

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

January 24, 2005

What Budget Address? Green Ribbon Commission Meets

While Washington was inaugurating a new President, Iraq getting ready for an election and Southern Asia recovering from the tsunami, Harrisburg was doing something much more important—talking football.

Gov. Rendell scheduled a press availability specifically to comment on the playoff chances of the Steelers and Eagles. He said he'd have to think hard about whether to go ahead with his February 8 Budget Address if it conflicted with a victory celebration in either city.

In response, Senate President Pro Tempore Bob Jubelirer and Senate Majority Leader Chip Brightbill sent a letter to Gov. Rendell saying the Budget Address is optional, but submitting a budget the week of February 7 isn't.

Are we ready for some football??

Voting Session Opens

Oh yeah, the Senate and House return to voting session Monday, January 24.

The House is set to adopt its rules and organize its committees. A preliminary list of Committee Chairs released by House Republicans this week showed no changes other than the previously announced new Chair of Appropriations—Brett Feese.

The Green Ribbon Commission is also scheduled to meet on Tuesday, January 25, the same day as a rally for increased environmental spending by environmental groups.



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Check the Calendar of Events

On the Hill

Green Ribbon Commission Meets Next Week, Groups Plan Rally

The Green Ribbon Commission announced it will meet on Tuesday, January 25, according to Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware) and Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) co-chairs.

Presentations will be made by Molly Morrison, Natural Lands Trust, Bruce Golden, Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation and Dr. Douglas Austen, Executive Director of the Fish & Boat Commission and William Schultz, Special Projects Manager, Pennsylvania Game Commission.

There have been no announced changes to the [members of the Commission](#).

Also scheduled for that same day is a [rally by environmental groups](#) in the Capitol Rotunda to press for increased environmental spending.

Waugh Chairs PA Delegation to Chesapeake Bay Commission



[Sen. Mike Waugh](#) (R-York) was recently elected by fellow Pennsylvania members of the [Chesapeake Bay Commission](#) to serve this year as the Chair of the PA Delegation.

Also serving on the Commission is Rep. Zug (R-Lebanon) as co-chair, Sen. Wenger (R-Lancaster), Re. Fairchild (R-Union) and Rep. Hershey (R-Chester).

Waugh has been a member of this tri-state legislative advisory

committee for close to six years. Having been appointed while in the House of Representatives, he served for four years, and after his election to the Senate, he was reappointed to the Commission in 2002.

Since his reappointment, the Senator has continued being an active representative for Pennsylvania knowing the important connections the Commonwealth and his district have to the Bay.

“The Susquehanna River provides 50 percent of the freshwater supply in the Chesapeake Bay, and many York County residents depend on the Chesapeake Bay’s health in pursuit of food, recreation, and other economic factors,” said Waugh.

The Senator is also very aware that individuals do much more than simply depend on a clean Bay, they, like the Commission, are working to keep it that way.

“South Central PA, including York County plays an essential role in ongoing efforts to preserve the ecological balance of the Chesapeake Bay,” said Waugh. “Pennsylvania’s involvement is crucial to the success of all programs with an objective to preserve this vital estuary.”

Sen. Waugh serves as chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Created in 1980, the Chesapeake Bay Commission is a tri-state group that serves in an advisory role to the members of the General Assemblies of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia on matters of Bay-wide concern. Of its 21 members, 15 are lawmakers – five each from PA, MD, and VA. Part of the Chesapeake Bay Commission’s ultimate goal is to clean up pollution, restore habitats and protect fish and wildlife.

In Other News

Rozell Stidd To Receive Ralph Abele Conservation Heritage Award

Rozell A. Stidd, a conservation officer for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Pennsylvania Game Commission who later was appointed as a Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commissioner, has been named the recipient of the 2004 [Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award](#).

The honor is the highest recognition the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission can confer on persons who distinguish themselves in the cause of conservation. It will be presented to Commissioner Stidd January 24 at 1 p.m. as part of the Commission’s winter quarterly meeting.

Stidd distinguished himself by outstanding service in the cause of conservation and protection and management of fisheries resources over a lifetime of service. Stidd was sworn in as a Commissioner of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission on June 19, 2001. Nominated by former Governor Ridge and confirmed by the Pennsylvania Senate, Stidd served on the 10-member board of Commissioners until his retirement in June 2003 for health reasons.

Born on May 14, 1921, at Guffey (a small oil-boom village on the Kinzua Creek) in McKean County, Commissioner Stidd became a fisherman at the age of four years. He



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has been an avid trout fisherman for his entire life. The oldest in a family of three boys, Stidd graduated from high school in June 1939 at Mt. Jewett, McKean County.

In December 1939, he enlisted in the United States Regular Army Air Corps. During World War II, he served with the 8th Fighter Group in the Pacific Theatre as a crew chief and engine change specialist on fighter aircraft at dozens of different combat air bases all over the Southwest Pacific, earning five bronze campaign stars. In June 1946, Commissioner Stidd enrolled as a student officer as part of the 4th Game Protector class at the Ross Leffler School. In June 1947, he completed the 12-month course required at that time, and was commissioned as a District Game Protector.

In late 1951, he resigned his commission in order to accept employment with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an Alaska Enforcement Agent, in the interior of the territory of Alaska. From December 1951 until January 1954, he served a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service district north of the Alaska Range, with headquarters at McGrath, Alaska.

