

# —PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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## **Governor's Environmental Budget Highlights Dam Repairs, Floodplain Mitigation**

Gov. Rendell is again pushing several tax increases and more borrowing to get the new programs he wants enacted as part of the [\\$28.3 billion state spending plan](#) he announced this week. New taxes are proposed for his health care plan, his Energy Independence Strategy and for a new economic stimulus plan that includes a new program for dam repairs and flood mitigation project funded by a tax on residential and commercial insurance premiums.

At the same time he called for an [economic stimulus plan](#), the Governor said Pennsylvania's economy remains strong. "Our revenues remain stable so far this fiscal year and we have a record-high job count at 5.8 million. But there are storm clouds in the national economic forecast and we need to continue working together now to ensure residents and businesses can weather any storm."

Overall, the Governor's proposed budget increases spending by 4.2 percent, or \$1.1 billion more than last year, to pay for proposed increases in education spending (\$291 million), a new short-term economic stimulus package and paying for the increasing costs of the Department of Corrections and medical assistance.

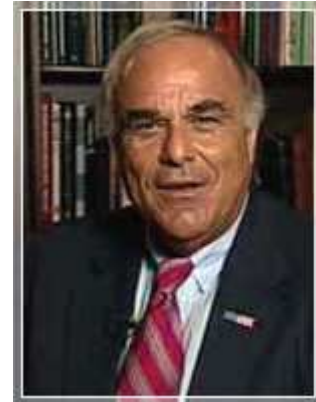
The Governor is projecting a \$427 million surplus by the end of the fiscal year that he would use to pay for parts of his proposal.

In renewing his call for action on his \$850 million Energy Independence Initiative, the Governor is again supporting a new tax on electricity for residential and commercial to pay for the new borrowing, but said he would consider alternatives.

Neither the Democratically-controlled House nor the Republican-controlled Senate has voted to support the tax increases needed to adopt this proposal over the last year. In fact, Senate Republicans and House Democrats have agreed not to support the new fee proposed by the Governor, instead relying on increasing revenue in the Utilities Gross Receipts Tax which was amended into [Special Session House Bill 1](#) (DePasquale-D-York) this week in the House.

The Governor asked again for the General Assembly to approve his [PennFuels proposal](#) that would require the use of one billion gallons of bio-fuels by 2017.

The Governor said he supported a change in the proposal to require a significant percent of ethanol made from sources of cellulose, like switchgrass, forest and agricultural waste, instead of corn.



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“It doesn't take much imagination to see Pennsylvania's energy economy booming when we become to cellulosic ethanol what Iowa has been to corn-based ethanol,” said the Governor.

He did acknowledge that [in December the federal government](#) adopted a six-fold increase in the use of bio-fuels as part of a national mandate for increasing the use of renewable fuels. (*See separate article- Biofuels Could Nearly Double Greenhouse Gas Emissions*)

Gov. Rendell's proposed [economic stimulus plan](#) includes quick passage of an additional \$750 million in Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, or RACP, funding to jump start \$1.5 billion in community and economic development projects.

The plan also includes a proposed [Rebuilding Pennsylvania](#) proposal that would fund the repair of 1,000 bridges and all state-owned high-hazard dams and help for local governments to repair their dams

Funding for dam repairs and flood mitigation projects would be paid for by a new tax on homeowner and business property insurance policies. In defending this new tax, the Governor called one [KDKA reporter](#) “nuts” for calling it a tax and told the [Post-Gazette](#) it was not a tax it was an “avoidance of debt.”

**NewsClips:** [Editorial: Sewers Ought to be Part of Rendell's Plan](#)  
[In Budget Proposal, Rendell Revisits Familiar Themes](#)  
[Millions for Bridges, Dams in Rendell Budget Plan](#)  
[Insurance Fee Tax Would Fight Flooding](#)  
[Governor Touts Flood Prevention Program](#)  
[Gov. Rendell Calls for Plan to Rebuild Pennsylvania](#)  
[Op-Ed: Much of State's Infrastructure Crisis is Hidden](#)  
[Rendell Unveils \\$28.3 Billion Budget](#)  
[Rendell Announces “Tight” State Budget](#)  
[Rendell Plan Gives \\$400 to Low-Income Families](#)  
[Rendell Presents Proposal to Boost State Economy](#)  
[Budget Would Attack Education Spending Shortfall](#)  
[State Budget Recycles Energy Program That Failed Last Year](#)  
[Budget Battle Tests Rendell's Clout](#)  
[Rendell to Ask for More Funding for Police](#)  
[House Republicans Preparing for a Battle Over Budget](#)  
[Rendell Urged to Ease Business Tax Burdens](#)  
[Rendell to Push on Health Insurance](#)  
[John Baer: State Budget Tug of War Starts with Big Ideas](#)

**Links:** [Governor's Budget Documents and Summaries](#)  
[Governor Previews Budget Initiatives – Presentation Slides](#)  
[House Democratic Budget Summary](#)  
[House Republican Budget Summary](#)  
[Budget Spreadsheet 08-09](#)

**Individual Environmental Agencies Show Mixed Budget Results**

Looking at individual budget requests for environmental agencies shows mixed budget results, but funds are still being diverted from watershed cleanup and abandoned mine reclamation projects to pay \$29.2 million in debt service for Growing Greener II bonds.

Watershed and mine reclamation groups are also concerned that federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation monies they fought so hard for in the U.S. Congress at the end of 2006 will not be shared with local watershed groups to do mine reclamation work. (See [Post-Gazette 2/10/08](#))

Here’s a quick summary of several key state environmental agencies—

**Department of Environmental Protection -----**

The proposed [Rebuild PA initiative](#) for dam and flood prevention projects would bring \$2.7 million in new funds to DEP and an increase of nine in the agency’s complement.

Overall there was a slight increase in DEP’s budget to \$694.5 million for 2008-09, it was \$692.4 in 2007-08 and \$728.2 million in 2002-03.

Increases in the budget--

- \$3,800,000 Environmental Stewardship Watershed Grants\*
- \$3,000,000 Flood Control Projects
- \$1,000,000 Recycling Fund Expenditures

\*this is slightly higher because funds were not proposed to be diverted to finance the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program like they were other years, but \$29.2 million is being diverted from the Environmental Stewardship Fund to pay debt service on Growing Greener II bonds.

Decreases in the budget include—

- \$500,000 County Conservation Districts
- \$874,000 Nutrient Management Fund
- \$500,000 Susquehanna River Basin Commission
- \$400,000 Delaware River Basin Commission
- \$750,000 Black Fly Spraying (without a loss of service DEP said)

**Department of Conservation and Natural Resources -----**

The overall budget of DCNR increased to \$417.4 million for 2008-09 from \$405 million in 2007-08 and was \$322.9 million in 2002-03.

Increases include—

- \$2,800,000 Community Conservation Grants Program
- \$2,400,000 Rebuilding PA floodplain mapping initiative
- \$2,017,000 State Forest Operations
- \$2,066,000 Keystone, Recreation, Parks and Conservation Fund
- \$1,723,000 Grants for Local Recreation
- \$ 689,000 Grants for Land Trusts

**Department of Agriculture -----**

The overall budget decreased to \$263.2 million in 2008-09 from \$284.3 million in 2007-08 and it was \$274.3 million in 2002-03.

Decreases include—

\$500,000 County Conservation Districts

\$500,000 Nutrient Management Fund

**Fish & Boat Commission -----**

The overall budget increased to \$64.5 million in 2008-09 from \$62.6 million in 2007-08.

**Game Commission -----**

The overall budget increased to \$89.2 million in 2008-09 from \$87.8 million in 2007-08.

- Links:** [Governor’s Budget Documents and Summaries](#)  
[Governor Previews Budget Initiatives – Presentation Slides](#)  
[House Democratic Budget Summary](#)  
[House Republican Budget Summary](#)  
[Budget Spreadsheet 08-09](#)

**Chesapeake Bay Foundation Urges Environment Be Given More Priority**

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation set letters to all members of the Senate and House and to Gov. Rendell urging Pennsylvania’s political leadership to make the environment more of a legislative priority, in particular the cleanup of our rivers and streams.

CBF noted that farmers, wastewater treatment plants, conservation districts and environmental agencies are not only facing significant challenges in meeting state and federal mandates to cleanup our waterways, but the production of biofuels will put additional strains on conservation programs.

CBF intends to work with all parties and its partners to provide the financial resources to meet these challenges.

The text of the letter follows--

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and over these past four decades, CBF has worked tirelessly with the agriculture community, wastewater treatment plant owners, state and federal governments and citizens to cleanup our waterways right here in Pennsylvania in order to restore the Chesapeake Bay and its many tributaries. We thank you for your support.

