

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

January 29, 2007

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

Ralph Abele, Mahon Access for All, Boating Education Awards Presented

A pioneering scientist, a hands-on conservationist, an innovative sportsman and an educator have been honored by the Fish and Boat Commission for their unique contributions that have furthered the work and mission of the agency.

The awards were presented this week at a special ceremony at the Commission winter quarterly meeting in Harrisburg.

“The awards honor the recipients for the important contributions they have made in their respective fields. It is my privilege to be in the company of so many

outstanding individuals. Each is most deserving of this recognition - and our thanks,” said Commission President Donald Anderson in introducing the recipients.

Dr. Ruth Patrick and Thomas J. Kerr were named as recipients of the [Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award](#).

Dr. Ruth Patrick holds the Francis Boyer Chair of Limnology at the Academy of Natural Sciences and has been an advocate of environmental protection and resource conservation in Pennsylvania and around the world.

In the late 1940s, Dr. Patrick developed methods for monitoring environmental health that are now the standard for evaluating rivers and streams. Much of Dr. Patrick’s career has been spent studying the main stem of the Delaware and its tributaries and analyzing the impact of human development.

She was one of the first scientists to apply an “ecosystem approach,” using both biological and physical conditions of a river to evaluate water quality. She was the first environmental scientist to sit on the board of the DuPont Corporation. She served as an advisor on water pollution and acid rain to presidents Lyndon Johnson and Ronald Reagan.

Thomas Kerr is the former chief executive officer of Wildlands Conservancy, one of the largest organizations of its type in the state. He worked extensively with Pennsylvania and United States law makers to advance environmental legislation and to fund support for the implementation of Wildlands projects and programs.



Gerry Sechrist, Thomas Kerr, Harry Miller & Dr. Ruth Patrick

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Kerr is one of the founding board members of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association and has served on the board of the Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers. He led two countywide initiatives to pass ballot referenda to establish a total of \$67 million for open-space and park acquisition in 2002. He helped ensure the passage of the Growing Greener II environmental bond fund referendum in May 2005.

Kerr will be honored at a special awards ceremony in his home area of Allentown later in the year.

The Commission 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;
- 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; and
- 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, Edward Kissell, Rozell Stidd and Dick St. Pierre.

Ralph W. Abele served as executive director of the Pennsylvania Fish Commission from 1972 until 1987.

Harry Miller of Latrobe was recognized with the first-ever [Paul J. Mahon Access For All Award](#).

Miller helped establish the Pennsylvania Sportsmen for the Disabled organization in 1989. Harry, the president of the organization, is the western Pennsylvania spokesperson for disabled people who enjoy the outdoors. He has worked with various organizations and state and federal legislatures to gain support for the disabled.

Through a partnership with the PFBC and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Harry developed and implemented a "shoreline enhancement" program that allows disabled persons to fish from shore at Keystone State Park. He received an appreciation award from the Commission for this program. Harry also received the Working for Wildlife Award from the Pennsylvania Game Commission for his efforts on behalf of the disabled.

The Mahon Award recognizes Pennsylvania citizens or organizations that have made outstanding contributions to improving fishing and boat access to the resource for the disabled. The award also honors Mahon, of Clarks Summit, for his efforts in the field.

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Mahon served for 15 years as a Fish and Boat Commissioner (1991-2006). The hallmark of his tenure was his unflinching efforts to ensure accessibility to the waterways of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for all individuals interested in fishing and boating, regardless of physical ability.

To be eligible for the Mahon Award, potential recipients must have:

- Been personally involved in the provision of angling or boating activities that directly support the recreational needs of the disabled;
- Led a regional or statewide effort to improve access to angling and boating resources by the disabled;
- Played a lead role in the development and construction of a major facility for disabled anglers and/or boaters;
- Significantly improved or enhanced the quality of the angling and boating experience in ways that make a substantial difference for persons with a disability; and
- Worked passionately and selflessly, over an extended period of time, to improve recreational use of Pennsylvania waters on behalf of the disabled angler and boater.

Gerry Sechrist of Lemoyne, Cumberland County received the Boating Education Appreciate Award.

Sechrist, a teacher and later an aquatic instructor, assisted in adding boating safety to the Cumberland Valley School District's Aquatics Program. Gerry was instrumental in starting the West Shore School District's Boating Safety Awareness Course and the Aquatics Program. In 1998, the West Shore School District won the Boston Whaler Boating Safety Youth Program of Excellence Award.

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Session Schedule

The Senate and House return to session on January 29.

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- Apply Now for Youth Bass Anglers Conservation School July 15-19
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- \$67 Million in Water, Wastewater, Brownfields Projects Announced
- Venango County Joins PA CleanWays Growing Grassroots Network
- Household Hazardous Waste, Rain Barrel Programs by PRC in Pittsburgh
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- Philadelphia Recycling Council's Meeting to Feature Archaeology of Garbage
- Lancaster Project Recognized by EPA for Greenhouse Gas Reductions
- Commonwealth Supports Green, Mixed-Use Riverfront Project in Pittsburgh
- Nominations for First-Ever Philadelphia Sustainability Awards Due Feb. 23
- Environmental Advisory Council Conference Set for March 10
- Fish and Boat Commission Awards Boating Facilities Grants
- Public Fishing and Boating Access to Lake Erie Improved by Several Projects
- Fish and Boat Commission Files Lawsuit to Protect Public Access
- Game Commission Awards Funding for Golden Eagle, Forest Songbirds Projects
- Nearly 160 More Acres Permanently Protected by Game Commission
- March 1 Conference to Focus on Environmental Careers
- Help Wanted: Wildlands Conservancy Seeks Chief Development Officer

Opinion

- The Future Is Now on Abandoned Mine Reclamation! *By Ed Wytovich, Catawissa Creek Watershed Association*

Feature

- Hibernating, Raising Young: Pennsylvania Bears Winter Denning Activities

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Video Blog

First Restoration Project in Moutour Run Watershed a Success

The Boggs Road Mine Drainage Treatment Project was the first project undertaken by the [Montour Run Watershed Association](#) in Allegheny County and it's been an overwhelming success!

The project reduces the iron content of the mine discharge from over 80 parts per million down to just 1 or 2 ppm.

San Sattinger, past president of the Montour Run Watershed Association, and John Davidson, a former DEP mine inspector and now a volunteer,



talk about how the project was developed and how it functions.

Adam Kropf, the son of the landowner, tells how the project has improved their quality of life and the local fishing.

The project was designed by [Biomost, Inc.](#), a firm that has designed more than 230 passive treatment components of all types that are successfully treating over 1 billion gallons of water a year.

Video Blog: [Boggs Road Treatment Project, Montour Run](#)

On the Hill

On the Senate/House Agenda

While no committee meetings are scheduled on environmental bills, Rep. Vitali (D-Delaware) and Sen. Erickson (R-Delaware) have scheduled a press conference to announce legislation to deal with the climate change issue. (*See Calendar of Events*)

Governor Renominates McGinty, DiBerardinis, Wolff to Cabinet Posts

Gov. Rendell this week sent his cabinet nominations to the Senate for confirmation, including Kathleen McGinty for DEP, Michael DiBerardinis for DCNR and Dennis Wolff at Agriculture.