In January 1954, Commissioner Stidd returned to service as a District Game Protector in northwestern Potter County. In January 1962, he was promoted to Law Enforcement Supervisor in the Southcentral Division Office at Huntingdon. In June 1972, Stidd was promoted to Supervisor of the Game Commission's Hunting License Section (under the Division of Administration) in Harrisburg. He retired from Commonwealth employment with the Game Commission in 1978.

Even though Commissioner Stidd's employment was with the Game Commission, his lifelong love of fishing, in general, and trout fishing in particular made him a leader in conservation. He has long been an active member of Trout Unlimited, and both before, during and after his term as a Commissioner, he was a leader in efforts to protect public fishing opportunities by having the Little Juniata River declared a public navigable waterway of the Commonwealth. Commissioner Stidd's account of the trout populations of the Little J and his exploits as a fly angler on this river helped emphasize the importance of maintaining public fishing rights on this waterway.

"The singularly distinctive accomplishments of Rozell A. Stidd in a lifetime of service to the cause of conservation reflect great credit upon him and truly warrant his selection as the 2004 winner of the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award," said Commission Executive Director Douglas Austen.

Commissioner Stidd is the third former member of the Fish and Boat Commission to earn the prestigious Abele Award. He joins former Commissioners Leonard Green and Enoch "Inky" Moore as a recipient of this award.

Commissioner Stidd is married and resides in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. He has three adult children.

The PFBC established the Abele Award to recognize citizens of Pennsylvania who have made outstanding contributions to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the aquatic resources of the Commonwealth, through one or more of the following accomplishments:

- Personally invested heavily in the long-term education of Pennsylvania's youth on conservation issues vital to an improved aquatic environment.
- Put at risk their person and livelihood to undertake public activities and positions on behalf of improving and protecting the aquatic resources of Pennsylvania.

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- Led a regional or statewide environmental effort that has been recognized for its duration and success in protecting and enhancing the aquatic resources of Pennsylvania.
- Played a leading role in reclaiming and enhancing a major significant natural water resource within the Commonwealth.
- Led an effort to pass major environmental legislation for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural environment of Pennsylvania.
- Brought national recognition to Pennsylvania through personal activities, actions and contributions to the aquatic resources.

The award serves as a memorial to [Ralph Abele](#) for his steadfast and courageous work in protecting and conserving our natural resources. [Past Abele Award winners](#) were: Ken Sink, Dr. Maurice Goddard, Lenny Green, Dr. William Kodrich, Robert W. McCullough, Jr., Peter Duncan, James L. Myers, Larry J. Schweiger, Enoch S. ("Inky") Moore, Robert P. Ging, Jr., Raymond Savel, Dr. Ed Bellis and Edward Kissell.

Ralph W. Abele served as executive director of the Pennsylvania Fish Commission from 1972 until 1987. His goal was to protect Commonwealth waters, conserve our aquatic resources and enhance fishing and boating in Pennsylvania.

He was quoted as proclaiming "If the fish can't survive in the water, there are serious problems for man." Ralph's "Resource First" philosophy continues to guide the Fish and Boat Commission today.

Attorney General Corbett Promises Aggressive Environmental Enforcement



Tom Corbett took office as Pennsylvania's Attorney General this week promising to "protect our environment and work with the Legislature to strengthen our laws so that we continue to have clean air to breathe and fresh water to drink."

As U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania and during his 14 months as Attorney General appointed by Gov. Ridge to fill out the term of Ernie Preate, General Corbett developed a solid record of prosecuting environmental criminals.

While U.S. Attorney, General Corbett convicted the first municipality in the nation for violating the Federal Clean Water Act which led to a \$50 million upgrade in municipal sewage systems in Western Pennsylvania.

During his earlier time as Attorney General he began to bring down the backlog of cases in the Environmental Crimes Section which won convictions under the Solid Waste Management Act, Clean Streams Law, the Storage Tank Act and other laws.

General Corbett proposed several initiatives during the campaign that would improve the tools used by the Attorney General and the Department of Environmental Protection to enforce Pennsylvania's environmental laws. They included—

- Increase the penalties and jail time under the Clean Streams Law and extend the statute of limitations on bringing criminal cases;
- Increase the compliment of the Environmental Crimes Section by adding more agents and prosecutors with expertise in environmental law;
- Create a toll-free tip line for whistleblowers and other tips involving environmental crimes;

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- Encourage the referral of criminal cases to the Attorney General’s Office from DEP and county district attorneys by improving communication, collaboration and cooperation on environmental cases. [The Attorney General can only investigate cases referred by these parties. It has no original jurisdiction to bring environmental cases on its own.]

For more information on positions taken by General Corbett during the campaign, go to the “[Protecting the Environment](#)” and “[Action Plan to Protect the Environment](#)” webpages.

[Note: David Hess from Holston & Crisci served on the bipartisan Transition Team for Attorney General Corbett.]

New Cambria Wind Farm Locates on Reclaimed Strip Mine

Freedom Wind Energy plans to develop a wind farm in Pennsylvania that will generate up to 400 megawatts (MW) of electricity, one of the largest wind mill projects in the state.

Freedom Wind, based in Butler, Pa., wants to install turbines at the site of a reclaimed strip mine that Cambria County is developing into an all terrain vehicle park. The county also sees an opportunity for wind development, and it conducted a bid solicitation, choosing Freedom Wind's proposal.