All of us can be proud of the many public and private actions taken by Pennsylvanians to protect our water resources, but we cannot ignore that serious challenges lie ahead. With the Chesapeake Tributary Strategy deadline for implementation just around the corner, and state and federal mandates to clean up our rivers and streams in place, we have much work to accomplish.

**Conservation Help for Farmers**

Fortunately, we can build on recent and important successes. Last year, thanks to your support and leadership, Pennsylvania enacted the Resource Enhancement and

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Protection Act (REAP) program, a new tax credit program and the first of its kind in the country, to help farmers install conservation practices on their farms.

The demand for REAP tax credits surpassed all expectations; in fact, it was so great that the entire \$10 million in credits was gone in the first 10 days of the enrollment period for projects in 50 counties across the Commonwealth.

It is true that we reap what we sow; those \$10 million in state credits leveraged another almost \$10 million in private investment by farmers.

REAP provides an effective and efficient program to deliver needed conservation practices and from this first year we know the demand is there for many more projects. CBF looks forward to working with state leaders to expand this program to \$50 million in this year's budget to meet the demand of the agricultural community to help protect Pennsylvania's clean water.

### **Help to Pay for Sewage Treatment Upgrades**

In addition to finding innovative ways to help promote farm conservation, Pennsylvania needs to find ways to meet the federal Clean Water Act's required nutrient limits for sewage treatment plants.

While there is disagreement over the estimated total cost for compliance, there is no disagreement that meeting the Chesapeake Bay nutrient limits will impose a significant financial burden upon municipalities. By closing the existing funding gap that currently precludes many of Pennsylvania's municipalities from moving forward on these projects, Pennsylvania can protect rate payers from absorbing the high cost of the necessary "green infrastructure" upgrades required to meet existing permit limits.

We must include, as a budget priority, significant state funding in this year's budget so wastewater treatment plants can comply with federal Clean Water Act requirements.

### **Help for Conservation Districts**

The effectiveness of REAP, Growing Greener Watershed Grants and other similar programs is significantly threatened by severe cuts to Conservation District funding as proposed in this year's budget request. Fully staffed and operational Conservations Districts are essential to effective delivery of conservation programs, particularly to our agricultural community.

These cuts to conservation districts are more significant as the Commonwealth seeks to encourage the use of "home-grown" biofuels by planting more corn and soybeans. Last year alone more than 100,000 more acres of corn were planted in the state putting a higher demand on farm conservation assistance programs.

General cuts to the budgets for the departments of Environmental Protection and Agriculture are also of concern. The overall budget for DEP has been significantly reduced in recent years, as has the department's overall staff capacity. These funding cuts, in addition to federal funding cuts, hamper Pennsylvania's ability to provide critical services and to support Pennsylvania's citizens and businesses in their stewardship of natural resources. Without strong and fiscally empowered agencies, the health of our communities and natural resources will inevitably be compromised.

There is no doubt that the steps we have taken so far are critical to our progress toward cleaning up our rivers and streams here in Pennsylvania and paramount for future improvement in the health of the Chesapeake Bay, but we have a long way to go.

The impairment of our rivers, streams and the Bay is much more than an environmental issue. The health of these resources relates to the health of our

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communities, the well-being of our citizens, the vitality of our economy, and directly or indirectly, the livelihood of the 17 million people who live in our region.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues in the coming year to ensure that Pennsylvania is doing everything possible to protect its precious natural resources.

### **County Conservation Districts Concerned with Gov. Rendell's Proposed Budget**

The [Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts](#) expressed its disappointment and frustration concerning Gov. Rendell's 2008-2009 fiscal budget proposal, which cuts soil and water conservation funding by \$950,000 from last year's final appropriation.

Pennsylvania's 66 conservation districts throughout the Commonwealth implement many programs and services to protect water, soil and other resources. Several programs local conservation districts implement include erosion and sedimentation control, watershed protection, and abandoned mine reclamation.

In light of Pennsylvania's interest in becoming a national leader in renewable energy production, it is imperative the Rendell administration and the state legislature provide the necessary technical assistance funding to properly produce and consume renewable energy in an environmentally sound manner. New technologies are being developed that utilize combustion, anaerobic digestion and gasification to generate energy from manure and other feedstocks.

Appropriate funding must become available to the conservation districts as they expand their technical assistance capacity commensurate with the development of biofuel and alternative energy production while also protecting soil, water, and air resources.

Susan Marquart, PACD Executive Director stated, "We will be working with members of the General Assembly not only to restore the funding for conservation districts, but to increase the state financial support so conservation districts can begin to assist landowners, renewable energy businesses, and the agricultural community who make the commitment to produce renewable energy in an environmentally safe manner."

In conjunction with increased funding for the conservation districts, PACD is advocating additional funding for the Department of Agriculture's Nutrient Management Fund. The Governor's budget proposal does not increase the fund, currently at \$3.28 million, even though the Pennsylvania is striving to meet the challenges of nutrient reductions in the Commonwealth's waters.

Larry Kehl, PACD president said, "The Nutrient Management Fund is vital to reducing nutrients in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and all other PA waterways. Without increased appropriations to this fund, our abilities to reduce nutrients in PA surface water will be severely hindered."

In the coming months, PACD plans on talking to members of the PA General Assembly and requesting the formulation of a budget document more accurately reflecting the environmental concerns in the Commonwealth.

### **PA Farm Bureau Concerned About Budget Cuts to Vital Programs**

[Pennsylvania Farm Bureau](#) said that Gov. Rendell's proposed Fiscal Year 2008-2009 state budget restores critical funding to help farmers acquire crop insurance, but continues the trend of funding cuts which impact agriculture, particularly for environmental programs.

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“Proposed funding for several key programs that directly reaches farmers and their fields have been cut for the second year in a row,” said PFB President Carl T. Shaffer.

Gov. Rendell’s budget plan does respond to one top concern of Farm Bureau by restoring \$1.5 million in support for Crop Insurance, taking it to the \$3 million level of two years ago.

However, the budget proposal recommends reductions to state Conservation Districts, cuts to the Ag Excellence Programs and reductions in Agriculture Research administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

In addition, funding for the Nutrient Management Fund remains stagnant, despite the importance of the program which provides technical assistance to farmers through loans, loan guarantees and grants to help implement environmental measures. PFB is seeking more than \$1.7 million in additional funding compared to the amount proposed in the budget.

Conservation districts, which face a reduction in funding of 33 percent over the past two years, help provide farmers with needed technical assistance in meeting increased regulatory burdens imposed on agriculture and in helping farmers meet nutrient and sediment reduction goals in the Chesapeake Bay.

The Governor’s proposal is more than \$1.5 million less than the amount PFB is seeking for conservation districts.

Cuts in Agricultural Research and Agricultural Extension programs concern Pennsylvania farmers, who often benefit through increased productivity and income. Agricultural research and extension programs also help advance environmental measures and alternative energy production. A 30 percent cut is proposed in the agricultural research budget for the Department of Agriculture, compared to two years ago.

In addition, Penn State University faces proposed cuts of more than \$500,000 in agricultural research and nearly \$600,000 in agricultural extension appropriations compared to last year.

“Pennsylvania needs to maintain its investment in agriculture so it can continue to benefit consumers and the state economy, while insuring we don’t fall behind other states,” added Shaffer.

Farm Bureau noted that the Governor’s proposal is just the beginning of the budget process and not the end. “Pennsylvania Farm Bureau will work with Gov. Rendell and the General Assembly to assure that the essential needs of Pennsylvania farmers are addressed,” concluded Shaffer.

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- Chesapeake Bay Cleanup, Appalachian Trail Bills OK’d by Senate Committee



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- House Environmental Committee Takes Comments on Extending Electric Rate Caps

### Other News

- Eastern Sports & Outdoor Show Salutes 10 “Heroes of Green,” 6 From PA
- PEC Accepting Nominations for 2008 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards
- Game Commission Launches Second Round of Deer Management Open Houses
- Wildlife For Everyone Foundation Buys Excavator to Assist with Habitat Restoration
- DEP Invites Comments on TMDL Plans in 5 Watersheds, in 5 Counties
- Schuylkill River Heritage Area Offers Mini-Grants, Regular Grants
- Watershed Group to Sponsor "Cabin Fever" Stream Cleanup February 16
- Students Invited to Apply for PA CleanWays' Sue Wiseman Scholarship
- Rohm and Haas Implements Strategic Sustainable Development Practices
- EPA Calculator Puts Greenhouse Gas Savings in Everyday Terms
- Biofuels Could Nearly Double Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Wind Turbines, Important Bird Areas and Wildlife Program February 21
- Great Backyard Bird Count Begins February 15
- Student Write On! Wetlands Challenge, the Illustrator's Challenge
- Audubon PA Sponsors 1st Annual Educators Birding Seminar May 17 & 18

### Spotlight

- National Geographic Channel Program Re-Lives Quecreek Mine Rescue
- Trout Are Thriving at the Cathedral School in Harrisburg, *By Cyndi Camp, Doc Fritchey Chapter – Trout Unlimited*

### Feature

- People Don't See “Seagulls,” *By Joe Kosack, Game Commission*

### Grants & Awards

[Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

## On the Hill

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### Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to voting session the week of February 11. The Senate will be in session February 11, 12, the House February 11, 12, 13 and **added 14**.