The Senate referred the nominations to the relevant oversight committees to hold hearings on the nominees.

The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will hold hearings on Secretary McGinty and DiBerardinis and the Senate Agriculture Committee will consider Secretary Wolff.

House Republicans Name Committee Chairs

The House Republicans named committee chairs this week, making changes to Environmental Resources and Energy and the Game and Fisheries committees, but not Agriculture.

Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) was named Republican chair of the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. He has served on the Committee before and as chair of the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee.

Rep. Sam Rohrer (R-Berks) was named Republican chair of the Game and Fisheries Committee. He served on the Committee last session.

Rep. Art Hershey (R-Chester) was again named Republican chair of the Agriculture Committee.

House Democrats [named their committee chairs](#) two weeks ago.

The individual members of the committees have yet to be named in the House.

Environmental Synopsis Features Summary of Kilbuck Township Landslide Hearing

The January issue of the [Environmental Synopsis](#) published by the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee features a summary of the Committee hearing on the Kilbuck Township landslide and other issues.

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Also featured are articles on the growth of wind energy, Great Lakes sewage management, EPA's grant process, warning shoppers about mercury in seafood and the reduction of nitrogen oxide emissions in Eastern states.

[A copy of the Environmental Synopsis is available online.](#)

The Joint Committee was chaired by Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venengo) until this week when he was named Republican Chair of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Bills Introduced

Several more House Bills were introduced this week, here's the rundown...

Flood Property Acquisitions: [House Bill 58](#) (Killion-R-Chester) An Act providing for the acquisition of property by the Commonwealth and local government units to mitigate flood hazards. *(no text available online yet)*

Recreational Access: [House Bill 74](#) (Harhart (R-Lehigh) further encouraging landowners to open their property to recreational users by providing for the liability of landowners to recreational users. *(no text available online yet)*

Historic Preservation: [House Bill 79](#) (Scavello-R-Monroe) providing for the Historic Preservation Incentive Grant Program for commercial and residential sites. *(no text available online yet)*

Note: House Bills are being introduced by members, but can't be printed until they are referred to committee. And since there are technically no House committees yet, they can't be referred.

Other News

DEP Accepting Applications for Watershed Restoration and Protection Grants

The Department of Environmental Protection this week invited community groups and watershed organizations to apply for the next round of grants under the state's [Growing Greener](#), flood protection and federal 319 programs.

The deadline to apply is April 13.

The grants can finance projects designed to clean up rivers and streams, address serious environmental problems at abandoned mines and contaminated industrial sites, enhance local recreational needs and improve quality of life for residents of the commonwealth.

"Growing Greener has provided an unprecedented investment in Pennsylvania's environmental health, and in ensuring our economic competitiveness," said Secretary McGinty. "With every new project we are bringing together the people and resources to clean up watersheds, provide new recreational opportunities and revitalize communities across the state."

In the upcoming grant round, DEP will invest in projects that address watershed impairments and protection through stream restoration; nutrient and sediment trading;

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stormwater management; and abandoned mine drainage projects that address long-term operation and maintenance challenges.

Of special interest are projects for resource recovery and innovative mine drainage treatment, as well as projects that undertake an integrated approach to water resources management at the county or watershed level.

In addition, preference will be given to projects, or several projects, that seek to restore an impaired watershed using a comprehensive approach. Projects that include private and public partnerships, promote the long term coordinated stewardship and restoration of the watershed and educate others regarding their roles in protecting the watershed and water supplies are of particular interest to the department.

Eligible projects also could include improving water quality in watersheds where streams are impaired; integrating stormwater management and flood protection into watershed management; encouraging the beneficial use of abandoned mine pool water; and watershed restoration and conservation strategies and projects that will help meet pollutant total maximum daily loads.

As part of the application process, applicants can also apply for funding through the department's Flood Protection Grant Program and the Federal Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grant Program.

Flood protection grants fund project improvements, non-routine maintenance and specialized equipment in communities that operate and maintain state and federal flood protection projects.

Section 319 grants fund development of watershed implementation plans that address nonpoint source impairments.

For more information on Growing Greener, or to receive an application package, e-mail GrowingGreener@state.pa.us , phone 717-705-5400 or visit DEP's [Growing Greener webpage](#).

Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grant Applications Due April 2

Applications for grants to restore riparian forests, wetlands, fish passage and to reduce sources of nutrient and sediment pollution are now being accepted under the [Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program](#).

Applications are due April 2.

Watershed restoration proposals that address one or more of the following priorities will be ranked highest for funding, all other things being equal:

- Restoring wetlands or forests (e.g., riparian buffers, floodplain forests) that will contribute significant improvements in habitat or water quality;
- Restoring fish passage in streams where unimpeded flow will establish significant gains in aquatic habitat for anadromous/diadromous fish;
- Reducing significant sources of nutrient and sediment loads to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, especially through developing integrated management strategies to address agricultural sources of nutrients and sediment; and
- Restoring shoreline habitat through projects that replace existing hardened (e.g., bulkheads and riprap revetments) or eroding shorelines with tidal marsh, natural bank stabilization materials, and buffer plantings.

Watershed conservation proposals that address one or more of the following priorities will be ranked highest for funding, all other things being equal:

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- Implementing a locally supported land conservation strategy to permanently protect land from development, especially forests, wetlands and lands supporting Best Management Practices such as stream buffers. Implementing low impact development practices and other innovative stormwater management practices to offset the potential water quality impacts of new development;
- Implementing social marketing campaigns focused on motivating specific conservation action(s) by a targeted audience within a particular watershed; and
- Demonstrating the economic incentives associated with conservation and pollution prevention practices to increase their rate of adoption.

Funding will be awarded through a competitive grant process to projects in the following two categories. Refer to the Grant Guidelines, below, for more information about these two categories.

Project Planning and Design – Grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 will be awarded to support project planning and design activities that set the stage for the successful implementation of watershed restoration and conservation projects, and that establish local capacity to ensure project investments can be sustained.

Implementation – Grants ranging from \$20,000 to \$200,000 will be awarded to support projects that directly lead to measurable improvements in the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Implementation grants may support watershed restoration, watershed conservation and watershed planning projects. Implementation grants will vary in size, duration and scale.

In general, smaller-scale demonstration projects will be eligible for grants in the \$20,000 to \$50,000 range. Multi-year and/or larger-scale projects will be eligible for grants in the \$50,000 to \$200,000 range.

The program is administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

For more information, visit the [Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program webpage](#).

DEP Requesting Comments on Proposed TMDLs in 6 Counties

The Department of Environmental Protection is inviting comments on proposed Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Plan in watersheds in six counties—

Mahanoy Creek Watershed, Columbia, Northumberland and Schuylkill Counties: DEP will hold a meeting on February 6 at 7:00 at the Girardville Borough Hall, Girardville. Contact: James Andrews 570-621-3118 or send email to: jameandrew@state.pa.us .

Spring Run Watershed, Elk County: DEP will hold a meeting on February 15 at 1:30 in the Knox District Mining Office, Knox to accept comments on the plan. Contact: Ed Heferle, 814-797-1191 or send email to: ehferle@state.pa.us .