The project will produce at least 100 MW and as much as 400 MW, depending on the recreational needs of the site. Freedom Wind would own and operate the project, not "flip" it to a larger buyer when finished. The company plans to use in-state engineers and contractors, and to buy turbines from [Gamesa](#), a Spanish company that is building a manufacturing plant in Pennsylvania.

Freedom Wind may sell the output to marketers, or sign up retail customers for the green power, then sell that "package" of buyers to marketers, the company said.

Pennsylvania's recently legislated Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard is increasing demand for wind energy. Under the AEPS, all retail suppliers in the state - utilities and marketers - must include alternative energy in their portfolios, starting with small percentages and rising to 18 percent over 15 years. That will include 8 percent of Tier I resources, which includes wind, the most widespread renewable.

Freedom Wind Energy is also developing a 30-MW wind project in Pennsylvania, and a project in New York that could generate up to 400 MW.

NewsClip: [Group Hopes to Lasso Breezes with 200 Windmills in Cambria](#)

Comments Available from Hearing on Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards

The Public Utility Commission held a technical conference this week to hear comments on the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards that was co-chaired by Chairman Wendell Holland and DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty.

The Standards require 18 percent of the electricity sold to retail customers in Pennsylvania come from specified, eligible alternative energy sources in 15 years or that electricity usage be offset through demand-side management measures. The PUC and DEP share responsibility for implementing the new law.

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The PUC received comments from 34 groups and organizations which are available through the [Public Documents search page](#) on the PUC's website. Search for Docket No. M-00051865.

NewsClip: [PUC, DEP Hold Technical Conference on Energy Standards](#)

'Business In Our Sites' Brownfield Project Funding Announced

The [Commonwealth Financing Authority](#) (CFA) announced the approval of 14 projects this week totaling over \$43.6 million in grants and loans, through the Business in Our Sites (BOS) program.

The projects will create shovel-ready sites for businesses through land acquisition, construction and feasibility studies. Since guidelines for Business in Our Sites were approved last fall, the CFA has approved 30 projects totaling more than \$75 million.

The brownfields projects include:

Allegheny County: The Allegheny County Airport Authority will receive a \$4 million financial package and the Moon Transportation Authority will receive a \$2 million loan to develop a 160-acre former strip mine into a business park at the Cherrington Extension site in Moon Township.

Blair County: Chestnut Avenue LP will receive a \$6.6 million loan to be used to develop an underutilized railroad property into a new strip retail center in Altoona's Logantown neighborhood.

Cambria County: The Johnstown Redevelopment Authority will receive a \$4 million financial package to redevelop the former Sani-Dairy Plant, located in the city of Johnstown.

Dauphin County: The Capital Region Economic Development Corp. will receive \$2.04 million in funding for infrastructure improvements to the remaining 35 acres of the TecPort Business Center, which formerly housed AMP's world headquarters, in Swatara Township.

Franklin County: The Cumberland Valley Regional Development Corp. will receive \$7.05 million for environmental cleanup and infrastructure development for the United Business Park in Southampton Township.

Greene County: The Greene County IDA will receive \$5.44 million to develop the EverGreene Technology Park, located in a Keystone Opportunity Zone in Franklin Township on 248 acres of land was previously strip mined.

Lebanon County: The Lebanon Valley Development Corp. will receive a \$3.48 million financial package for the development of the Lebanon Valley Business Park in South Lebanon Township located on 133 acres formerly owned by Alcoa.

Luzerne County: Greater Hazleton Can DO Inc. will receive a \$2.77 million loan to develop Phase II of Humboldt Industrial Park East, located in a former brownfield/greyfield site and designated a Keystone Opportunity Zone.

The Greater Pittston Chamber of Commerce will receive a \$1.18 million financial package for land acquisition and infrastructure development at the former Avoca Rail Yards in Duryea, which is a brownfield site and designated a Keystone Opportunity Zone.

Washington County: The Washington County Authority will receive a \$3.5 million financial package to fund the development of the Town Center at Southpointe II

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in Cecil Township. The 221-acre brownfield site, formerly the Western Center state-run institution for the mentally ill, will be located adjacent to Southpointe I and will incorporate entertainment venues, restaurants and marketplaces.

Planning grants were approved for the following projects:

Blair County: The Altoona-Blair County Development Corp. will receive a \$33,100 Business in Our Sites planning grant to assist the Borough of Tyrone with predevelopment planning for a new hotel complex at a former blighted site on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Dauphin County: The Borough of Steelton will receive a \$175,000 planning grant to be used for the Front Street Redevelopment Project, which will create 300,000-square-foot of new commercial, professional office and residential units. This project will redevelop between seven and 10 vacant or blighted buildings in an effort to revitalize downtown Steelton.

Lancaster County: The EDC Finance Corporation will receive a \$175,000 planning grant for 45 acres of the Armstrong World Industries site located in a designated Keystone Opportunity Zone. The funds will be used for an environmental assessment, remediation plan, building reuse and demolition study, development of a master plan and marketing study.

The [Commonwealth Financing Authority](#) is a seven-member board, created to administer and fund projects from programs created to oversee the Business in Our Sites, the Tax Increment Financing Guarantee (TIF), First Industries Fund, New PA Venture Capital Investment, New Pennsylvania Venture Guarantee, Building PA, PennWorks, and the and Second Stage Loan programs.