You can watch the [Senate Floor Session](#) and [House Floor Session](#) live online.

### On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House published committee schedules and floor Calendars for the week of February 11—

### Calendars



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**House (February 11):** [House Bill 1742](#) (Pashinski-D-Luzerne) the Scrap Material Theft Prevention Act; [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate gas and energy prices; [House Resolution 518](#) (Petroni-D-Allegheny) commemorating the life and contributions of Lady Bird Johnson for her leadership role in preserving its natural beauty.

**Senate (February 11):** [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) making the first comprehensive revisions to the Bituminous Coal Mine Safety Act in 45 years; [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to take steps to protect the Appalachian Trail; [House Bill 1329](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) further providing for appeals and challenges to zoning ordinances; [House Bill 1330](#) (Kessler) further providing for appeals from official maps and local development ordinances; [Senate Bill 1096](#) (Gordner-R-Columbia) providing for the disposition of fines for trespass in an account reserved for snowmobiles and ATVs; [Senate Resolution 224](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the cost for wastewater treatment plants to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy.

### Committees

**House:** the Appropriations holds an informational meeting with the Secretary of the Budget on [House Bill 2230](#) (Evans-D-Philadelphia) establishing the Protecting PA's Progress Program and [House Bill 2231](#) (Evans-D-Philadelphia) increasing the debt ceiling for redevelopment assistance capital projects; the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee holds a hearing on [Special Session House Bill 54](#) (George-D-Clearfield) extending the cap on electric rates beyond 2010; the Game and Fisheries Committee meets for a presentation on the Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commissions annual reports.

**Senate:** the Game and Fisheries Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1214](#) (Surra-D-Elk) changing the terms of Game Commissioners from eight to four years; the Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1264](#) (Boscola-D-Lehigh) providing for geologists in training; the Finance Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1248](#) (Rhoades-R-Schuylkill) providing for a home heating oil rebate program.

**Other:** the Joint Legislative Budget and Finance Committee meets to release a performance audit of the Fish and Boat Commission.

### Bills Introduced

The following bill of interest were introduced this week—

**Geologists:** [Senate Bill 1264](#) (Boscola-D-Lehigh) amending the Engineer, Land Surveyor and Geologist Registration Law further providing for geologists-in-training.

**Rate Cap Extension:** [Special Session House Bill 54](#) (George-D-Clearfield) extending 2010 electric price rate caps.

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**Oil and Gas Well Damage:** [House Bill 2227](#) (Hanna-D-Centre) amending the Oil and Gas Act to further provide compensation for damage caused by oil and gas wells.

**Protecting PA’s Progress:** [House Bill 2230](#) (Evans-D-Philadelphia) establishing the Protecting PA’s Progress Program.

**RCAP Increase:** [House Bill 2231](#) (Evans-D-Philadelphia) increasing the debt ceiling for redevelopment assistance capital projects.

### Senate/House Bills Moving

These environmental bills of interest were considered by the Senate and House this week—

#### Senate

**Diesel Idling:** [Senate Bill 295](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) limiting diesel idling was passed by the Senate and now goes to the House for action.

**Deep Mine Safety:** [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) making the first comprehensive revisions to the Bituminous Coal Mine Safety Act in 45 years, in-part based on recommendations made after the [2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue](#), was amended on Third Consideration and is on the Senate Calendar for final action.

**Chesapeake Bay Cleanup:** [Senate Resolution 224](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the cost for wastewater treatment plants to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and is on the Senate Calendar for action.

**Appalachian Trail:** [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to adopt zoning ordinances to protect the Appalachian Trail was amended and reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and is on the Senate Calendar for action.

**Zoning Ordinance Appeals:** The Senate Local Government Committee amended and reported out [House Bill 1329](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) further providing for appeals and challenges to zoning ordinances and [House Bill 1330](#) (Kessler) further providing for appeals from official maps and local development ordinances and are on the Senate Calendar for action.

#### House

**Theft of Scrap Materials:** [House Bill 1742](#) (Pashinski-D-Luzerne) the Scrap Material Theft Prevention Act was amended and passed by the House and now goes to the Senate for action.

**Local Planning:** The House Local Government Committee amended and reported out [House Bill 1812](#) (Gillespie-R-York) amending the Municipalities Planning Code related to mediation and was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

**Review of Guidelines:** [House Bill 674](#) (Reed-R-Indiana) that would broaden the review of guidelines and policies by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and re-referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

**Coal Bed Methane:** [House Bill 1735](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) sorting out the property rights associated with coal bed methane recovery was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and re-referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

**Governor's Energy Proposal:** [Special Session House Bill 1](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing a grant program and authorizing indebtedness for Energy Development Authority was amended to include the Senate's funding mechanism and deleting the Governor's system benefit charge and reported out of the House Finance Committee and then re-referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

**Energy Conservation:** [House Bill 2200](#) (George-D-Clearfield) requiring utilities to adopt energy efficiency and demand-side management programs was amended by the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and re-referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

### **Energy Bills Moving, Not Moving from House Committees**

Several energy bills were moving in the House this week including part of the Governor's Energy Independence Initiative, but legislation to provide a transition to market-based electric rates was taken off a committee agenda.

The House Finance Committee amended and reported out [Special Session House Bill 1](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing a grant program and authorizing \$850 million in bonds for the PA Energy Development Authority.

The bill was changed to include the Senate's funding mechanism and deleting the Governor's system benefit charge.

The House Consumer Affairs Committee reported out legislation that requires electric distribution companies to reduce the demand for electricity by 2.5 percent by 2013, but deferred action on part of the Governor's energy initiative providing a transition to market-based electricity rates. The bills include:

- [House Bill 2200](#) (George-D-Clearfield) requiring utilities to adopt energy efficiency and demand-side management programs, which was amended in Committee; and
- [House Bill 2201](#) (McCall-D-Carbon) amend Title 66 providing for a transition to market-based electric rates, requiring assistance to low-income customers and providing for advance payments of electric bills was passed over.

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Rep. David Levdansky (D-Allegheny) serves as Majority Chair of the Finance Committee and Rep. Steven Nickol (R-York) serves as Minority Chair.

Rep. Joe Preston (D-Allegheny) serves as the Majority Chair of the Consumer Affairs Committee and Rep. Bob Godshall (R-Montgomery) serves as Minority Chair.

### House Environmental Committee Approves Coal Bed Methane, Rule Review Bills

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee reported out legislation on property rights associated with coal bed methane and a bill to broaden the review of guidelines and policies published by state agencies.

The bills include:

- [House Bill 674](#) (Reed-R-Indiana) that would broaden the review of guidelines and policies by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission; and
- [House Bill 1735](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) sorting out the property rights associated with coal bed methane recovery.

The Majority Chairman of the House Environmental Committee is Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) and the Minority Chair is Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

### Chesapeake Bay Cleanup, Appalachian Trail Bills OK'd by Senate Committee

The Environmental Resources and Energy Committee this week approved a resolution calling for totaling the costs of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup and legislation requiring municipalities to do more to protect the Appalachian Trail.

The bills include [Senate Resolution 224](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the cost for wastewater treatment plants to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy.

Sen. Pat Vance told the Committee her intent was not to delay implementation of the Chesapeake Bay point source reductions in nutrients, but to get to the bottom of the cost estimates for complying with this requirement.

The other bill was [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to adopt zoning ordinances to protect the Appalachian Trail. This bill was amended to include provisions for the notification of communities that must comply with the requirements in the bill.

Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) serves as Majority Chair of the Committee and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) serves as Minority Chair.

### House Environmental Committee Takes Comments on Extending Electric Rate Caps



The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will hold a hearing on [Special Session House Bill 54](#) (George-D-Clearfield) that would extend the existing rate caps on electricity prices from 2010 to 2013.

"No one wants to use a stick to protect citizens and businesses from dangerous electric-rate increases," said Rep. George. "However, sometimes a stick is needed to move people off self-centered obstinacy."

