth.

“We have found that growing the plants in below ground systems promotes better root growth. The roots are protected from temperature extremes and function more like they will when they are planted.”

“There is an ever-increasing demand for larger native plants,” says MacKenzie. “That is why we have grown in this department. Commercial applications, parks, and other places where there is considerable public exposure, are often looking for older plants that are larger and create more initial visual impact.”

Irrigation System

“We take great pride in our irrigation systems,” says MacKenzie. “We rely on drip irrigation wherever possible. We use both ground water and filtered surface water that we draw from the Octoraro Creek nearby. By using drip irrigation and spray stakes, the water goes directly to the roots where it is needed. We only use the amount of water that the plants need. Its good management and stewardship of the water supply.”

“In 2003 I was appointed to serve on the Statewide Water Resources Committee,” he says. “We are in the process of creating a new state-wide water plan for Pennsylvania by 2008. Everyone is taking a closer look at how we can conserve and enhance our state’s water resources, including the farming community.”

Living Laboratory and “Showroom”

MacKenzie is especially excited about what he affectionately calls “Lucy’s Playground,” referring to ten acres of floodplain that has been turned into a native plant habitat where his Chocolate Labrador Retriever enjoys coming to frolic and play.

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“We use this area as a display area to show others what can be done to land that is prone to flooding when there are heavy rains and the creek overflows its banks,” he says. “This area was once a tiled and drained cornfield that was often still to wet. We created this as part of a stream restoration project in 2000, and today it thrives.”

“With the riparian buffer and wetlands that we’ve created, we are able to become much better stewards of the land, and at the same time, we can use this area as a ‘showroom’ and a classroom to equip others on how to use native plants in various circumstances,” says MacKenzie. “In this case, when rain water flows down from the upper fields and the area where the main part of the nursery is located, this buffer keeps the runoff from going directly into the Octoraro Creek,” he says, pointing to the hillside that joins the two areas.

“We are pleased to practice what we preach and we are happy that our wetland ‘water quality facility’ has all finally come together. Now we have a habitat where we can find wood ducks, herons and osprey. We even have seen two bald eagles down here from time to time.”

Customers and the Future of Native Plants

MacKenzie says they now specialize exclusively in trees and shrubs because the demand for them has grown so much in recent years.

“Here at Octoraro Native Plant Nursery, we sell about 60 to 70 species of trees and shrubs. We also offer salttolerant plants for the Coastal plain regions that are grown at a location in southern New Jersey.”

“We continue to see a greater need for native plants in the agricultural arena with the expansion of the federal Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP),” says MacKenzie, who serves on the Board of Directors and Government Relations Committee of the [Pennsylvania Landscape and Nurseryman’s Association](#).

MacKenzie, a Penn State graduate of the Landscape Architecture program says that the business has continued to grow and diversify every year.

“We find our plants going into federal, state, and local governmental projects; state DOT (Department of Transportation) contracts, non-profit organizations such as the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and watershed organizations, and golf courses.”

At first, his customers tended to be those who were being required to plant native plants because of issues relating to environmental compliance.

“The mix was definitely more regulatory-driven than it is today,” he says. “Today, upwards of 65 percent of our end users buy native plants for water quality restoration projects because they believe it’s the right thing to do. Our customer base continues to grow.”

For more information native woody plants, contact [Octoraro Native Plant Nursery](#) contact them at 717-529-3160 and for other non-woody and aquatic native plants types, visit the [New Moon Nursery](#).

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More Information on Native Plants

[Landscaping with Native Plants in Pennsylvania - DCNR](#)

[Green Landscaping with Native Plants - EPA](#)

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[PaED: Habitat Solutions, Inc. Restoring Native Plants, Wetlands & Streams](#)
[Contact the Master Gardeners, Penn State Extension Office in Your County](#)
[2006 Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Conference Feb. 7-9](#)
[2006 Millersville Native Plant Conference June 1-3](#)
[Pennsylvania Native Plant Society](#)
[Native Plant Center – Audubon Society of Western PA](#)
[Gardening Goes Native in PA, Penn State Research](#)
[Bowman’s Hill Wildflower Preserve](#)
[Wildlands Conservancy Native Plant Initiative](#)
[Ernst Conservation Seeds](#)
[Links to Other Resources](#)

Quick Clips

Here’s a selection of NewsClips on environmental topics from around the state.

[Study Shows 90% of Antlerless Deer Escape Hunters](#)
[Wild Pigs Pose Habitat Problems](#)
[Insects, Blight or Deer Cause of Forest Problems?](#)
[Mine Company, State Battle Coal Fire](#)
[Editorial: Keep Parks’ Priority Straight](#)
[\\$200,000 Grant for Montour Trail](#)
[Radon Warning Out](#)
[Montgomery County Open Space Grants Ready to Issue](#)
[DEP Working to Revitalize Former Industrial, Mining Sites](#)
[Students Create Recycled Products](#)

Watershed NewsClips

Read a sampling of NewsClips on watershed topics from around Pennsylvania.