For more information, visit the [Business in Our Sites webpage](#) or call 1-866-GO-NEWPA (1-866-466-3972).

Colleges, EPA, DEP Sign Environmental Self-Audit Agreement

The [Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania](#), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Environmental Protection signed an agreement this week to voluntarily disclose violations found through environmental compliance audits conducted by member schools.

The goal of performing self-audits is to encourage schools to develop Environmental Management Systems, an approach to managing environmental responsibilities that can help to identify ways to reduce and prevent pollution, ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and save money while improving productivity.

Many companies and organizations are afraid to conduct self-audits for fear any violations they find will come back to haunt them in the form of fines or penalties. Under this agreement, DEP and EPA agree to work with institutions to resolve any problems uncovered by self-audits without taking enforcement action.

“The Association is pleased to have the support and encouragement of EPA and DEP as we implement a program that provides a real common sense approach to environmental self-regulation on a campus,” said AICUP President Don Francis. “The specter of fines, penalties and other harsh consequences has been lifted, allowing our members to proactively identify and correct processes on campus that either conflict with environmental laws or create unknown hazards for those involved. Over the next few

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years, volunteer teams of peer reviewers will be walking our campuses identifying areas where improved regulatory compliance can be achieved, and they will do so with the full cooperation of the audited campus. The EPA and DEP agreement makes all of this possible.”

Victoria Justus of Turning Bird Consulting, advisor to AICUP, will be working directly with participating AICUP members and has already performed a number of on-site reviews with volunteer peer review teams.

AICUP will train Environmental Compliance Reviewers from the ranks of the personnel at the participating schools. Currently 25 of AICUP’s 83 members are participating in the program. The association hopes to increase the participation rate to more than 50 percent.

To assist schools in conducting the self-audit’s DEP Office of Energy and Technology Development created a new College and [University Environmental Management System and Best Management Practices Manual](#) to be used for this project and by other schools.

Apps Now Available for Community Based Water Resources Education Projects

The [Water Resources Education Network](#) (WREN) Project and the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund (LWVPA-CEF) will accept proposals for water resources education projects through April 1.

Projects must be sponsored by community based partnerships that educate, build awareness, and promote water-sustaining public policies and/or behavior change. WREN will fund projects up to \$5,000 and will look for proposals designed to encourage individual or collective action that will protect and improve local water resources.

Applicants can download the [2005 WREN Water Resources Education grant application package](#) from the WREN website.

Projects selected for funding need to be conducted July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006 and should include activities that enhance cooperation between citizens and municipal officials and private organizations.

WREN will fund projects in two tracks:

- **Source Water Protection projects** which educate the public about how to protect, improve or restore the drinking water source waters for the community’s public drinking water system. [Source water is the untreated, raw water from streams, rivers, lakes, springs, or underground aquifers that serve as sources of a community’s drinking water.]; and
- **Watershed Protection projects** which educate the public about how to protect, improve or remediate the watershed from the impacts of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. [NPS pollution includes drainage or runoff from: abandoned coal mines, oil or gas wells; inadequate erosion control practices during urban development; improper agricultural and timber harvesting practices; and failing on-lot septic systems or other waste disposal sites. NPS also results from hydrologic modifications (changing the way water flows through an area.)]

Funding for source water protection projects is provided by Department of Environmental Protection through the State Revolving Loan Fund for Drinking Water Source Water Protection. Funding for the watershed protection projects is provided by

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the DEP Nonpoint Source Management Program through Section 319 of the federal Clean Water Act, administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Since 1992, LWVPA CEF has made nine rounds of grant awards, totaling 197 grants, to Pennsylvania partnerships working to improve their water resources.

For more information contact WREN Project Director Sherene Hess, at 724-465-4978 or by email to: wren@pa.lwv.org

Help Available to Your Group Through the Watershed Assistance Center

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) [Watershed Assistance Center](#) recently received two grants that will help support their award-winning technical assistance program.

Late last year, the Center was notified by EPA that it was awarded an Assessment and Watershed Program Protection Grant in the amount of \$50,000 to assist grassroots organizations with abandoned mine drainage (AMD) issues. It is anticipated that much of this funding will be focused toward ongoing efforts to remediate AMD in the West Branch of the Susquehanna Watershed. The grant has the possibility of becoming up to a \$250,000 cooperative agreement over a three-year period with EPA.



In addition, the Center was recently awarded a grant in the amount of \$120,000 from the Growing Greener program to continue providing cost-free assistance to watershed groups and other qualifying organizations with legal, scientific, administrative and educational issues.

Organizations within the Ohio, Susquehanna, Lake Erie, Potomac and Genesee watersheds are eligible to receive assistance supported by this grant. Organizations located within the Delaware watershed may also receive assistance from the Center, which will be provided by WPC as a match to the Growing Greener grant.

Since the inception of the Watershed Assistance Center in 2001, 267 organizations have received assistance from the program, and 1,601 total requests for help have been answered.

For more information visit the [Watershed Assistance Center webpage](#), email: wac@paconserve.org or call 724-459-0953

EPCAMR Sponsoring Iron Oxide Workshop January 28

The [Eastern Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#) (EPCAMR) is sponsoring a workshop on January 28 for all those interested in putting together a grant application to promote the recovery of iron oxide in mine drainage discharges.