Walley Run Watershed, Clarion and Forest Counties: DEP will hold a meeting on February 15 at 10:00 in the Knox District Mining Office, Knox to accept comments on the plan. Contact: Ed Heferle, 814-797-1191 or send email to: ehferle@state.pa.us .

Southwest Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Forum Feb. 9

Rural landowners and farmers are invited to the 2007 Southwest PA Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Forum on February 9 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Giannilli's II in Greensburg.

Registration forms must be postmarked by February 2.

CREP is a voluntary federal program designed to improve water quality and wildlife habitat by financially rewarding landowners for implementing conservation practices on their land. Enrollment is open to any producer or landowner with eligible marginal cropland, pastureland, or non-forested streams.

The program is administered by the U. S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency and implemented by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, in conjunction with a host of local partners, including the Department of Environmental Protection, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

The 2007 Southwest PA CREP Forum provides information for those who have never participated as well as those who are under contract. The forum will provide information about herd health; environmental and financial benefits of CREP; practice installation and maintenance questions.

Farmers and landowners will share personal experiences in the CREP program and vendors and contractors and suppliers will be on hand to provide information about their products. Local conservation agencies and experts will also be available to answer questions and provide information.

Registration is \$12 and includes morning snacks, coffee breaks and lunch.

For information about the 2007 Southwest PA CREP Forum, contact Leanne Griffith at the Westmoreland Conservation District at 724-837-5271, extension 211 or send email to: leanne@wcdpa.com .

Sustainable Agriculture Conference Feb. 1-3 in State College

The [Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture](#) will celebrate the 16th anniversary of its [Farming for the Future conference](#) February 1, 2 and 3.

Each year the annual meeting has grown in number of attendees, workshops and overall stature in the field of sustainable agriculture. In 2006, over 1,600 farmers and consumers attended the three-day conference, making it one of the largest sustainable agriculture conferences in the nation.

The theme for the 2007 Farming for the Future conference – “Cultivating Excellence: Farming to Serve the Common Good” -- was developed by PASA's all-volunteer, conference planning committee this summer.

Keynote speakers are James Kunstler, author of “The Geography of Nowhere,” Michael Ableman, farmer and author of “Fields of Plenty,” and Joel Salatin, farmer and author of “You Can Farm.”

In addition to over 100 workshops and 10 pre-conference tracks, the conference features locally-grown, organic meals, a sustainable marketplace, arts and music, and programming for youth and teens.

For more information, visit the [Farming for the Future conference webpage](#) or call 814-349-9856.

Applications Now Being Accepted for Trout Unlimited Youth Fishing Camp

Applications are now being accepted for the 12th annual [Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp](#) being held June 17-22 at the Allenberry Resort in Boiling Springs, Cumberland County, according to Camp Chairman Rod Cross.

Applications must be received by March 15.

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

“We expect to receive numerous applications once again this year,” Cross said. “It is important for students to understand that it is an honor to be chosen for this elite camp.”

According to Cross, the selection of 32 students is a rigorous process, which requires students to include an essay on why he or she wishes to attend.

“By selecting leaders in high school today, it is believed that they will be the leaders of communities for years to come,” Board Member Clark Hall said. “It is important for them to recognize the value of clean water and how it relates to every day life. The curriculum has been structured to provide the necessary foundation for that education.”

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.

According to Cross, the camp faculty includes people from various environmental fields and from state agencies such as the Fish and Boat Commission, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

“One faculty member, in particular is Dr. Robert Behnke of Colorado State University who is considered the foremost trout biologist in the world,” Cross said.

The camp is limited to 32 selected, qualified students, aged 14 to 17. The student must have been born between June 22, 1989 and June 17, 1993 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.

For more information or to receive an application, contact Mike Klimkos at 717-243-3056, or via email at klimkos@epix.net ; Rod Cross at 717-263-0365; or visit the [Fly Fishing Camp webpage](#).



Apply Now for Youth Bass Anglers Conservation School July 15-19



The [Youth Bass Anglers Conservation School](#), Pennsylvania’s unique opportunity for students 14-17 who love to fish and learn

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about warm-water fishery, will begin accepting registrations February 1.

Instruction will be offered July 15-19 on Lake Perez at the Pennsylvania State University's Stone Valley Recreation Area, Huntingdon County. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Fish and Boat Commission are sponsoring the school.

"We are proud to join this cooperative educational effort giving angling youth a solid foundation in warm-water aquatic ecosystems, their management, and how they affect black bass and bass angling," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "Participants will improve their stewardship skills, leave the school better equipped to serve as leaders in conservation, and have a heck of a lot of fun learning."

The program will include fishery biology, fisheries management, habitat improvement, boating safety, fishing skills and techniques, fish and boating law enforcement, fisheries and conservation careers and tournament angling.

Instruction is geared toward youth who already possess some basic outdoor skills and fishing experience but want to further develop those skills and learn more about bass angling.

"Research clearly shows that good, well-structured youth fishing programs like this one help kids improve their skills, so they fish more and build a greater sense of aquatic stewardship and outdoor ethics. So, not only do good youth fishing programs create better anglers, they create better citizens," said PFBC Executive Director Doug Austen.

Other school partners include the PA Bass Federation Inc., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Penn State and Marsh Creek Bass Club.

"The camp is a combination of non-stop, hands-on, fun-filled activities ranging from boat safety and basic angling skills to fish biology and habitat management," said PA Bass Federation Conservation Director Bill Reichert. "Learning fishing skills from a dozen volunteers and introduction into aquatic science by professional staff offer the students insights into opportunities to become conservation and environmental leaders."

Applicants must submit a written, one-page essay explaining: "What fishing means to me; the importance of conservation; and why I want to attend the school." A letter of recommendation is also required. Only 20 students will be selected.

As a \$125 enrollment fee will be charged upon acceptance, students are encouraged to seek organizational sponsorship through sporting, community or civic groups.

Visit the [Youth Bass Anglers Conservation School](#) or contact DCNR Bureau of State Parks Environmental Education Specialist Spring Reilly at 814-625-9369, or send email to: spreilly@state.pa.us

Students Invited to Participate in Wildlife Leadership Adventure Programs

The [Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education](#) will hold two [Wildlife Leadership Adventure Programs](#) on deer and grouse this July for students 14 – 17.

This cooperative educational initiative begins with an intensive summer residential field camp, training high school youth in a curriculum emphasizing wildlife biology, habitat, and ecosystem management in Pennsylvania. The programs will be held--

- July 9-13: Pennsylvania Bucktails (deer camp) at Raystown Field Station; and
- July 16-20: Pennsylvania Drummers (grouse camp) at Raystown Field Station.

Students will learn through hands-on field studies combined with classroom activities and labs taught by leading wildlife biologists and professionals in the state,

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representing agencies and organizations such as Audubon, Ruffed Grouse Society, Quality Deer Management Assoc., PGC, DCNR, PDA, PSU, Juniata College, Dickinson College, and more.

Following the summer field experience, PICE continues to mentor the youth throughout the year, as they engage in public outreach and service projects on wildlife and conservation issues. Students create record books, documenting their achievements and qualifying them for rewards such as outdoor trips, scholarships to return to the next field camp as an assistant leader, and college scholarships.

For more information on the program visit the [Wildlife Leadership Adventure webpage](#).