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"The priority remains enactment of a comprehensive energy policy that would put Pennsylvania on the road to energy independence," Rep. George said. "However, the threat of rate increases of 60, 70 percent or more affecting more than 4 million electric customers makes development of stopgap legislation imperative."

Those tentatively scheduled to testify include: Tyrone Christy, Commissioner, Public Utility Commission; State Sen. Lisa Boscola (D-Lehigh); Sonny Popowsky, consumer advocate of Pennsylvania; Carl Wood, regulatory affairs director, Utility Workers Union of America; and Morgan O'Brien, president, Duquesne Light Company.

"Responsible energy proposals have been on the table for many months," Rep. George said. "Progress has been stonewalled, and pleas for cooperation for the common good have so far proved futile."

"Pennsylvania's economic vitality is at stake, and the question is whether the time for pushing and prodding shareholders is over and it's time to start shoving. I reluctantly suggest that time has come."

PPL's 1.4 million customers in 29 counties already face rate increases projected at 35 percent when its rate cap expires after December 31, 2009. More than 2.7 million customers of PECO and FirstEnergy's Penelec and Met-Ed subsidiaries face double-digit rate increases when their rate caps expire after December 31, 2010.

Rep. George said other states' responses to expiring rate caps suggest that further inflexibility may not be in the best interests of utilities.

Illinois responded last year to sharply higher electric rates with \$1 billion in rate relief and creation of a state agency to buy electricity and build generators. Virginia and at least five other states abandoned or indefinitely delayed deregulation after realizing the broken promises of deregulation.

"The lobbyists and their pleadings of poverty or bankruptcy will not win the day when faced with the wrath of citizens staring at massive increases in their monthly electric bills and news reports of record profits by utilities," Rep. George said.

Under Special Session House Bill 54, utilities could seek annual rate-cap relief when they show significant changes in their costs. During the rate-cap extension, energy would be secured to ensure reliable service at the lowest, reasonable rates through a portfolio of long-term, short-term and spot market purchases and meeting alternative-energy requirements.

"Average electricity prices jumped by 36 percent in deregulated states where rate caps expired -- much higher than rates in states still regulating generation costs," Rep. George said. "Extending the rate caps is not the preferred manner of muting the damage but it may be the necessary one."

Rep. George said he plans to hold more hearings on the legislation.

[Rep. Bud George](#) (D-Clearfield) serves as Majority Chairman of the Committee and Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) serves as Minority Chair.

## **Other News**

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### **Eastern Sports & Outdoor Show Salutes 10 "Heroes of Green," 6 From PA**

Hunting, fishing and conservation go hand in hand. To recognize people they deem "Heroes of Green," the [Eastern Sports & Outdoor Show](#) presented by Chevrolet, awarded ten people with \$100 in Sports Show Spending Cash for their work in conservation.

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The 10 winners will also have their winning ideas displayed at the Chevrolet booth in the Fishing Hall at the 2008 Eastern Sports & Outdoor Show, February 2-10, State Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg.

Six of the winners were from Pennsylvania:

**Corey N. Miller, Reading, Pa:** Corey Miller and his father take the time to remove dumped materials, including metal and broken glass to prevent contamination of a small creek that area wildlife uses as a water source.

They have also built an environmentally friendly tree stand that uses engineering principles to support the platform without putting any type of fasteners into the tree itself. They also prune and care for six overgrown apple trees that now produce twice as many apples each year solely for wildlife consumption.

**Ralph Martone, New Castle, Pa:** Ralph Martone is the advisor for the Shenango High School Conservation Club. The students in the club work with the Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission on projects including tree pruning and planting, habitat improvements, planting food plots, stream improvements and the stocking of trout.

**Mike Miller, Holtwood, Pa:** For the last few years, Mike Holt has been working with young people from his neighborhood picking up trash, addressing erosion issues and seeing how others are impacting the area in a positive manner. They talk to others about methods of conservation and the young people exhibit enthusiasm for conservation. “We are hardly changing the world, but we may be making a difference a little at a time,” said Miller.

**Don Bashore, Mifflintown, Pa:** Don Bashore is a charter member of the Pennsylvania Wild Turkey Federation and the Shade Mountain Chapter that holds youth field days to train youth in conservation, plant trees and cut browse.

Bashore is a regional director for the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts and the Juniata County Conservation District where he helps with the Youth Envirothon and promotes best management practices to conserve our natural resources and preserve land for future generations.

**Kevin Gray, Duncannon, Pa:** Kevin Gray is Advancement Chairman of The Duncannon Boy Scout Troop 64 that started recycling for the War effort in the 1940’s—a recycling program that continues today.

The scout troop’s commitment to the environment is strong and growing. They maintain the only county curbside pickup and a drop-off center. This program sees the appropriate recycling of approximately 100 tons of material annually. The Scouts participate in the Perry County recycling program once a month and assist the borough in reducing the amount of waste hauled to landfills.

**Carla Wehler, St. Mary, Pa:** As an avid outdoor lover, Carla Wehler volunteers with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to help conserve habitat for not only Pennsylvania’s elk, but all species. She also promotes hunting and conservation to area youth by donating items to youth groups and archery organizations that are mentoring young people.



For more information, visit the [Eastern Sports & Outdoor Show website](#).  
NewsClip: [Outdoor Show Honors Conservation Boosters](#)

### **PEC Accepting Nominations for 2008 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards**

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Dominion invite groups, individuals, companies, or organizations to apply for the [Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards](#).

Nominations due by March 12.

The Awards recognizes and honors outstanding achievements of organizations, businesses, and individuals in a wide range of environmental initiatives throughout the 29 county region and pays tribute to those that have demonstrated a commitment to environmental excellence, leadership, and accomplishment in their respective fields.

The counties to submit a nomination: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Cameron, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Fayette, Forest, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Somerset, Venango, Warren, Washington, and Westmoreland.

Past winners have included innovative land use and development projects, energy efficiency projects, public awareness programs, pollution prevention activities, and other initiatives to protect or enhance the environment of this region.

All nominations will be reviewed and evaluated by an independent panel of judges and award program staff. Finalists may also be asked to host a site visit to demonstrate their program or activities.

To submit a nomination, please download and complete the nomination form on the [PEC website](#).

### **Game Commission Launches Second Round of Deer Management Open Houses**

Following up on last fall's effort to explain the state's [deer management program](#) and meet interested residents closer to home, the Game Commission is once again hitting the road in coming weeks to hold six open houses across the state.

The [Commission also reminded hunters](#) to complete their Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) report cards and mail them into the agency by February 10.

"Open houses provide a means for the agency to reach out and interact with hunters and other Pennsylvanians whose lives are influenced by deer," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director. "They have been used by the agency in the past and have been warmly received by residents who attend them. We have designed these open houses to provide the general public with information about our deer management program and an opportunity to discuss any questions that they may have."

In the 2003-07 Deer Management Plan, three goals, all identified and supported by Pennsylvanians, were established to guide the program. They were to: improve deer health, improve forest health and reduce deer-human conflicts.

The open houses that were held in 2007 gave the public the opportunity to provide input regarding the addition of two goals to the Deer Management Plan.





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After receiving public input at those open houses, the agency has added two additional goals to the plan. Those goals are to manage deer to provide recreational opportunities; and to improve the public's knowledge and understanding of deer and the deer management program.

"Based on the first round of public input, we made adjustments to the deer management plan," Roe said.

Roe noted that the open houses will be held in six different locations from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. on a Saturday to maximize the opportunity for those interested in attending, and to afford those who were unable to attend last fall to do so this spring. Also, this round of open houses will be held in different locations than those held in the fall.

The schedule for the open houses is as follows:

- Southcentral Region: February 16, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the McConnellsburg American Legion Post #561, Fulton County;
- Northeast Region: February 23, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Saint Rose Academy, 1300 Old Plank Road, Mayfield, Lackawanna County;
- Southeast Region: March 1, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Game Commission's Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area Visitors Center, 100 Museum Road, Newmanstown, Lancaster County;
- Southwest Region: March 15, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Game Commission Southwest Region Office, 4820 Route 711 North, Bolivar, Westmoreland County;
- Northcentral Region: March 29, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Red Fern Inn, St. Marys, Elk County; and
- Northwest Region: April 5, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at McLane Church, 12511 Edinboro Rd., Edinboro, Erie County.

The open houses and outreach information were developed by a Deer Communications Working Group, which was proposed by the Deer Management Section and created by Roe in late April of 2007.

"This group has worked hard to identify Pennsylvania's and the Game Commission's deer management educational and outreach needs, and develop the displays, brochures, workshops and website information, that will help deliver that important message to the public and fellow employees," Roe said. "We encourage Pennsylvanians to take time to visit one of these open houses."