The proposed new Northeast Region Resource Recovery Initiative would explore ways to extract useful compounds like iron oxide from mine discharges based on a project EPCAMR started this summer under a U.S. Office of Surface Mining grant. Also providing financial support were Hedin Environmental, the Earth Conservancy, Gemark Service Corporation, DEP and the Luzerne County Conservation Districts.

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The project is developing a GIS database inventory and analyses of the purity and estimated volumetric calculations of iron oxide deposits commonly found at regional discharges and is already showing results.

To help take this project to the next step, EPCAMR is inviting interested parties to attend the January 28 meeting from 10:00 to 2:00 at their offices at the Luzerne County Conservation District. [Follow these directions](#) or call 570-674-7991 for more information.

DEP Solicits Interest in Reclaiming Lackawanna County Mine Site

The Department of Environmental Protection this week published a notice soliciting interest from the landowners and/or licensed mine operators in the reclamation of a 3.5 acres abandoned mine site known as Project No. PBF 35940101.1 in Mayfield Borough, Lackawanna County.

Letters of interest must be received by Roger J. Hornberger, District Mining Manager, District Mining Operations, Department of Environmental Protection, 5 West Laurel Boulevard, Pottsville, PA 17901, no later than March 3.

For more information contact Mr. Hornberger at 717-621-3118.

Using Compost to Prevent Stream Bank Erosion

[River Valley Organics](#), of Wrightsville, Meadville Land Service Inc. (814-337-1974) of Meadville, PA and [Weaver Mulch](#) in Coatesville have teamed up with [Filtrexx International](#) to produce recycled organic products for stream bank stabilization, erosion and sediment control on construction sites and roadsides, stormwater drain inlet protection, removal of hydrocarbons in stormwater runoff, stormwater and bio-retention ponds, and green roofs for buildings.

Projects areas in Pennsylvania include PennDOT State Road 222 near Reading, Lower Paxton Township near Harrisburg, Mason Dixon Farms in Gettysburg, and Foundations Phase II Project in Lancaster.

Soil erosion is considered the biggest contributor to nonpoint source pollution in the United States, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Soil loss from both agricultural and nonagricultural lands in the United States amounts to over 4 billion metric tons each year due to erosion. Soil loss rates from construction sites are 10-20 times that of agricultural lands. It is estimated that the annual cost to society for on-site loss of soil, nutrients, water and yield reduction due to soil erosion is over \$27 billion per year.

The most serious impacts of soil erosion occur once the sediment leaves the site and enters surface waters. When eroded sediment is transported from its site of origin to nearby surface waters it also carries fertilizers, pesticides, fuels and other contaminants and substances commonly spilled at construction sites that readily attach to soil particles.

Surface water that is loaded with sediment can lead to reduced drainage capacity, increased flooding, decreased aquatic organism populations, decreased commercial and recreational fishing catches, clogged and damaged commercial and industrial irrigation systems, increased expenditures at water treatment plants to clean the water, and decreased recreational and aesthetic value of water resources.

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Diverting organic materials from landfills has many benefits, including, reducing potential ground water pollution from landfill leachate, the amount of methane released to the atmosphere, the need to expand existing landfills and construct new ones, and potentially improve soil quality by replacing organic matter and recycling nutrients if applied to highly depleted soils.

For more information contact Britt Faucette, Director of Research, [Filtrex International](#) by calling 678-592 7094 or by email to: britt_faucette@hotmail.com.

PA Partnership Forming to Promote No-Till Conservation Practices

A coalition of eight public, industry and academic organizations is forming a PA No-Till Alliance and inviting producers, agri-business, consultants, conservation districts and other interest groups to become members.

The coalition will hold an informational meeting on March 4 in Spring Mills, Center County from 9:30 to 6:00.

So far, the coalition is made up of the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service, PA Farm Bureau, PA Association of RC&D Councils, Department of Environmental Protection, PennAg Industries Association, Penn State Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Cedar Meadow Farms.

The initial goals of the Alliance include: information exchange between no-tillers in PA and throughout the country, sharing of new technology and research as well as input regarding sediment and nutrient management issues related to agriculture. The Alliance will also help to coordinate and support activities between regional no-till groups and partners within the Commonwealth.

For more information about the upcoming meeting and the proposed Alliance, contact: Susan Parry, Capital Resource Conservation and Development Coordinator, at 717-948-6633 or by email to: susan.parry@pa.usda.gov.

(Courtesy of Andrea Sharretts, Director Natural Resources, PA Farm Bureau)

Farming for the Future Conference to be Held Feb. 4-5 in State College



The [Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture](#) will hold its annual [Farming for the Future conference](#) February 4 -5, in State College.

Allan Savory, co-founder of the Center for Holistic Management, will kick off the conference titled “Reclaiming Health: Nourishing our Farms and Families.” Other featured keynote speakers include Marion Nestle, nutritionist, and Jerry Brunetti, director of Agri-Dynamics.

The two-day conference will consist of more than 50 workshops, two keynote addresses, a full trade show and specially prepared meals using regional and sustainably raised foods.

Workshops include topics such as city and farm markets, holistic health, composting, naturopathic medicine, farming for long-term health and appealing to and on-farm renewable energy systems.