For each camp, PICE is also looking to involve four adult leaders who learn right alongside the youth, and act as the primary mentors and motivators to the youth as you all experience the program together. The Institute can provide Act 48 credits for participation.

To learn more about the Adult Leader role, please contact Gail Farmer by sending email to: gfarmer@piceweb.org or calling 610-756-3194.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

\$67 Million in Water, Wastewater, Brownfields Projects Announced

The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority announced the approval of \$67 million in grants and loans to fund water, wastewater and brownfield projects.

Most of the money -- \$62.9 million-- was in the form of low-interest loans. Combined with \$3.8 million in grants, PENNVEST will fund 11 clean water projects in nine counties.

The awards approved by PENNVEST range from a \$382,950 loan to replace an old, leaking water line for a community in Allegheny County to a \$15-million loan to expand the capacity of a wastewater treatment plant for the Sharon, Mercer County.

[A complete list of projects provided funding is available online.](#)

Venango County Joins PA CleanWays Growing Grassroots Network

[PA CleanWays](#) announced this week that Venango County has formed the newest chapter in the growing PA CleanWays network.

PA CleanWays of Venango County was developed with the support of the Venango County Regional Planning Commission and the Venango County Commissioners.

Lynn Moss will serve at the Chapter Coordinator. Lynn works for the Venango County Regional Planning Commission as a Planner and also serves as the county recycling coordinator. The chapter will be coordinating their first illegal dumpsite cleanup this spring in Oil Creek State Park.

Since 1990, PA CleanWays, its chapters and affiliates, have removed and properly disposed over 9,000 tons of trash from 614 illegal dumpsite cleanups and recycled over 1,300 tons of scrap metal from these sites. In addition, over 319,000 tires and 22,000 appliances have been properly disposed through cleanups and special collection events.

All of this was made possible through the combined efforts of more than 30,000 volunteers contributing nearly 145,000 hours of volunteer services.

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Individuals and groups interested in volunteering can contact the PA CleanWays of Venango County office at 814-432-9684.

Household Hazardous Waste, Rain Barrel Programs by PRC in Pittsburgh

The [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) and other partners will present a series of programs in the Pittsburgh area on household hazardous waste and installing rain barrels.

Household Hazardous Waste: On February 7, the Energy and Environment Program Series at [Mt. Lebanon Library](#) in Allegheny County will feature a presentation by Ginette Walker Vinski of the Pennsylvania Resources Council on non-toxic alternatives to and proper disposal of household hazardous wastes.

The program will begin at 7:00 p.m.

During the presentation, Ms. Vinski will demonstrate the use of homemade, non-toxic cleaners compared with potentially toxic cleaners found at local stores. Participants will receive a free 28-page color booklet called Hazardous Waste in the Home: How to Safeguard Your Health & the Environment and a customized spray bottle imprinted with non-toxic cleaning recipes.

To register for this event, contact Caroline Tibbetts from the Mt. Lebanon Library at 412-531-1912 or by email at tibbettsc@einetnetwork.net.

Rain Barrel Program: This workshop will help homeowners take advantage of this free source of water while at the same time contributing to improved water quality in our rivers and streams and reducing your contribution to combined sewer overflow and polluted urban runoff.

The programs will be held February 6 in [Greentree Borough](#) at 7:00 and on April 21 at the [Urban Gardener](#) at 10:30.

PRC's Watershed Awareness/Rain Barrel Workshop will demonstrate how to assemble and install a retrofitted 55-gallon drum/rain barrel, and offer other rainwater harvesting options. Participants will receive the necessary hardware to assemble and install a rain barrel for rainwater harvesting and on-site usage.

The cost is \$30 for nonmembers, \$25 for members of PRC.

For more information call 412-431-4449 x247 or send email to: Nancy Martin-Silber at nancym@ccicenter.org

Composting, Vermiculture, Solar Energy, Gardening, Frog Frolic by PRC-East

The [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) is offering a series of six different workshops at its Delaware County Environmental Living Center now through May on a variety of topics. Here are the workshops available....

Composting Workshops: Composting is nature's way of recycling. By utilizing the natural process of decomposition, organic materials often considered "waste," such as grass clippings, food scraps, autumn leaves and even paper, can be recycled back into a rich soil conditioner.

The workshops will be held: March 22, April 26 and May 22 from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

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These workshops thoroughly cover the importance of composting, setting up a compost pile, proper maintenance and ways of using finished compost. Participants will receive an Earth Machine Compost Bin with attendance. This bin, approved across the state as an ideal bin for urban and suburban areas, has an eighty-gallon capacity.

Cost: Non-member Single - \$25 Couple \$35; Member Single - \$20 Couple \$30

Worm Composting Workshop: Worm composting or vermicomposting is an effective way to recycle both food and paper waste. According to the U.S. EPA, approximately 10 percent of the waste stream is food and over 38 percent of the waste stream is paper.

The workshop will be held February 20 from 7 to 9 p.m..

These materials can be removed from the waste stream and used as resources, specifically food and bedding for a worm bin. Not only is vermicomposting valuable in reducing the waste stream, it also produces two highly marketable products: worms and castings. Red worms are marketable within the fishing industry and worm castings are for sale in many lawn and garden centers as a rich, organic soil fertilizer.

Learn about the benefits of composting with worms. It's easy, fun, odorless and produces a great soil additive! Class participants will learn how to house, feed, harvest and care for their own worms. Be prepared to roll-up your sleeves and make your own worm composting bin! Each participant or couple will be provided with a bin, instructions, and worms. You will go home with a complete, ready to use vermiculture system!

Cost: Non-member Single - \$25 Couple \$35; Member Single - \$20 Couple \$30

Solar Power Workshop: Join the solar experts from Mesa Environmental to learn the benefits of solar power. Mesa will talk about tax benefits, current grant funding for solar systems and the types of installations.

The workshop will be held February 7 at 7 p.m.

Cost: \$5

Frog Frolic Workshop: Join Neumann College Professor Mac Given on a stroll around PRC's Environmental Learning Center pond to learn about our native frogs, toads and salamanders. Listen to the frog chorus using headphones and an underwater microphone.

This is a great program for families; but wear old shoes or boots and bring a flashlight!

The workshop will be held April 18 at 7 p.m.

Cost: \$5 adults, \$3 children.

Organic Perennial Gardening Workshop: Get an overview of disease and fungal problems common in home gardens and organic alternatives. Pruning and preventative maintenance also covered.

Participants will work in PRC's organic garden.

The workshop will be held May 16 at 7 p.m.

Cost: \$5 adults, \$3 children.

Rain Barrel Workshop: This workshop will help homeowners take advantage of this free source of water while at the same time contributing to improved water quality in our rivers and streams and reducing your contribution to combined sewer overflow and polluted urban runoff.

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The workshop will be held March 28 at 7:00. Watch for more rain barrel workshops to be scheduled soon.

Cost: \$5 adult.

To register for any of these workshops, contact Sue Cochrane at 610-353-1555 ext. 232 or send email to: cochrane@prc.org.

Philadelphia Recycling Council's Meeting to Feature Archaeology of Garbage

World-renowned garbologist, William Rathje´ will give the keynote speech at the annual meeting and awards luncheon for the [Greater Philadelphia Commercial Recycling Council](#) March 9 at Temple University.