The Game Commission recognizes that the public's comprehension of deer management and changes to the agency's deer program is essential to manage deer progressively and effectively.

While this outreach/educational effort targets all Pennsylvanians, there is considerable focus on hunting, primarily because hunters have helped the agency manage Pennsylvania's deer population for more than 100 years.

"Hunters have partnered with the Game Commission to manage wildlife since the agency's inception," Roe said. "Their financial contributions help support Pennsylvania's wildlife management programs and their efforts afield have helped to keep our deer populations in check. Hunters matter a great deal to the Game Commission and Pennsylvania."

For more information, visit the [deer management program webpage](#) and download a complete selection of the brochures being distributed at the open houses.

**NewsClips:** [Game Commission Hung Up on Changes to Deer Season](#)  
[Game Commission, Farm Bureau Differ Over Deer Season](#)

[Deer Hunting Restrictions Will Hurt Farmers  
Hunters Reminded to Summit DMAP Report Cards](#)

**Wildlife For Everyone Foundation Buys Excavator to Assist with Habitat Restoration**

Vern Ross, Executive Director of the [Wildlife for Everyone Endowment Foundation](#) announced the Foundation has purchased a Caterpillar excavator to assist in completing wetland and stream restoration projects throughout the Commonwealth.

The excavator was previously a long-term rental from Cleveland Brothers, Inc., which easily facilitated the buyout procedure. The Caterpillar 322CL excavator is fitted with a bucket and a large hydraulic thumb, which is essential for maneuvering and placing large rocks into streams for habitat improvements.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program has partnered with the Foundation to complete several crucial habitat improvement projects that fulfill both Agencies' missions.

Future projects are currently being surveyed, designed and permitted, and it is anticipated that the majority of the summer will be spent a field constructing joint projects.

Mark Roberts, the Partner's for Fish and Wildlife Program Coordinator for Pennsylvania stated that, "this type of cooperative effort is the cornerstone of our program. We very much appreciate the assistance and partnership with the Foundation, because when like-minded agencies work cooperatively together, the habitat gains can be significant."

Roberts said that planned habitat restoration projects included wetland restoration, stream bank stabilization, in-stream habitat improvements through natural stream channel design, and riparian corridor enhancement via tree planting and management.

The partnership between the WFEEF and USFWS started in 2005 with the restoration of 2,000 feet of stream and more than three acres of wetlands at the Quaker Run Project site in 2005. This collaborative pilot project among the WFEEF, USFWS, Department of Environmental protection and Coal Township was located on abandoned mine land in Coal Township, Northumberland County.

Russ Schleiden, Chairman of the Board for the WFEEF stated that, "The Quaker Run project was a good fit for the Foundation because one of our major focus areas is habitat restoration, and we look forward to completing several more habitat restoration projects thru this partnership".

The [Wildlife for Everyone Endowment Foundation](#) was established in 2004 to provide permanent private support for wildlife habitat enhancement, wildlife research and education, land preservation, and for the establishment of a Wildlife Research and Education Center.

**DEP Invites Comments on TMDL Plans in 5 Watersheds, in 5 Counties**

The Department of Environmental Protection this week invited public comments on Total Maximum Daily Load Plans for five watersheds in Armstrong, Butler, Clarion, Jefferson and Venango counties. ([Pa Bulletin page 840-842](#))

**Patterson Creek Watershed, Armstrong County:** DEP will hold a public meeting March 4 at 6:00 p.m. at the Armsdale Administration Building, Room 103, 124 Armsdale

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Rd., Kittanning, Pa. Comments due: April 4. Contact: Joe Boylan 814-797-1191 or send email to: [joboylan@state.pa.us](mailto:joboylan@state.pa.us) .

**Scrubgrass Creek Watershed, Venango, Butler Counties:** DEP will hold a public meeting February 26 at 9:00 a.m. in the Knox District Mining Office, Knox. Comments due: April 9. Contact: Ely Heferle 814-797-1191 or send email to: [ehferle@state.pa.us](mailto:ehferle@state.pa.us) .

**Leatherwood Creek and Town Run Watersheds, Clarion County:** DEP will hold a meeting February 26 at 11:00 in the Knox District Mining Office, Knox. Comments due: April 9. Contact: Ely Heferle 814-797-1191 or send email to: [ehferle@state.pa.us](mailto:ehferle@state.pa.us) .

**Welch Run Watershed, Jefferson County:** DEP will hold a meeting February 26 at 1:00 p.m. in the Knox District Mining Office, Knox. Comments due: April 9. Contact: Ely Heferle 814-797-1191 or send email to: [ehferle@state.pa.us](mailto:ehferle@state.pa.us) .

To see a copy of these TMDLs and for more information, visit DEP's [TMDL webpage](#)

### **Schuylkill River Heritage Area Offers Mini-Grants, Regular Grants**

The [Schuylkill River Heritage](#) Area is now accepting applications for two grant program--mini-grants of \$1,000 and regular grants that promote conservation in the group's service area.

Regular grant letters of intent are due February 29 and mini-grant applications are due April 4.

Mini-grants are available for developing publications, educational programs or special events. Projects to be funded must be completed between July 1 and December 31.

Grants will be awarded based on how well the proposals meet five goals: education, recreation, tourism, community revitalization and promoting resource conservation.

Recipients must match 50 percent of the grant, and at least 10 percent of that match must be from nongovernmental sources.

The service area includes parts of Berks, Chester, Montgomery, Philadelphia and Schuylkill counties.

For more information go to the [Schuylkill River Heritage Area grants webpage](#).

### **Watershed Group to Sponsor "Cabin Fever" Stream Cleanup February 16**

The [Watershed Alliance of York](#) seeks volunteers for a "Got Cabin Fever" stream cleanup to be held from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. February 16 along Kreutz Creek in Hellam Township, York County.

Volunteers should meet at 295 Campbell Rd., off the Lincoln Highway (Rt. 462). Cleanup work gloves, trash bags and light refreshments will be provided.

A special need is one or two individuals who are skilled with using a chainsaw safely to remove woody debris entanglements. Volunteers are advised to dress casual, wear sturdy footwear, and dress appropriately for the weather.

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If the National Weather Service issues a winter weather advisory (extreme cold or precipitation) for the day of the event, the cleanup will be cancelled.

Funding is being provided by PPL Corp. Cleanup pre-registration is requested by February 14.

To learn more about WAY, please visit the [Watershed Alliance of York website](#) or contact Gary R. Peacock at 717-840-7430 or send email to [gpeacock@yorkccd.org](mailto:gpeacock@yorkccd.org), and leave your name, number attending and telephone number or email where you may be reached.

### Students Invited to Apply for PA CleanWays' Sue Wiseman Scholarship



PA CleanWays is now accepting applications for the [Sue Wiseman Scholarship](#), an annual \$1,000 scholarship that recognizes youth who have demonstrated leadership and shown exceptional commitment and dedication to reducing litter and illegal dumping in their community.

Applications are due May 1.

The Sue Wiseman Scholarship is open to Pennsylvania youth, ages 16-21, who have initiated and carried out a personal project(s) that addresses littering, illegal dumping, recycling, proper disposal, beautification, or education. An education project must address one of the other topics listed.

The scholarship is named for Sue Wiseman, whose own commitment and dedication to a cleaner environment led to the founding of PA CleanWays, a statewide nonprofit organization empowering people to eliminate illegal dumping and littering in Pennsylvania.

Since 1990, PA CleanWays has facilitated over 700 illegal dump cleanups resulting in the removal of 9,520 tons of trash, 2,081 tons of scrap metal and 337,030 tires statewide. PA CleanWays community-based approach has involved more than 42,000 volunteers.

For more information visit the [Sue Wiseman Scholarship webpage](#) call PA CleanWays at 877-772-3673.

### Rohm and Haas Implements Strategic Sustainable Development Practices

[Rohm and Haas Company](#) announced it has embarked on a comprehensive journey to develop and implement strategic, sustainable development practices across all areas of its businesses and operations.

In launching this initiative, the company has formed a partnership with the international non-profit organization, [The Natural Step International](#).

The Natural Step is a leading global research, education and advisory organization that specialize in developing systematic, science-based approaches for organizations to become more sustainable.

Through participation in its Core Funding Partner Program, The Natural Step will assist Rohm and Haas Co. in incorporating sustainable objectives in all of its business, research and development, and operating practices.