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◇ For more information, visit the [Farming for the Future webpage](#) or call [PASA](#) at 814 349-9856 or e-mail: info@pasafarming.org

Schuylkill Watershed Congress Set for March 5-6

The 2005 Schuylkill Watershed Congress will be held at the Montgomery County Community College on March 5-6 and will feature a keynote address by Thomas Cahill, of Cahill Associates, 20 workshop sessions, networking and poster sessions, exhibits and watershed tours.

To learn more, go to the [Schuylkill Watershed Congress webpage](#). The program is being organized by the [Delaware Riverkeeper Network](#).

Adams County Chapter Trout Unlimited Receives National Conservation Award

The Adams County Chapter of Trout Unlimited was recently recognized with the Gold Trout Chapter Award, the highest recognition given to a chapter of Trout Unlimited.

For more than 20 years Adams County volunteers have collaborated with Northern Virginia Chapter members in restoration activities along Conewago Creek.

The efforts of the two chapters improved a once silt-choked trout fishery and at the same time fostered an inter-state cooperative ethic that is especially noteworthy given the fact that Pennsylvania and Virginia do not share a common border.

The Adams Chapter was also honored with the Edward J. Urbas Award by the [Pennsylvania Chapter of Trout Unlimited](#) as the state's best chapter in 2004.

For more information on the Adams County Chapter, contact: [Rick James](#) by email or call 410-775-1433.



DCNR Seeks Comments on Future of Erie Bluffs State Park

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) will hold a public planning session on January 26 in Girard, Erie County seeking public comment on natural resource management and future development plans for [Erie Bluffs State Park](#).

The park's history, vast natural resources and recreational potential will be addressed by officials of DCNR's Bureau of State Parks, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, former owner of the 540-acre tract, and Wallace Roberts & Todd LLC, a private, Philadelphia-based design and planning firm contracted to draft the park's master plan.

Those attending the session will be asked two major questions: "What would you like to see happen at Erie Bluffs State Park?" and "What concerns do you have about future development of Erie Bluffs?"

Bureau of State Parks Director Roger Fickes and other guest speakers will discuss a variety of topics, including how public involvement will help Erie Bluffs serve as a model for future state parks, natural resources fieldwork by the Western Pennsylvania

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Conservancy at the site, an overview of the master plan process; and the importance of public input.

The [Western Pennsylvania Conservancy](#) acquired the tract on Lake Erie's shoreline in western Erie County from Reliant Energy in December 2003, using a \$1.5 million grant from DCNR. The conservancy released the land to DCNR late last month.

The site is composed of several ecological zones, including relict sand dunes formed shortly after glaciation, wetlands fed by natural springs and seeps, a lake plain swamp forest, seep-ravines, creek ravines, and the bluff face itself.

In May and July 2004, more than 130 scientists, naturalists and volunteers across the state converged on Erie Bluffs State Park in a four-day, volunteer effort to identify as many plants and animals as possible in day and night field exercises. Popularly known in the scientific community as a "[bioblitz](#)," the effort identified more than 1,200 species.

For more information, go to the [Erie Bluffs State Park webpage](#).

DCNR Honors Pike County Community For Wildfire Preparedness

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry officials this week honored Hemlock Farms, a Pike County community, for working to prevent and being ready to fight wildfires.

Off Route 739 in Lords Valley, Hemlock Farms includes 2,562 homes with a population nearing 10,000 residents. At a community ceremony today, Delaware State Forest District officials presented Firewise bronze-medal honors to community representatives for their successful incorporation of wildfire prevention and suppression into their Emergency Response and Action Plan.

The [Pennsylvania Firewise Community Program](#) is designed to aid firefighters, and safeguard buildings and residents against wildfires in wooded areas.

As the agency responsible for protecting Pennsylvania's forests from fire, DCNR is concerned with the increased risk of wildfire caused by the influx of residents into heavily wooded areas. DCNR offers Wildfire Hazard Mitigation grants to help communities reduce risks by financing planning costs, as well as removal of fire hazards, improvement of firebreaks and emergency access roads, and enhancement of public information efforts.

DCNR, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the Office of the Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioner formed the Firewise program in 1996. Of the 31 Firewise communities throughout the state, three were recently recognized as National Firewise Communities for 2004 including Roaring Creek Forest property owners in Columbia County and Bear Creek Lakes and Hickory Run Land and Homeowners Development, both in Carbon County.

Communities can obtain grant applications, as well as information about the [Firewise Community Program](#), from the Bureau of Forestry's Division of Forest Fire Protection. Contact Forest Program Specialist Glenn Bell at (717) 783-7956 or gbell@state.pa.us.

County Commissioners Support Increase in Realty Transfer Tax for Open Space

Billing it the "Agenda for Citizen Fairness," leaders from Pennsylvania's counties this week announced their list of top priorities which calls upon state leaders to achieve tax fairness for counties and to honor their commitments to funding human services programs.

The Association is backing a specific proposal that would increase the Realty Transfer Tax to provide additional funding for farmland and open space preservation.

For more information, go to the Association's [Agenda for Citizen Fairness webpage](#).

Hearing Set to Review Ozone Attainment Progress in Philadelphia Region

The Department of Environmental Protection has announced it will hold a "mid-course review of progress" hearing on how the Philadelphia Region is moving toward attaining the one-hour ozone standard on [February 24 in Norristown](#).