Rathje´, a professor of anthropology at the University of Arizona, is founder of "The Garbage Project" which studies the secret life of landfills. He is also co-author of "Rubbish!: The Archaeology of Garbage."

A featured workshop during the day will examine incentive-based recycling for offices and workplaces. GPCRC has been working with the support of Philadelphia-based [RecycleBank](#) to create a recycling credit program for businesses and institutions.

"As always, we're offering innovative ideas and new thinking about recycling and trash to professionals in the region," said Ed Barr, president of GPCRC. "Recycling is going to be a major component of 21st century cities. It addresses economic development issues, energy independence, climate change, and landfill shortages. Plus, smart recycling programs reduce operating costs."

Barr manages Thomas Jefferson University Hospital's nationally recognized recycling and waste reduction program that saves the healthcare institution more than \$100,000 annually.

U.S. EPA Region III administrator Don Welsh is scheduled to open the day's events with comments on his agency's [Resource Conservation Challenge](#).

Area businesses and institutions will receive recognition in a number of categories for their recycling efforts. GPCRC has commissioned members of the [Philadelphia Dumpster Divers](#) artist group to create unique awards.

Registration information and awards applications can be accessed at the [GPCRC website](#) or by calling 215-247-3090.

Lancaster Project Recognized by EPA for Greenhouse Gas Reductions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week recognized a landfill gas recovery project developed by a partnership between the Lancaster County Solid Waste Authority, Turkey Hill Dairy, Caterpillar, Inc. and PPL for its greenhouse gas reductions.

"Across the nation, EPA is helping transform landfill waste into energy wealth," said Bill Wehrum, acting assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. "We are recognizing partners who have demonstrated superior innovation and environmental achievement in advancing landfill gas energy projects."

The Authority voluntarily installed 20,000 feet of piping, tying together the collection systems of co-located landfills. Two Caterpillar 3520 engines, installed and operated by PPL and fueled by landfill gas, generate 3,200 kilowatts of electricity. Boilers

capture the heat from the engines generating steam for Turkey Hill Dairy—the well known maker of ice cream, milk, and tea products.

The project's benefits include: steam for Turkey Hill Dairy that offsets 225,000 gallons (80 percent) of the diesel fuel they did use, annual greenhouse gas reductions equivalent to planting 38,200 acres of forest, removing the emissions of 26,800 vehicles, or preventing the use of 324,900 barrels of oil, annual energy savings equate to powering 2,000 homes, and estimated emission reductions of 37,800 metric tons of carbon equivalents. The project will generate power for the next 25 years.

As a member of the Chicago Climate Exchange, the Lancaster Authority is voluntarily making a legally binding commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by six percent by 2010, using 2006 as a baseline.

The Lancaster Authority is the first public environmental services organization in the United States to become a member of the CCX—the world's first voluntary, legally binding, multi-sector market for reducing and trading greenhouse gas credits.

"PPL is committed to environmental excellence, and we're proud to be a part of this project, which is providing green energy and reducing emissions of methane, a greenhouse gas," said Steve Gabrielle, business development manager of PPL Energy Services.

EPA's Landfill Methane Outreach Program is a voluntary assistance and partnership program that reduces greenhouse gas emissions by supporting landfill gas energy project development. The program also assists countries throughout the world in developing landfill methane reduction projects through the international Methane to Markets Partnership.

"The partnership between PPL, Turkey Hill Dairies, and the Lancaster County Solid Waste Authority is a perfect example of three organizations coming together for the common good," said former Rep. Gib Armstrong (R-Lancaster).

For more information and a list of the other winners, visit the [Landfill Methane Outreach Program webpage](#).

NewsClip: [Caterpillar Joins Call for Climate Changing Pollution Standards](#)
[Montco Joins an End Run to Kyoto](#)

Commonwealth Supports Green, Mixed-Use Riverfront Project in Pittsburgh

Gov. Rendell this week announced a \$12.3 million investment from a number of state agencies in [Pittsburgh's Cultural District Riverfront Development Project](#), the nation's first master-planned, "green," mixed-use neighborhood.

"By supporting the re-birth of Pittsburgh's cultural district, we're opening the doors to a better quality of life for local residents and stirring new opportunities for the city," said Gov. Rendell. "This comprehensive and innovative effort has all the ingredients needed to create a vibrant environment that will draw attention and additional development. People will want to be here when the project is finished."

The Urban Land Institute called Pittsburgh's \$460 million Cultural District Riverfront Development project one of the most significant and ambitious urban planning efforts in the country. The project is being coordinated by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust.

A one-of-a-kind arts community, the Riverfront Development will break ground in mid-2007 and will be completed within seven-to-10 years. The project will include unique retail and art spaces, restaurants, parks, public art projects, pedestrian plazas and parking

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facilities. Plans call for seven new residential buildings, a street of townhouses, an upscale hotel and a performing arts venue.

The total cost for Phase I is expected to reach \$90 million and will result in the creation of an estimated 90 retail jobs, 20 management jobs and 1,000 construction jobs, as well as 180-220 new residential units and new retail space.

The \$12.3 million investment included:

- \$7 million in Redevelopment Assistance Capital Funds for the preparation and construction of the underground parking garage, which will serve the entire area;
- \$3 million Pennsylvania Housing and Finance Authority New Market Tax Credits, which will be used to supplement financing for both mixed-use building, including a total of 180-220 condominium units;
- \$1 million DCED Growing Greener II -- Smart Growth funds to develop both the underground garage and the two mixed-use sites;
- \$1 million DEP Growing Greener II -- Industrial Sites Reuse Program funds for site remediation of the location formerly occupied by the Duff's Building and the Pittsburgh Opera House, which will house the underground parking facility and the two mixed-use buildings; and
- \$300,000 DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program funds for building a public park space between the two mixed-use buildings.

For more information, visit the [Pittsburgh's Cultural District Riverfront Development Project website](#).

Nominations for First-Ever Philadelphia Sustainability Awards Due Feb. 23

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council and seven other regional organizations are now accepting nominations for the first-ever [Philadelphia Sustainability Awards](#).

Nominations are due February 23.

The Awards will recognize and celebrate the Philadelphia region's progress towards becoming the most sustainable city in America - today and for generations to come.

Nominees who have achieved sustainable excellence through innovative environmental practices or creative partnerships are encouraged to apply. Successful candidates will be those who solve challenges through solutions that go beyond standard or regulatory techniques, and who demonstrate a measurable impact on the Greater Philadelphia region.

The latest [SustainLane](#) survey ranked Philadelphia 8th in the nation, with particularly high scores in the areas of: transportation (tied for #2 in overall mobility), local food and agriculture (#3), and energy and climate change policy (#5).

“The Philadelphia Sustainability Awards is an opportunity to celebrate and honor our region's sustainability frontrunners, and to give them deserved recognition for their innovations, honor their leaders and challenge others to do better,” said Patrick Starr, Vice President of PEC.

Submissions will be judged by an accomplished panel of jurors, each with intimate knowledge of the Philadelphia region and/or sustainability issues. Jurors will select finalists in early March and will select winners by early April. The winners will be announced at the sustainable event of the year – a “green carpet” reception on April 26.