[Friends of Upper Delaware Adopt Floodplain Restoration](#)
[Forum to Eye Canyon’s Future](#)
[DEP Spearheads Mine Reclamation Efforts](#)
[Editorial: Necessity for Protection is Clear as Water](#)
[Bucks Towns Don’t Meet Stormwater Standards](#)
[Group Aims to Educate Young Anglers](#)
[Critical Issues – Watershed Protection](#)
[River Conservation Grant Awarded](#)
[PA Watersheds Data System Populating Quickly](#)

Regulations

No new regulations published this week. See Technical Guidance & Permits for other changes.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – January 14, 2006](#)

Comment Deadlines: [Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

[Copies of Proposed Regulations \(DEP website\)](#)

[Status of Regulations, 6-Month Calendar \(DEP website\)](#)

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Agriculture published an [interim policy on the enforcement](#) of the Commercial Manure Hauler and Broker requirements. The Department of Environmental Protection also [published guidance changes](#) in drinking water, x-ray machine and permit coordination programs as well as [revised Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation General Permit requirements](#) and changes to the [list of certified radon testing and remediation firms](#) (PaB page 231).

Draft: DEP ID: 291-4200-001. Medical X-ray Procedures Operator Training Guide. Comments due: February 13.

Final: DEP ID: 400-2000-301. Policy for Permit Coordination. This guidance identifies coordination procedures to be used by Department staff in the technical review and decision making of projects involving multiple Department permits or authorizations.

Final: DEP ID: 383-3310-109. Pennsylvania Drinking Water Information System Inventory Users Manual. This document establishes guidance and protocol for the use and maintenance of a computerized public water system inventory for the management of the Safe Drinking Water Program.

Final: DEP ID: 383-2000-108. Construction and Operation Permits Guidance. The guidance and procedures contained in this document (effective November 1, 1997 at 27 Pa.B. 6278 (November 29, 1997)) provide direction to Department staff for implementing permit issuance and tracking activities under the safe drinking water management programs.

[For copies of Draft Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

[For copies of Final Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Upcoming conferences, meetings, workshops, plus links to other online calendars. Meetings are in Harrisburg unless otherwise noted. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

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- [DEP's Annual schedule of board and advisory committee meetings for 2006](#)
- [No Cost Environmental Training Courses Online January/February](#)
- **January 17** – **CANCELLED**. Environmental Quality Board meeting.
- **January 17** – [DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 11:00 a.m..
- **January 19** – [Rachel Carson Forum on Nutrient and Sediment Credit Trading](#).
- **January 19** – Green Building Association of Central Pennsylvania “[Escape Cabin Fever Reception and Seminar](#)” Harrisburg.
- **January 23** – Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition presents Judy Wicks, founder White Dog Café, on Local Living Economics, 3:00, Glasbern Inn, Fogelsville. Info: Julie Thomases, jthomases@yahoo.com
- **January 24** – Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committee meets to consider consider the re-appointment of Michael L. Krancer to the Environmental Hearing Board and [Senate Resolution 207](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) urging DEP to place a nine month moratorium on implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy and [House Resolution 382](#) (Frankel-D-Allegheny) urging Congress to reauthorize the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund in Room 8E-A, 9:30.
- **January 25** – House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee informational meeting on [energy policy](#). The agenda includes Dr. Alan Scaroni, Director of the Energy Institute at Penn State University regarding energy research and development, Rosemary McAvoy of the Renewable Energies Council discussing alternative fuels and Christopher Lynch, Director, [Environmental Management Services](#) of the Small Business Development Center at the Wharton School regarding energy efficiency in small businesses. North Office Building, Hearing Room 1. 9:30.
- **January 25** – [DCNR Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 a.m.
- **January 31** – Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committee hearing on legislation modernizing Pennsylvania’s deep mine safety law and [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasuni-D-Somerset). Room 8-EA Capitol Building. 9:00.
- **February 8** – House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee will hold a public hearing on [House Bill 2141](#) (Geist-R-Blair) and adopting the California vehicle emission standards for Pennsylvania. North Office Building, Hearing Room 1. 9:00.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#)

(courtesy [PA Organizations for Watersheds & Rivers](#))

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

(courtesy [PA Center for Environmental Education](#))

[Senate Committee Schedule](#) [House Committee Schedule](#)

Helpful Web Links

[Daily NewsClips](#) [Daily DEP Update](#) [GreenTreks Network](#) [Watershed Weekly](#)

[DEP Press Releases](#) [DEP Advisory Committee Meetings & Agendas](#)

[DCNR Resource Magazine](#) [DCNR Press Releases](#)

[Fish & Boat Commission Press Releases](#) [Game Commission Press Releases](#)

Stories Invited

Send your stories about environmental issues, programs and positive actions to **PA Environment Digest** - DHess@HolstonCrisci.com or go to www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com .

PA Environment Digest is edited by David E. Hess, former Secretary Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and is published as a service to the clients of Holston & Crisci and the public. Holston & Crisci is a Harrisburg-based government and public affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Holston & Crisci call 717-234-1716.

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