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“This partnership with The Natural Step will be a catalyst for further sustainable product innovation, business management practices and corporate leadership, and will build on our existing commitment to apply the principles of Sustainable Development and Green Chemistry to develop innovative technologies to address critical societal needs, such as more environmentally friendly building and construction products, technologies to improve the accessibility of potable water, greater abundance and higher quality agriculture crops, and innovative solutions to meet growing energy needs,” said Raj L. Gupta, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Rohm and Haas Co. “We are excited that this partnership will help us establish a leadership position in addressing critical sustainable needs.”

The announcement of a formal partnership between Rohm and Haas and The Natural Step is the most recent milestone in a shared mission to bring sustainable development to the forefront of the chemical industry.

As part of its commitment, Rohm and Haas is sponsoring a distance-learning program centered on The Natural Step principles, aimed at equipping professionals in the chemical industry with the knowledge to implement meaningful change at their individual companies.

The company’s Packaging and Building Materials business has already begun working with The Natural Step and a key customer, Hydro Polymers, to drive sustainable practices in the product development and commercial areas of that business. In August 2007, The Natural Step and Hydro Polymers presented Rohm and Haas with the 2007 Hydro Sustainability Award for its performance and efforts in sustainability.

Leaders from Rohm and Haas and The Natural Step will work closely together throughout 2008 to identify opportunities to integrate sustainable development into the company’s daily business and operations management.

The Rohm and Haas Company initiatives will be led by Alan Barton, Executive Vice President, Regional Director, The Americas and includes an executive steering team of company leaders representing its global businesses, regions and support organizations.

More information, visit the [Rohm and Haas sustainability webpage](#).

## EPA Calculator Puts Greenhouse Gas Savings in Everyday Terms

Can you picture what it means to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 1 million metric tons? News stories are packed with measurements of greenhouse gas reductions, but it can be difficult to understand them until now.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s new [Greenhouse Gas Calculator](#) helps you turn greenhouse gas savings into more easily understood everyday terms. The calculator converts greenhouse gas-related savings estimates, typically presented in "million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents," into familiar terms such as the greenhouse gas emissions that would result from:

- Driving a particular number of cars for a year;
- Using a particular amount of gasoline or barrels of oil;
- Using a particular number of tanker trucks' worth of gasoline;
- Providing energy to a particular number of homes for a year;
- Growing trees across a particular number of acres for a year;
- Recycling a particular quantity of waste instead of sending it to the landfill; or
- Generating electricity from a particular number of coal fired power plants for a year.

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Users can enter savings in emissions, electricity consumption, gallons of gasoline, or number of vehicles into the calculator and determine up to 13 different ways to express the magnitude of the savings. The calculator uses the latest emission factors, approaches and statistics available through 2007.

As an example, if a typical household switched all its incandescent light bulbs to Energy Star qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs, it would save about 75 percent of the lighting electricity use, or about 1,463 kWh a year.

After five years, these energy savings are equivalent to: saving about 10,289 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions; conserving 530 gallons of gasoline; saving 11 barrels of oil; planting 120 tree seedlings; or recycling 1.6 tons of waste.

For more information, visit the [Greenhouse Gas Calculator webpage](#).

### **Biofuels Could Nearly Double Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

[An article in the journal Science](#) this week calculates the use of biofuels made from corn and cellulose will nearly double greenhouse gas emissions over 30 years.

Most prior studies have found that substituting biofuels for gasoline will reduce greenhouse gases because biofuels sequester carbon through the growth of the feedstock. These analyses have failed to count the carbon emissions that occur as farmers worldwide respond to higher prices and convert forest and grassland to new cropland to replace the grain (or cropland) diverted to biofuels.

Using a worldwide agricultural model to estimate emissions from land use change, we found that corn-based ethanol, instead of producing a 20 percent savings, nearly doubles greenhouse emissions over 30 years and increases greenhouse gases for 167 years.

Biofuels from switchgrass, if grown on U.S. corn lands, increase emissions by 50 percent. This result raises concerns about large biofuel mandates and highlights the value of using waste products.

A second article explores the impact of [land clearing for producing biofuels](#) and its impact on climate change.

**NewsClip:** [Study: Corn Fuels Hurt Climate More Than Gasoline Biofuels Deemed a Greenhouse Threat](#)

### **Wind Turbines, Important Bird Areas and Wildlife Program February 21**

The [Appalachian Chapter of Audubon Pennsylvania](#) will hold a special Wind Turbines, Important Bird Areas and Wildlife Program on February 21 at 7:30 at the Christ Presbyterian Church, 421 Deerfield Road, Camp Hill (near Harrisburg).

Kim Van Fleet, Important Bird Area Coordinator for Audubon Pennsylvania will give a presentation on the potential impacts on birds, bats and other wildlife and habitats that must be taken into account in the siting, construction and operation of modern wind turbines.

For more information, visit the [Appalachian Audubon events webpage](#).

### **Great Backyard Bird Count Begins February 15**

On February 15-18 bird watchers all across North America will be participating in the 11th annual [Great Backyard Bird Count](#)- what about you?



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This popular hobby and can be done from your yard, a city park, nature center, even your fire escape. Best of all, your actions truly make a difference as your count is included with thousands of others, helping science and conservation spotlight changes in bird populations and distribution from year to year.

Last year's count was a record-breaker. Citizen scientists across the United States and Canada counted more than 11 million birds and tallied 616 species, submitting 80,000 checklists, exceeding the previous record of 61,000 checklists in 2000 by 33 percent.

Up and coming film directors, please upload your video to YouTube and tag it "Great Backyard Bird Count." Some of the best clips will also be posted on the Bird Count site and enter the 2008 photo contest as well.

Visit the [Great Backyard Bird Count webpage](#) for more information.

**NewsClip:** [Residents Can Take Part in Bird Count Contest](#)

### Student Write On! Wetlands Challenge, the Illustrator's Challenge

May is American Wetlands Month and students in grades K-9 can take part in two contests—one to demonstrate their writing skills and another their artistic skills to create a children's book.

The deadline for entries is April 1.

Write On! Is for students in grades 7 to 9 with the theme of "Marshy Migrations: Journeys of a Lifetime." The Illustrator's Challenge is for students in grades K to 6.

[Details and an application are available online.](#)

### Audubon PA Sponsors 1st Annual Educators Birding Seminar May 17 & 18

The first [Annual Educators Birding Seminar](#) sponsored by Audubon Pennsylvania will be held on May 17-18 at the [John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove](#), Audubon, Pa..

Applications are due April 1.

This free two day seminar will provide the necessary tools, training and resources to integrate important and current environmental education topics into classrooms including: bird identification, biologically diverse habitats and studying populations in riparian corridors.

Teachers will have access to several bird habitat areas in Philadelphia and Montgomery County, including Roosevelt Park, the Collegeville and Wetherill dams and more.

Guest presenters will be from Audubon Pennsylvania, the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy and Still Water Publishing author Jane Kirkland.

[An application is available online.](#)

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

## Spotlight

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### National Geographic Channel Program Re-Lives Quecreek Mine Rescue



On February 12 at 8:00 p.m. the National Geographic Channel will recreate the events leading up to and during the 2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue in Somerset County, Pa.



The program—[Critical Situation: Coal Mine Disaster](#)—uses actors to play key individuals in the rescue and recreates mining conditions and rescue scenes.

The program will be repeated on February 12 at 11:00 p.m. and February 19 at 1:00 p.m.

## Spotlight

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### **Trout Are Thriving at the Cathedral School in Harrisburg**

**By Cyndi Camp**

**Doc Fritchey Chapter – Trout Unlimited**

In November, the Cathedral School's 8th grade class in downtown Harrisburg received its shipment of trout eggs for its much anticipated Trout in the classroom adventure.

Thanks to Dave Cross, liaison for [St. Margaret Mary School's](#) Trout in the Classroom program last year, and his son, the 55 gallon, 4 foot long aquarium, its assorted pumps, filters and chiller were up and running well in advance.

Maureen Mahnken, the participating teacher, called in a bit of a panic because the eggs were in water in a plastic bag, and she didn't know what to do next. I asked her to float the bag in the aquarium, and when I arrived shortly after school let out, was met by Maureen and three very enthusiastic students named Mercedes, Leeamsy and Jade. They stayed after class to be involved in the first step of their project.

We released the eggs into a "breeder net" and were supposed to count them—a clearly impossible task. Maureen and the girls estimated 350 eggs, 41 of which were dead on arrival.

Over the next several days, a few dozen or so more eggs died, and in the meantime, others started to hatch. Within a week, all had hatched and the fry started to "button up," absorbing their yolk sacs.

On December 14, Frank Viozzi and I went to visit the class and watched the students release their "babies," as they called them, into the enormous volume of water. All headed right to the gravel on the bottom and tucked in.