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Coordinating organizations include PEC, City of Philadelphia, Delaware Valley Green Building Council, PennFuture, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, The Reinvestment Fund, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, and American Institute of Architects.

Go online to [download an Award Nomination Packet](#). Contact Spencer Finch (x105) or Jessica Anderson (x101) at 215-592-7020 if you have any questions.

Environmental Advisory Council Conference Set for March 10

The [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) is hosting the annual Environmental Advisory Council Conference at the American College and the Gregg Conference Center in Bryn Mawr on March 10.

The Conference will focus on several aspects of sustainability. As usual, regional leaders and innovators who are leading the way will serve as presenters. As conference attendees will learn, “sustainability” is more than just a buzzword. It impacts our food, transportation, energy and homes.

The program kicks off with a discussion by the Union of Concerned Scientists on how global warming impacts the Northeast United States and Pennsylvania in particular. Attendees will then choose from several breakout sessions where they can learn about clean energy, sustainable agriculture practices, green buildings and using trees to manage stormwater runoff.

Also to be presented are the EAC Achievement Awards which honor excellence in community involvement, effectiveness and originality when responding to environmental concerns. Past recipients have created greenway stewardship guides for priority landscapes and organized environmental activities such as cleanups and educational guides.

For more information about the conference, contact: Jeanne Barrett-Ortiz, EAC Director 215-592-7020 x103 or send email to: jortiz@pecpa.org.

Visit the [Environmental Advisory Council Network website](#) for more information on forming your own council.

Fish and Boat Commission Awards Boating Facilities Grants

The Fish and Boat Commission this week announced it has awarded more than \$1.5 million in grants to 22 municipalities for the development, improvement or rehabilitation of public recreational boat launches.

The awards are provided through the [Boating Facilities Grant Program](#), a funding stream initiated by the PFBC to help ensure Pennsylvania’s recreational boaters are provided with the highest quality boating facilities on water bodies across the state. The program is designed for public entities that have or will have the capability to provide boat access facilities that are open and available for general public use.

[A complete list of grants awarded is available online.](#)

Public Fishing and Boating Access to Lake Erie Improved by Several Projects

The Fish and Boat Commission and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources took several actions this week that will result in improved public fishing and boating access to Lake Erie and its tributary streams.

The Commission purchased nineteen acres adjacent to Walnut Creek in Fairview Township, Erie County, totaling 19.3 acres. The properties are located south of Route 5 and north of Route 20, between Dutch and Manchester Roads.

The parcels provide more than 900 feet of frontage along Walnut Creek. Approximately 1.5 miles upstream from the mouth of the creek in an area that is already heavily used by steelhead anglers just south of the Commission's existing Walnut Creek Property.

The \$36,000 purchase will be funded from the [Lake Erie Access Improvement Program](#) with monies generated by the sale of special Lake Erie Fishing Permits.

This is the sixth acquisition funded through the Lake Erie Access Improvement Program in recent months, securing some 10,000 feet of stream and shoreline for angling purposes. Four of the projects involved pooling funds with other public entities (thereby leveraging PFBC monies) with the other two involving purchases by the agency.

In a separate announcement, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources awarded Girard Township a \$73,000 grant and the Fish and Boat Commission awarded a \$73,000 grant from the Lake Erie Access Improvement Program to purchase the George Miller property at 3320 Elk Park Road.

The low-lying land is mostly in the floodplain and contains 350-feet of stream frontage on Elk Creek, one of the largest and most popular Lake Erie tributaries for steelhead trout fishing.

“Recreational fishing gives a \$36 million boost annually to the Erie economy. So while these purchases represent a significant investment, they will also provide an equally significant return,” said PFBC Executive Director Doug Austen. “Ensuring public access for recreational fishing and boating is a major focal point for the Commission both in Erie and elsewhere in the Commonwealth.”

Fish and Boat Commission Files Lawsuit to Protect Public Access

The Fish and Commission this week filed a complaint and petition for a preliminary injunction seeking to preserve public access to Quaker Lake in Susquehanna County.

The suit seeks to preserve the only public access to Quaker Lake, a 127-acre water body that is the lone lake in Susquehanna County historically open for free public recreational use.

The Commission closed the access area at Quaker Lake last summer after an adjacent property owner claimed that a portion of it encroached upon his property and erected a fence that prevented use of the site.

“Quaker Lake is a very important resource to the anglers and boaters of the area. After a thorough review and analysis of the relevant deeds and legal research, the Fish and Boat Commission has determined that it is appropriate to take legal action to resolve this property dispute. Today's filing represents our commitment to providing public fishing and boating opportunities at Quaker Lake into the future,” said PFBC Executive Director Doug Austen.

Game Commission Awards Funding for Golden Eagle, Forest Songbirds Projects

The Game Commission this week approved two projects that will benefit migrating eastern golden eagles and forest-interior songbirds.

The projects are:

- **Assessing Conservation Needs of Eastern Golden Eagles in Pennsylvania:** This project aims to collect information on where and how eastern golden eagles migrate through Pennsylvania, and to use this data to develop statewide maps showing the relative risks migrating eagles face from the development of wind power. (National Aviary, Todd Katzner)
- **Silvicultural Impacts on Cerulean Warblers and Other Priority Forest Birds:** This project will assess how partial tree harvests in mature oak forests affect the abundance and demographic rates of Cerulean warblers and other forest-interior species, both within cuts and in adjacent uncut forestland. It remains unclear how these birds respond to partial timber harvests. (Clarion University, Charles Williams)

Funded from an allocation provided by the [State Wildlife Grant Program](#) and regional endangered species funds, administered through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Federal Aid Program, the projects will be provided a combined \$68,900.

"The Game Commission and its partners have accomplished great good for wildlife and the environment through the State Wildlife Grants Program," noted Carl G. Roe, agency executive director. "Managing Pennsylvania's wildlife is a multifaceted undertaking that becomes more challenging - and usually more expensive - with each passing year. When we can get some help, both locally and nationally, we welcome it.

"None of these projects will lead to a net reduction in the Game Fund. But they do provide a way for educational and conservation institutions to help us learn more about and better manage wildlife species of greatest conservation concern," said Roe.

The U.S. Congress has recently reauthorized the State Wildlife Grants Program in the 2006 fiscal year; Pennsylvania will receive \$1.96 million (\$1.98 in 2005).

Nearly 160 More Acres Permanently Protected by Game Commission

The Board of Game Commissioners this week approved three options that will increase the State Game Lands system by roughly 160 acres.

In Plunketts Creek Township, Lycoming County, the Board approved the purchase of 101 acres adjoining SGL 134. The parcel - 52 acres of reverting farmland, 49 forested acres - is being purchased from the David Taylor Estate, Barbours, and provides exceptional ruffed grouse, white-tailed deer and wild turkey habitat. SGL 134, which has holdings in both Lycoming and Sullivan counties, is 6,722 acres. There are no reservations on the parcel. The purchase price was \$100,000. The amount paid from the Game Fund will be limited to \$40,000.

Other funding will be provided through a previously-approved land-lease exchange with Fisher Mining and through a partnership with the state Department of Environmental Protection providing funding for environmental initiatives and projects from settlement agreements.