DEP has prepared a [mid-course report](#) outlining the status of measures taken to achieve attainment in the region and it is requesting comments on that report. For more background go to DEP's [Clean Air Plans webpage](#).

For more information contact Susan Ferree, 717-787-9495 or by email to: sferree@state.pa.us.

Notice of Certified Emission Reduction Credits, Recent Transactions

The Department of Environmental Protection this week published a notice of availability of emission reduction credits, by company, in the state's Emission Credit Registry and a summary of recent transactions ([January 22 PaB 586](#)).

Included in the Registry are credits for nitrogen oxide, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur oxides and particulate matter.

Credits in the Registry can be used to satisfy new source review requirements and to trade and sell to companies that need them or have an excess.

For more information contact Virendra Trivedi, Bureau of Air Quality, 717-787-4325 or go to [Emissions Credit Registry](#) background paper.

DEP also published notice of the [NOx budget training program; new source set-aside 2005 proposed allocations](#) and the [NOx budget training program; proposed NOx allowance allocations for 2008 to 2012](#) this week.

EPA Launches New Spanish Language Environmental Website

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has launched a new consolidated [Spanish language website](#) as part of its ongoing effort to provide environmental information both in Spanish and English.

The new site compiles EPA's Spanish language materials on a wide variety of areas from lead poisoning prevention to controlling asthma triggers, recycling to proper management of pesticides. The site was developed through a series of focus groups to respond to the environmental needs and interests of Hispanics.

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In addition to environmental health information, the site also offers educational resources for students and teachers who often seek Spanish language learning tools on the environment. The site also provides information about EPA grants, small business opportunities and environmental jobs at EPA.

Ned Smith Center Hosts Evening on PA’s Conservation Heritage



The [Ned Smith Center](#) will host an evening program on “PA's Conservation Heritage-The People, the Policies, and the Places” presented by Beth Hager, Chief of Development at the State Museum and Wayne Kober, former Director of PennDOT Office of Environmental Quality, at 7:00 p.m. on February 10 in Millersburg, Dauphin County.

The program will include presentations on the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals environmental heritage initiatives; PA [Senate Resolution 324](#) on conservation history that passed on November 15, 2004; [J. Horace McFarland](#), Harrisburg native and founder of the National Park Service; and thoughts on the role of the Ned Smith Center in conservation history education.

The Horace McFarland presentation will include a multi-media slide show of McFarland's historical photographs of Harrisburg and other cities, and an actual speech given by him around the country as part of his city beautification advocacy in the early 20th century.

Quick Clips

[Penn State Sponsors Winter Trash To Treasure From Items Left By Students](#)

[Teen Farmer Reaps State Energy Grant](#)

[Student Gets Grant for “Hoop House” System](#)

[Opinion – Confessions of a Bat Lover](#)

[PA Company Develops Bioreactor Process to Produce Hydrogen](#)

[Environmental Charter School to Open](#)

[Methane Gas Wells May Dot Countryside](#)

[Eagles Finding a Haven on Potomac](#)

[Sprawl Endangers Imperiled Species](#)

[Hunters Lament Lack of Deer, Farmers Differ](#)

[Willie Nelson Biofuels](#)

We’re Looking for a Few Good Photos to Share!

Want to share some of your winter watershed or scenic photos with other PA Environment Digest readers?

You are invited to send them to: DHess@HolstonCrisci.com .

Pennsylvania is a beautiful state, let’s show off a little!

Feature

The Geography of Restoring Aultmans Run in Indiana County

Brian Okey, the modest, but focused president of the Aultman Watershed Association for Restoring the Environment (AWARE), listed all the grants and partners the Association put together in the last four years to cleanup their watershed and then paused.

“When you list them all like that, it’s pretty impressive,” sounding almost amazing himself.

Thanks to the Association and its partners, 5.5 tons of iron from an abandoned mine discharge will no longer flow untreated into Aultmans Run every year.

But that is only one project, Okey explained.

AWARE benefited from four Growing Greener grants, one for starting the association, another for a watershed assessment and two for individual projects—the SR 286 treatment system that’s now up and running and to design a solution for treating a major abandoned mine discharge to Reed’s Run, a tributary to Aultmans Run.

But it doesn’t stop there.

The group was named a [Groundwater Guardian Community](#) in 2001 for their partnerships with the local [PA Cleanways Chapter](#) on annual watershed cleanups and anti-litter efforts. They also received several grants from the [Water Resources Education Network](#) and a PA League of Women Voters to produce educational materials about watershed issues and a grant from the [PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers](#) to put up stream identification signs.

And they kept adding partners.

“We aren’t as big as other organizations, so we have to rely on developing partnerships to get our work done,” said Okey “We partnered with PA Cleanways, [EASI \(Senior Environment Corps\)](#) and the [Stream Team](#) to get our early projects started and to do water monitoring. We benefited a lot from overlapping memberships.”

They went from zero members in 2000 to 140 in 2004.

The [Indiana County Conservation District](#), DEP’s [Cambria District Mining Office](#), the [Western PA Conservancy Watershed Assistance Center](#), the [Kiski-Conemaugh River Basin Alliance](#), [Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#) and many others helped out.

Okey said he probably missed a few, but hoped he didn’t.