Frank took many photos of the students as they surrounded the tank and jockeyed for position to see and participate.

Our instructions are to give only tiny amounts of food, spread over 2-3 feedings a day, after the fry begin to swim to the surface. As of December 21, six fry were up looking for food and gobbled it quickly. I'm totally amazed that such tiny creatures can swim up that huge column of water, but there they are, and more will follow in the next few days.

Maureen reports that all 14 students in the class are now actively interested and involved in the care of their charges. They test water quality, remove and replace three gallons of water and check for dead fry daily. They are keeping journals, learning about watersheds and the nitrogen cycle and are taking responsibility for the trout entrusted to them.

So far, there appear to be no further deaths. The students are fearful that the tank will not support the large number of fish they currently have. According to Trout in the Classroom project teachers from previous years and Fish and Boat Commission sources, we can expect significant losses over the coming months. Nevertheless, things are going very well at this time.

The class sent a computer-generated thank you card to the Doc Fritchey Chapter. These are really neat kids, and it's my privilege to get to know them.

Visit the [Doc Fritchey Chapter – Trout Unlimited website](#) and the [Trout in the Classroom](#) webpage for more information. *Reprinted from the [January issue of Hatches](#).*

**Video Blog:** [Doc Fritchey TU Guides Spring Creek Restoration Efforts](#)  
[TU Members Celebrate Nearly 20 Years of Treating Acid Mine Water](#)  
[Volunteers Mitigate Acid Rain Impacts on Wiconisco Creek](#)

## Feature

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### People Don't See 'Seagulls'

By Joe Kosack

Wildlife Conservation Education Specialist  
Game Commission



As the air turns cold, they trickle into the state, particularly along the Susquehanna, Delaware and Ohio rivers. Then they branch out to everything from unfrozen lakes and agricultural fields to parking lots and landfills.

Most people call them seagulls. But don't, because, according to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, they are not.

Even though Webster's recognizes the word seagull, as "a gull frequenting the sea," and as a word that has been in use since the late sixteenth century, it's just not a word that people are supposed to use when referring to gulls, primarily because Pennsylvania doesn't have a nearby "sea" from which the birds would have come.

There are gulls that qualify elsewhere in the world, just not in Pennsylvania. Birders prefer the word "gull" in all cases; they don't seesaw on word usage, even if the gulls inhabit seaside areas.

In urban slang, the word "seagull" refers to a person who will do anything for food, or someone who glides around the office doing nothing. Although both are not exactly complimentary references, they do sort of describe the gull lifestyle. The birds really do fly around - seemingly aimlessly - looking for food and capitalizing on it wherever and however it presents itself.

"Gulls will eat just about anything edible served hot, cold or frozen," said Dan Brauning, who supervises the Game Commission's Wildlife Diversity Section. "They like fast food, dead fish, waste grain, even stuff that just looks like food. Presentation isn't important. All that matters is accessibility and acquisition."

Richard Bach, author of the 1970 best-selling book "Jonathan Livingston Seagull," understood what mattered most to these compulsive birds. He wrote, "For most gulls, it's not flying that matters, but eating." And, basically, that's what brings them to Pennsylvania's interior: food.

Seeing gulls so far from the Atlantic Coast, Lake Erie or the Chesapeake Bay seems odd to most people. They seem to be fish out of water, birds out of place. After all, next to migrating snowy owls or snow geese, there's really nothing else with feathers that's so starkly pale in our skies.

"Most people think of gulls inhabiting beaches and along boardwalks and docks," Brauning said. "So when they see them dumpster diving at Central Pennsylvania fast-food joints, hanging with Canada geese in agricultural fields, or teaming in the open spaces of busy mall parking lots, they don't get what's going on.

"But it's really not complicated. These birds are here to eat and winter. If they could do it somewhere else, closer to their nesting grounds, and at a place that provided sufficient food, they probably would be there. They don't necessarily prefer Pennsylvania as much as they take advantage of its convenience."

Pennsylvania is sandwiched geographically between the Atlantic Coast and the Great Lakes - two substantial gull population centers - and the state's rivers and land uses have always drawn the birds into the state's interior.

Although a good number of the gulls you see now are transients passing through Pennsylvania as they migrate to wintering areas, most are here to forage for food. They are seasonal residents, leaving for big water areas to nest in the spring and rear young in the summer, and returning to the Commonwealth as winter tightens its grip on the Northeast.

Gulls zero in on areas where food is readily accessible and where open areas - particularly parking lots and farm fields - afford them protection from predators. They prefer to huddle in areas where they can see danger approaching from a considerable distance and use every available eye in the group to monitor the surrounding open space. The hint of trouble draws considerable attention.

"Gulls are intelligent birds and adapt to civilized settings quickly," Brauning said. "They're every bit as adept as raccoons and black bears at seizing opportunities to score food and willing to tolerate the presence and inconveniences of cars and people to work an area. Sometimes, in fact, they even seem a little disrespectful of people because they allow us to get so much closer than other wild birds, or force you to brake while they dissect litter."

Although a variety of gulls pass through Pennsylvania during spring and fall migrations, only a few spend winter here. Ring-billed and herring gulls are the most common. Two others that come or stopover for prolonged periods are the great black-backed gull, which are common along the Delaware River and Lake Erie shore, and Bonaparte's gull, along the Lake Erie shore and in northwestern counties. There's also always a chance to catch an Iceland gull mingling with our regular winter guests, particularly herring gulls; but that can be difficult, like trying to find a diamond in a glass recycling bin.

Ring-billed gulls are America's and Pennsylvania's most widespread gulls. They weren't always as common as they are now in-state. In fact, back in the late 1800s, the Commonwealth had more herring gulls. Today, however, ring-billed gulls are just everywhere there are large open spaces and big water. Herring gulls also are fairly

common, but they don't stray as far from large bodies of water or rivers. Both gulls are year-round residents in some areas of the state.

Gulls come to Pennsylvania because it's convenient, and because it has rivers that are loaded with small aquatic critters they eat readily, hundreds of restaurants that serve fast food indirectly to gulls, and plenty of parking lots to loaf in. It's not exactly Florida, but it sure beats panhandling along the icy Atlantic Coast or the shores of Lake Erie.

Although gulls occasionally test the tolerance of some people when they soil property with droppings or become aggressive while foraging, most people seem to be ok with them. But, even if they weren't, state and federal laws protect them.

"Gulls and their antics have grown on many Pennsylvanians," Brauning said. "They enjoy watching the birds while they're out and about, partly because they're so visible and entertaining and partly because the gulls seem so out of place here.

"Seeing a gull shuffle across a parking area, calling or yawning, even sleeping with its bill tucked under its wing, sparks interest and attention, and on cold days, even compassion for these resilient birds. Their seasonal presence continues to attract considerable curiosity and probably will for some time."

Gulls appear to be right at home in Pennsylvania's heartland, even though they're not. Every spring they leave Pennsylvania's interior, although some will stay along Lake Erie and the lower Susquehanna and Delaware rivers and their tributaries.

But just remember, those that go are not going back to the sea. And they're not seagulls. Suggesting otherwise infers gullibility. And who would want to do that?

For more information on Pennsylvania's wildlife resources, visit the [Game Commission website](#).

## Grants & Awards

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This section gives you a heads up on upcoming deadlines for grants and financial assistance as well as nominations for awards and other recognition programs. **NEW** means from last week—

- **February 19** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **February 20**— [USDA Conservation Innovation Grants](#)
- **February 22**— [Allegheny County Global Warming Poster Contest](#)
- **February 22**— [Clean Water Begins and Ends With You Student Art Contest](#)
- **February 29**— [Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants](#)
- **February 29**— [Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Grants](#)
- **February 29**—**NEW**. [Schuylkill River Heritage Area Regular Grants](#)
- **March 12**—**NEW**. [PEC Western PA Environmental Awards](#)
- **March 17**— [Community Action for a Renewed Environment Grants](#)
- **March 31** – PAEP [Karl Mason Environmental Award](#).
- **March 31**—[DEP Host Municipality Inspector Grants](#)
- **March 31**—[Pa CleanWays Litter Hawk Youth Award Program](#)
- **April 1**—**NEW**. [Write On! Wetlands Challenge Student Competition](#)
- **April 2** – [WREN Water Resources Education Project Grants](#)
- **April 4**—**NEW**. [Schuylkill River Heritage Area Mini-Grants](#)
- **April 25**— DCNR [Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grants](#)

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- **May 1**—**NEW**. [PA CleanWays' Sue Wiseman Student Scholarship](#)
- **May 20** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **June 20**— DEP [Section 902 Recycling Development Grants](#)

[Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

### Quick Clips

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

[Deer Hunting Restrictions Will Hurt Farmers](#)  
[Anti-Idling Bill Passes the Senate](#)  
[Penn State's Green Initiatives Detailed on Website](#)  
[New Eatery Going Green](#)  
[Op-Ed: Greening Philadelphia, Creatively](#)  
[Editorial: State Prepared for 2nd Gas Rush?](#)  
[Natural Gas May Be Boon to the Region](#)  
[Bucknell, Focus the Nation Tackle Global Climate Warming Issues](#)  
[Climate Concerns, Nuclear Power Support Rise](#)  
[Patriot-News Columnist Wins Environmental Honor](#)  
[Editorial: Broader Energy Safety Net Needed](#)  
[Boscola Presses Case for Electric Rate Caps](#)  
[Balancing Act: Dealing With High Feed Prices](#)  
[Energy-Efficient Building Saves Cash, Environment](#)  
[Another Dentist Saves Energy, Reduces Waste](#)  
[23 Miles of Delaware Canal Loses Water in Towpath Collapse](#)  
[Tree Giveaway Sponsored by Boyertown Committee](#)  
[Rendell Lauds Federal Court Decision on EPA Mercury Rule](#)

### Watershed NewsClips

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

[Editorial: Sewers Ought to be Part of Rendell's Plan](#)  
[Chesapeake Bay Sewage Rate Hikes Delayed for Many](#)  
[Lock Haven Challenge Chesapeake Bay Permit Standards](#)  
[Frustration Brews Over Costs to Clean Up Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)  
[Editorial: Feds Need to Help Fund Chesapeake Bay Cleanup](#)  
[Editorial: Chesapeake Cleanup Bill Won't Be Going Away](#)  
[Editorial: Hold Off on Sewage Lawsuit if Governor Creates a Panel](#)  
[Authority Members Still Unsure of Cost Impact of Sewer Plant Upgrade](#)  
[No Relief for Chesapeake Cleanup Costs](#)  
[Editorial: Lions Share of Bay Cleanup Needs to Come From State](#)  
[Editorial: Cleaning Up Bay at Whose Expense?](#)  
[More Berks County Farmers Enroll in Chesapeake Bay Effort](#)  
[Group Seeks New Name for Swatara Creek](#)

[Susquehanna River Bass Tourneys Banned](#)  
[Lawsuit Over Access to Fish Little Juniata River Resolved](#)

## Regulations

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The Independent Regulatory Review Commission [published comments](#) on a proposed Environmental Quality Board air quality regulation covering consumer products. The Public Utility Commission [published its order](#) on energy conservation reporting and customer assistance programs.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – February 9, 2008](#)

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

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

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

## Technical Guidance & Permits

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The Department of Environmental Protection published [a new final policy](#) on Storage Tank Product Delivery Prohibition, a notice of availability for two General NPDES permits for [Petroleum Product Remediation](#) and [Wet Weather Overflow Discharges](#), and a [General Permit for waste composting](#).

**NewsClips:** [DEP Reissues Residual-Municipal Waste Composting General Permit](#)  
[Final Storage Tank Product Delivery Prohibition Guidance Issued](#)

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

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

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- [DEP Announces No-Cost Online Remediation Training](#)
- **February 11—NEW.** House Appropriations informational meeting with the Secretary of the Budget on [House Bill 2230](#) (Evans-D-Philadelphia) establishing the Protecting PA's Progress Program and [House Bill 2231](#) (Evans-D-Philadelphia) increasing the debt ceiling for redevelopment assistance capital projects. Room 140. 10:00.
- **February 11—NEW.** Senate Finance Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1248](#) (Rhoades-R-Schuylkill) providing for a home heating oil rebate program. Room 461. 11:00.

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- **February 12**—**NEW**. Senate Game and Fisheries Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1214](#) (Surra-D-Elk) changing the terms of Game Commissioners from eight to four years. Room 8E-A East Wing. 11:00.
- **February 12**—**NEW**. House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee hearing on [Special Session House Bill 54](#) (George-D-Clearfield) extending the cap on electric rates beyond 2010. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 9:30.
- **February 12**—**NEW**. Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1264](#) (Boscola-D-Lehigh) providing for geologists in training. Room 461. 12:00.
- **February 13**— House Game and Fisheries Committee meets for a presentation of the Game Commission annual report. Room 205 Ryan Building. 9:00.
- **February 13**—Joint Legislative Budget and Finance Committee meets to release a performance audit of the Fish and Boat Commission. Room 8E-A East Wing. 10:00.
- **February 14**— House Game and Fisheries Committee meets for a presentation of the Fish & Boat Commission annual report. Room 205 Ryan Building. 9:00.
- **February 14**—**NEW**. DEP Northwest [Regional Roundtable meeting](#). DEP Regional Office, 230 Chestnut St., Meadville. 10:00.
- **February 16**—**NEW**. [Lehigh Valley Environmental Advisory Council Conference](#). Northampton Community College, Bethlehem.
- **February 19**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Agriculture. Room 140. 2:00.
- **February 21**—**NEW**. Senate Republican Policy Committee hearing on the Costs of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy. LTBA.
- **February 22-23** – 2008 [Keystone Coldwater Conference](#). State College.
- **February 25**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Public Utility Commission. Room 140. 9:00.
- **February 25**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – PEMA, Homeland Security, Fire Commissioner. Room 140. 10:00.
- **February 25**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Budget Secretary. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 3:00.
- **February 26**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Insurance. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 10:30.
- **February 26**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Community and Economic Development. Room 140. 2:00.
- **February 27**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Transportation. Room 140. 9:00.
- **February 27**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Office of Consumer Advocate and Small Business Advocate. Room 140. 1:00.
- **February 26**—[PA Chamber Energy Summit](#). Harrisburg Hilton.
- **February 28**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Agriculture. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00.
- **February 28**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Health. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 10:30.
- **February 28**—[Pennsylvania Wild Resources Symposium](#). [Powdermill Nature Reserve](#). Pittsburgh.



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- **February 28-March 2**—[PA Assn. of Environmental Educators Conference](#). Antiochian Village Camp and Conference Center near Ligonier, Pa.
- **March 1-2**— [Schuylkill Watershed Congress](#). Montgomery County Community College, Pottstown.
- **March 3**—House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Environmental Protection. Room 140. 9:00.
- **March 3**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Room 140. 10:00.
- **March 3**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Environmental Protection. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 3:00.
- **March 3**—**NEW**. [2008 Philadelphia Sustainability Awards Program](#). Philadelphia Flower Show.
- **March 4**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00.
- **March 4**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Transportation. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 1:15.
- **March 5**— **Rescheduled**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Environmental Protection. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 3:00.
- **March 6**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Community and Economic Development. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 1:15.
- **March 6**—House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee holds a hearing on [House Bill 1989](#) (Wansacz-D-Luzerne) establishing the PA Flood Grant and Assistance Program. Council Chamber, Scranton. 10:00.
- **March 8**—**NEW**. [Southeast PA Environmental Advisory Council Conference](#). Villanova University, Villanova.
- **March 11**—**NEW**. Senate Game and Fisheries Committee information meeting on the Game Commission’s Deer Management Program. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 11:00.
- **March 19**— Capital Region Water Board Meeting. Susquehanna River Basin Commission Building. 1:00. Contact: Cindy Rock, [Cindy.L.Rock@comcast.net](mailto:Cindy.L.Rock@comcast.net) or call 717-633-7959.
- **March 28**— Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference and Shad Symposium. Holiday Inn, Fogelsville. Information, send email to: [rkennedy@lehighconservation.org](mailto:rkennedy@lehighconservation.org) .
- **March 29**— [PennFuture’s Annual Watershed Conference](#). Chadd’s Ford.
- **April 1-2**— The Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry 2008 [Environmental Regulations & Technologies Conference](#). Eden Resort Inn & Suites, Lancaster.
- **April 17**— Sewage Task Force, [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) meeting. Penn Stater, State College. 10:00.
- **April 18**—**NEW**. [Water Trail Working Session Conference](#).
- **April 19**—**NEW**. Protecting Our Headwaters Streams and Wetlands-What You Can Do. Cedar Crest College, Allentown. 10:00-3:00. Contact: Barbara Benson, 610-282-33611 or send email to: [barbarabenson@bensonsails.com](mailto:barbarabenson@bensonsails.com) .
- **May 13-15**—[PA Water/Wastewater Association](#) annual conference. Valley Forge.
- **May 28**—**NEW**. [Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards Program](#). Pittsburgh.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

You can watch the [Senate Floor Session](#) and [House Floor Session](#) live online.

**Helpful Web Links**

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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

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

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

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

**Stories Invited**

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

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