In Pine Grove Township, Schuylkill County, the Board approved a donation of 59 acres adjoining SGL 211. The parcel - 52 wooded and 7 farmland acres - was donated by Jean Jones of Rockville, Maryland. She placed a restriction on the tract that it could not be

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sold or transferred for 25 years from the date of the deed. The land, which provides fine habitat for wild turkeys, white-tailed deer and songbirds such as ovenbirds and worm-eating and black-throated green warblers, will augment SGL 211's 44,373 acres. The seven acres of tillable land interspersed with woodland are especially beneficial to wildlife in this area because there are few herbaceous openings found in this part of SGL 211.

In Jay Township, Elk County, the Board approved a donation of 1.1 acres adjoining SGL 311. The parcel, donated by James and Shirley Burke of Weedville, is surrounded on three sides by SGL 311 with the fourth being a township road that will provide better access. SGL 311 comprised 3,067 acres before the donation.

"The Game Commission's ability to purchase and preserve lands for wildlife and for public hunting and trapping has always been limited by rising property values and, during certain tight financial times, the limited availability of funds," said Carl G. Roe, agency executive director. "The agency's last license fee increase was in 1999, and since that time, we have made considerable cuts in the agency's budget to keep pace with inflation and to offset reduced license sales.

"For the foreseeable future, it seems likely that most of this agency's land acquisitions will be tempered by the availability of escrowed funds, assistance from conservation partners and property donations. We'd like to do more, but it's a financial impossibility," said Roe.

In addition to relying on the agency's land purchase escrow funds, Roe noted that the agency has maximized land acquisition efforts by working closely with conservation partners, such as the various land conservancies.

"Conservation-minded individuals and organizations are helping the Game Commission leave a legacy for all Pennsylvanians to admire," Roe said.

For more information on how to contribute either land or money, visit the Game Commission's [Wildlife Donations webpage](#).

March 1 Conference to Focus on Environmental Careers

Environmental professionals and students pursuing environmental careers are encouraged to attend the [Society of Women Environmental Professionals](#) Capital Chapter's second annual "[Making Environmental Connections](#)" conference on March 1.

The conference will be held at Harrisburg Area Community College C. Ted Lick Wildwood Conference Center from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., .

The conference will provide attendees an opportunity to learn about emerging environmental issues, to network with other environmental professionals, and to mentor local college students interested in becoming environmental specialists.

Panel discussions by industry leaders on current environmental topics such as water quality, biofuels, conservation and open space corridors, and global warming are planned. A student mentoring luncheon and sponsorship exhibits will also be included. Joanne Denworth from Governor Rendell's Office of Policy will deliver the keynote address.

For more information, including registration materials, please visit the "[Making Environmental Connections](#)" or e-mail Bev Reinhold at breinhold@state.pa.us .

Help Wanted: Wildlands Conservancy Seeks Chief Development Officer

The [Wildlands Conservancy](#) is seeking a chief development officer who will be responsible for the planning, implementation and oversight of an advancement program that secures significant financial support from foundations, governments, corporations and individuals.

The candidate should hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in marketing, communication, public administration or a related field and have five to 10 years experience in fundraising, possessing a working knowledge of major gifts giving, capital campaign formation and execution, and planned and estate giving. CFRE or ACFRE preferred. A general knowledge of environmental issues would be a plus.

Send resume to: CDO Search Committee, Wildlands Conservancy, 3701 Orchid Place, Emmaus, PA 18049

Opinion

The Future Is Now on Abandoned Mine Reclamation!

By Ed Wytovich

Catawissa Creek Watershed Association



I first wish to thank and congratulate all of the people who worked so hard to get passage of the new federal Abandoned Mine Land Bill. Well done!

It is now time to plan how to best spend the money so that greatest safety and environmental improvements can be gotten from the money spent.

Priority one projects, those that pose the biggest danger to human health and well being should of course be prioritized and

tackled first. While doing so I would like to see a more “holistic” or watershed approach be applied, not only to priority one projects but all projects.

Remember the caveat, “whatever we do to the land we do to the water.” With this in mind, I ask that a long, hard look be taken downstream to see what impacts or benefits a particular project will have on a watershed and how, while treating the obvious problem, can we also enhance downstream benefits.

This type of approach should give us the biggest environmental bang for the buck.

Every effort should be made to eliminate the infiltration of entire streams into old mine workings. This will have several benefits. It will eliminate openings into abandoned mines, thereby reducing a safety threat, it will reduce the amount of Abandoned Mine Drainage that will have to be treated and by reducing the amount of AMD also reduce the size needed for future AMD treatment systems.

Over the long run I feel that putting streams back onto the surface will also prove to be very cost effective as it should reduce costs of installing AMD treatment systems and also reduce long term operation and maintenance costs for these systems.

Whenever and wherever possible, wetlands should be created as part of reclamation efforts. These wetlands will not only provide habitat for wildlife but should also be designed to help reduce the impact of stormwater events, even if this means that some water may infiltrate old workings.

Even though such infiltration may seem counter to what I said previously, I feel that we can plan for the treatment of additional AMD from such infiltration and reduce potential downstream flood events.

When planning AML reclamation I suggest that every opportunity to increase the fertility of the “soil” be taken, especially the use of waste organic by products. By doing so, we can help mitigate the effects of greenhouse gasses by planning for the sequestration of carbon. Perhaps it is even possible to realize some carbon sequestration credits for such work.

Finally, I strongly urge greater cooperation between all parties, whether they be government agencies, the landowners, and local groups such as watershed organizations.

By partnering in such projects I feel that we can capitalize on the synergy of partnerships and sharing of information.

Ed Wytovich is president of the Catawissa Creek Watershed Association, president of the [Eastern Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#), the winner of the 2006 Chevron Conservation Award and the Governor’s Award for Watershed Stewardship. He can be contacted by sending email to: crickguy@ptd.net .

Video Blog: [Ed Wytovich Talks About Watershed Restoration, Partnership](#)

Feature

Hybernating, Raising Young: Pennsylvania Bears Winter Denning Activities

Unlike all other wildlife, early January marks the time when [Pennsylvania's black bears](#) are giving birth to their young, which weigh less than one-half pound, according to the Game Commission.



"Despite the time of year, survival of these newborns is relatively high, and a litter can range in size from one to five, with the average being three," said Mark Ternent, Game Commission bear biologist. "Amazingly, this entire process occurs while bears are in hibernation.

"In Pennsylvania, bears den up and become dormant during the winter. Females, which will be producing cubs, may begin hibernating as early as mid-November. Hibernating bears, unlike other hibernating wildlife, are awake and aware of their surroundings, but usually will not leave a den site until spring. Body temperature, respiration and heart rate might decline, but not noticeably. They do not urinate or defecate while dormant.

At the time cubs are born, females will groom their cubs daily, so hibernation for bears is more like a prolonged rest than a deep sleep that is common of other hibernators, such as woodchucks or chipmunks."

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Ternent noted that, on warm, winter days, male bears may emerge from a den and even move around, but they will return to a den. He said that these activity bouts are not actually foraging trips.

"In rare instances, where food sources are readily available, a bear may visit the food, but it is usually only temporary," he said.

