



PA Environment Digest

An Update On Environmental Issues In PA

Edited By: David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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DEP Awards 73 Grants to Protect, Improve Watersheds, But Growing Greener Is Broke

The Department of Environmental Protection announced Friday it will invest in 73 watershed protection projects intended to improve watersheds, stormwater runoff, acid mine drainage and educational programs, among other environmental efforts.

This year, the [Growing Greener Program](#), which is funded by the Environmental Stewardship Fund, will award \$9.72 million for 57 projects around the state.

The Growing Greener Program is now all but bankrupt and the program needs to be refunded. The Marcellus Shale drilling impact fee bills now pending in the General Assembly and a potential transfer from the DCNR Oil and Gas Fund are the best possibilities to see the program continue. Visit the [Renew Growing Greener Coalition](#) website for more information.

An additional project, funded by the Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Grant, will cost \$72,912. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program, which was created through the federal Clean Water Act to help reduce water pollution from nonpoint sources, is funding 15 additional projects, which would total \$3.12 million.

"We are delighted to provide support to local communities and watershed groups to fund projects that enhance and protect Pennsylvania's water quality," DEP Secretary Mike Krancer said. "That includes projects that address abandoned mine drainage, stream bank restoration, stormwater reductions and agricultural runoff."

These projects will reduce nonpoint source pollution in watersheds where streams are impaired by implementing agricultural and stormwater best-management practices; developing, repairing or installing passive systems to treat abandoned mine drainage; and supporting the establishment of riparian buffers, among other goals.

One of the Growing Greener program's goals is to invest in projects that protect watersheds from impairment due to nonpoint source pollution or those that will restore damaged waterways.

Some examples of priority areas are restoration activities to reduce pollutant load in impaired watersheds for which total maximum daily loads have been developed; projects in priority watersheds that would reduce the source of impairment; and priority activities that lead to water quality restoration and protection.

In this latest grant round, 130 applicants request about \$24.5 million. Applications came from counties, authorities and other municipalities; county conservation districts; councils of governments; watershed organizations that promote local watershed conservation efforts; and other authorized organizations involved in restoring and protecting the environment.

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

For more information on Growing Greener or to see the complete list of grant recipients, send email to: GrowingGreener@pa.gov, call 717-705-4500 or visit DEP's [Growing Greener](#) webpage.

NewsClips: [DEP Invests In 73 Watershed Protection Projects](#)
[Dozens Of Grants Got To Remedy Stormwater, Acid Mine Drainage](#)