The [SR 286 Project](#) (named for a nearby state road) treats one of three large sources of acid mine drainage in the watershed. The other two-- Reeds Run and the McIntyre site on Neil Run-- both contribute significant mine water pollution to the watershed.



Volunteers up to their elbows planting the SR 286 wetland last July. See the Special Photo Feature Attached to this article.

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[Stream Restoration Incorporated](#), a non-profit organization experienced in developing mine reclamation projects, [Amerikohl Mining Inc.](#), [BioMost, Inc.](#), the Stream Team and AWARE all cooperated to get a Growing Greener grant to design, permit, and install the SR 286 passive treatment system, the first in the Aultmans Run Watershed.

The project was finished early last year and the wetlands planted last summer in a series of “work days” by Association members.

Aultmans Run is classified as a trout-stocked fishery. One of the main goals of AWARE is to improve the health of Aultmans Run to become a viable fishery throughout its entire length.

Samples taken last year show iron discharges have dropped from 15 mg/L to less than 4 mg/L as a result of the SR 286 Project, a dramatic improvement.

Aultmans Run Watershed is located a short 15 or 20 minute drive from Indiana University of Pennsylvania where Okey is a Professor of Geography and Regional Planning and teaches a course in fresh water resources.

“I encourage (or coerce) students into helping with projects and try to get other faculty involved,” said Okey. “The watershed is a very good field laboratory that’s close by.”

One of his fellow faculty members even used Aultmans Watershed for a lesson in social geography, having his students collect oral histories of the area, including stories about the mining days in the watershed.

Okey sees good challenges ahead-- finishing the Reed’s Run design, putting up the Association’s first webpages and joining up with the [Todd Bird Club](#) to promote bird watching and recreational opportunities with Conemaugh Lake.

“Aultmans Run flows right into [Conemaugh Lake](#) so there is a natural tie in to recreation opportunities offered there,” Okey explained.

“Getting people involved in the watershed, not only students, but the people that live here is a continuing challenge,” Okey said. “It’s easy for a core group of people to burn out, but so far that hasn’t happened. We’re going to keep up our momentum.”

And judging from their record of so far, we have no doubts they will!

For more information contact AWARE through Brian Okey, at 724-357-3766 or by email: Brian.Okey@iup.edu .

Watershed NewsClips

[Partners Flock to Restore Willis Run in York County](#)
[Residents Study Route for Water Reuse Plan](#)
[Study Would Eye Watershed Fixes in Sewickley Creek](#)
[Rendell Praises Those Involved in Oil Spill Response](#)
[Oil Spill Rated as Second Worst on Delaware](#)

Regulations

The Environmental Quality Board published laboratory accreditation rules this week for comment and approved revised regulations on explosives, extended the review time on a petition to adopt PA's own mercury standards and other topics at their meeting.

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The Environmental Quality Board published this regulation for comment this week: [Proposed Laboratory Accreditation Regulations](#). Comments due: February 22.

[Environmental Quality Board Approves Explosive Rules](#)

The EQB also voted to extend its review time on a petition to adopt Pennsylvania's own mercury standards for power plants by 120 days to allow time for the Department to review a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposal that is set to come out in March.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – January 22, 2005](#)

Comment Deadlines: [Regulations](#) [Technical Guidance](#)

[Copies of Proposed Regulations](#) [Status of Regulations, 6-Month Calendar](#)

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Environmental Quality Board published notice this week that it has approved an update to the state's [Hazardous Waste Facilities Plan](#).

The Department of Environmental Protection published [notice of a change](#) to this final technical guidance:

DEP ID: 383-3130-208: New Source Sampling Requirements for Groundwater Sources for Community and Nontransient Noncommunity Water Systems.

DEP published notice of two items related to its nitrogen oxide credit trading program:

[NOx budget training program; new source set-aside 2005 proposed allocations](#)

[NOx budget training program; proposed NOx allowance allocations for 2008 to 2012](#)

[For copies of Draft Technical Guidance](#) [For copies of Final Technical Guidance](#)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **January 24** – First day of voting session for Senate & House
- **January 25** – Green Ribbon Commission meeting
- **January 26** – Joint Legislative Budget & Finance Committee meeting to discuss awarding contracts related to [House Resolution 927](#) (Sunday hunting).
- **February 1** – [Joint Legislative Air & Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) presentation on PA's nutrient trading program.
- **February 2** – Groundhog Day, [watch live via the Internet!](#)

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- **February 2** – Joint Legislative Budget & Finance Committee meeting to release report on DCNR snowmobile and ATV program.
- **February 2** – [Governor’s Energy Board](#) meeting.
- **February 4-5** - [Farming for the Future conference](#) in State College.
- **February 8** –Governor’s Budget Address (unless delayed by football)
- **February 10-11** – [Fundamentals of Geology & Applied Geology, Philadelphia](#)
- **February 17-18** – [Fundamentals of Geology & Applied Geology, Pittsburgh](#)
- **February 24** – DEP public hearing on [Mid-Course Review of Progress](#) Toward Meeting Ozone Standard in Philadelphia.
- **March 5** – [Schuylkill Watershed Congress](#), Montgomery County Community College, Pottstown
- **April 10-12** – [Engineering Sustainability 2005](#) – University of Pittsburgh School of Engineering.

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

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

Contributions Invited

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

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