Pennsylvania's black bears -- numbering nearly 15,000 -- are powerfully-built animals. Most adult bears weigh between 140 to 400 pounds, but rare individuals may exceed 800 pounds. Extremely agile for their size, bears can reach speeds of 30 miles per hour, can climb easily and swim well. Mainly nocturnal, bears sometimes feed and travel by day.

In late winter, February through mid-March, the Game Commission will use telemetry equipment to locate dens of radio-collared female bears. Then, armed with tranquilizers, agency biologists and Wildlife Conservation Officers will gather data about the adult bear, as well as the cubs.

"After sedating the adult, we weigh it, check its radio collar and ear tags and replace them if necessary, and then place ear tags on each of the cubs," Ternent said. "Once the data collection is complete, we return the female and its cubs to the den, and leave the area. Den visits are necessary to monitor bear reproduction levels in Pennsylvania."

In spring, when the bears leave the den, the female continues to protect the cubs, sending them up trees if danger threatens. By fall, cubs weigh between 60 and 100 pounds and, in most cases, despite their ability to survive on their own, den with the adult female for their first winter before separating the following summer.

For more information, visit the Game Commission's [black bears webpage](#). The page also features a series of online videos of adult and young bears.

Quick Clips

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

[Electric Rate Plan Discussed to Encourage Conservation](#)

[Duquesne Light Wants 9% Rate Increase](#)

[PPL to File for Increase in Distribution Rate](#)

[Bats and Turbines Could Share Space](#)

[Farm Couple Make Friends with Flying Insect Eaters](#)

[Bush Energy Focus Could Juice Up Region](#)

[EPA Helps Farmers Turn Livestock Waste Into Wealth](#)

[Oil, Gas Drilling Called Out of Control](#)

[Penn State Environmental Stewardship Initiatives](#)

[Reducing Pollution, One Gift At a Time](#)

[New Downtowns Are in the Burbs](#)

[Rethinking Chesco's Sense of Place](#)

[Going Native: A Fresh Approach is Growing Locally \(Philadelphia\)](#)

[Farm Preservation is Montco's Passion](#)

[Lancaster Farmland Preservation Funding Likely to Drop in 2007](#)

[Franklin County Officials Unveil Open Space Plan](#)

[Court Dismisses 3rd Challenge to Local Farming Restrictions](#)

[On the Three Rivers Heritage Trail](#)
[In PA Anthracite Country, Subsidence Nothing New](#)
[Blair County Ozone Level Improving](#)
[Game Commission Hears Protests About Ban on Kids Hunting Deer](#)
[Deer Hunts: Longer Day Advances](#)
[Outdoors: Unusual Birds Seen in Warm Winter](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[The Next Page: Spelling Out the Story of Pittsburgh's Waterways](#)
[Creek Creatures Leave Their Marks in the Sand](#)
[Forum: Wildlands Conservancy Sets Goals for Future](#)
[Stream, River Work Needed Because of Flood in Berks County](#)
[Williamsport Approves Nutrient Reduction Study](#)
[Federal Program May Have Been Too Ambitious](#)
[Tunkhannock and Bowmans Creek Watersheds May Need New Vision](#)
[\\$3.4 Million to Replace Water Supplies Affected by Abandoned Mine](#)
[Funding Pushed for Pittsburgh River Projects](#)
[Op-Ed: Fulfilling the Promise of the Philadelphia Waterfront](#)

Regulations

The Environmental Quality Board published notice it has [accepted a petition](#) to limit diesel engine idling for study and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission [published comments](#) on the PUC Alternative Energy Portfolio regulations.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – January 27, 2007](#)

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 Environmental Protection [published notices](#) extending the comment periods on several proposed policies covering combined sewer overflows and medical x-ray equipment, a proposed [Residual and Municipal Waste Composting General Permit](#),

Draft: DEP ID: 291-3350-001 Monitoring and Reporting Methodology for Individuals Occupationally Exposed to Medical X-rays While Wearing Protective Apparel. Notice extending the public comment to February 26.

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Draft: DEP ID: 291-4200-001. Medical X-ray Procedures Operator Training Guide. Notice extending public comment to February 26.

Draft: DEP ID: 385-2000-011. Pennsylvania Combined Sewer Overflow Policy. Notice extending public comment to February 28.

[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](#)

- **February 2** – Groundhog Day. Live coverage on PCN begins at 6:00 a.m.
- **February 6** – Gov. Rendell’s Budget Address
- **February 7** – [PA Energy Development Authority board meeting](#). Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **February 8** – Sewage Task Force, Joint Conservation Committee. Penn Stater, State College. 10:00.
- **February 9** – DEP [Storage Tank Advisory Committee](#) Financial Responsibility and Certification Subcommittee meeting. 14th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. Harrisburg. 10:00.
- **February 14** - House Appropriations Committee – Presentation of budget needs by House members. 9:00.
- **February 15** - House Appropriations Committee – Presentation of budget needs by House members (if needed). Majority Caucus Room. 9:00.
- **February 15** – Legislative Forestry Task Force Meeting, Joint Conservation Committee. Penn Stater Conference Center, State College. 10:00.
- **February 26** - Senate Appropriations Committee - Dept. of Revenue (1:15). Hearing Room 1, North Office.
- **February 27** - House Appropriations Committee – PA Emergency Management Agency (11:30). Majority Caucus Room.
- **February 28** - Senate Appropriations Committee - Budget Secretary (3:00). Hearing Room 1, North Office.
- **February 28** - House Appropriations Committee – Public Utility Commission (9:00), Dept. of Community and Economic Development (10:00). Majority Caucus Room.
- **March 1** - Senate Appropriations Committee - Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (9:00). Hearing Room 1, North Office.
- **March 3** – [Schuylkill Watershed Congress](#). Montgomery County Community College, Pottstown.
- **March 5** - House Appropriations Committee – Dept. of Environmental Protection (1:30), Dept. of Agriculture (3:00). Majority Caucus Room.

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- **March 6** - Senate Appropriations Committee - Dept. of Transportation (9:00). Hearing Room 1, North Office.
- **March 6** - House Appropriations Committee – PA Economy League on Transportation Funding (10:00), Dept. of Transportation (2:00). Majority Caucus Room.
- **March 7** - Senate Appropriations Committee - Dept. of Community and Economic Development (1:15). Hearing Room 1, North Office.
- **March 7** – House Appropriations Committee – Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources (3:00). Majority Caucus Room.
- **March 8** - Senate Appropriations Committee- Dept. of Agriculture (9:00), Public Utility Commission (10:30), Dept. of Environmental Protection (1:15). Hearing Room 1, North Office.
- **March 18-20:** [Governor’s Outdoor Conference](#). State College.
- **April 5-6:** [Preparing for the Storm: Stormwater Solutions for PA Communities](#). State College.
- **April 13-15:** [PA Assn. Environmental Educators “No Child Left Inside” Conference](#). Wilkes-Baree.
- **April 27-28:** West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium III. Genetti Hotel. Williamsport. Contact: Amy Wolfe at 570-726-3118 or send email to: awolfe@tu.org .
Video Blog: [Amy Wolfe Talks About Restoring the West Branch](#).

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#) (courtesy [PA Organization for Watersheds & Rivers](#))

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

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Send your stories about environmental issues, programs and positive actions to [PA Environment Digest](#) - DHess@CrisciAssociates.com or go to www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com .

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

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