

-PA ——— Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

Groups Say Funding Needed to Cleanup PA Waters Going to Chesapeake Bay



Senators Corman, Vance

The Senate Republican Policy Committee this week held a hearing on the cost of cleaning up Pennsylvania's waterways to meet federal Clean Water Act nutrient reduction requirements for the Chesapeake Bay and noted their disappointment with Gov. Rendell for not including funding for the initiative in his proposed budget.

184 wastewater treatment plants in the Chesapeake Bay drainage area are facing a 2010 deadline to upgrade their facilities to meet the federal requirements. In addition, farming operations, developers and municipalities with stormwater issues are also facing new, tougher standards.

The hearing was held at the request of Sen. Patricia Vance (R-Cumberland), the prime sponsor of [Senate Resolution 224](#) which passed the Senate last week directing the Joint Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to develop a cost estimate for implementing the [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy](#). ([DEP Grants Bay Extensions](#))

Jon M. Capacasa, Director, Water Protection Division of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, told the Committee, "making these reductions by 2010 is not merely aspirational on EPA's part, as a court order has established this deadline. Failure to remove the impairment by 2010 means EPA will develop and enforce a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) allocation which will address any shortfall, including measures for point sources if the state designed program is not successful."

If EPA is forced to adopt a TMDL they could impose a state-of-the art cleanup technology requirement on wastewater plants that would impose even heavier burdens on ratepayers.

Capacasa said, "EPA applauds the extensive work already accomplished by the PA DEP working closely with various municipal organizations to consider the burden on users and to identify several creative options to minimize the user burden."

Department of Environmental Protection Secretary [Kathleen McGinty](#) agreed with Senators the cleanup would be costly, but said cutbacks in federal funding for infrastructure have hampered efforts by the state to provide funding needed to implement the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy.

Secretary McGinty said DEP was working to make the cost of compliance cheaper for wastewater treatment plants by implementing the [Nutrient Credit Trading Program](#)

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which now has more than 476,000 pounds of approved nitrogen credits available for purchase.

She noted in October the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority authorized the investment of up to \$50 million in federal funds to help jumpstart the nutrient trading program.

Secretary McGinty also said Gov. Rendell will form a Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force soon by executive order that will make recommendations for infrastructure funding across the state in time to be included in his 2009-10 budget request.

[John Brosious](#), PA Municipal Authorities Association, said the estimated cost of complying with the cleanup requirements for wastewater treatment plants is now over \$1.2 billion, significantly higher than the \$190 million initial estimate by DEP and more than the \$620 million estimate developed by a DEP workgroup last year.

Brosious said while states like Maryland have provided over \$1.5 billion to fund upgrades to its wastewater treatment plants to meet the standards and Virginia has committed to providing \$700 million, Pennsylvania over the last six years has cut Act 339 operating grants to wastewater treatment plants by \$324 million. Both states have fewer treatment plants affected by the requirements.

He also agreed with Secretary McGinty that the federal government has cut its funding of drinking water and wastewater projects over the last three years, but by only \$43 million.

Wastewater plants are faced with making decisions now on upgrading their facilities, he said, but so are farmers, municipalities with stormwater problems and others that must significantly reduce nutrient and sediment loadings.

Brosious said PMAA supports additional funding for wastewater plant upgrades, but also for the farm community, noting they supported the \$10 million [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act \(REAP\)](#) farm conservation tax credit program.

Several individual municipalities told the Committee about their expected costs of complying with the clean water requirements, including: [James Felmlee](#), Borough of Lewistown, Mifflin County, [Frank Rankin](#), Carlisle Borough, Cumberland County and Fairview Township, York County.

[John Bell](#), PA Farm Bureau, said farmers continue to play a vital role in the cleanup of Pennsylvania waterways and have invested significant amounts of their own money to install conservation practices, a fact that was recognized by the Department of Environmental Protection and others.

Bell outlined several limitations of the current nutrient credit trading program from a farmer's perspective saying it was never expected to be the "magical answer" to meet the nutrient reduction goals of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Plan.

One limitation, he said, was a serious lack of trust among purchasers of credits needed to comply with permit requirements because they are concerned they will not have a degree of control over the practices used to generate the credits on farms.

"We continue to be optimistic that nutrient trading can work in the future, and can be helpful in moving Pennsylvania toward meeting the nutrient reduction goals outlined in Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy," Bell said.

[Robert J. Fisher](#), PA Builders Association, told the Committee, "the primary goals of the Tributary Strategy will not be met unless the nutrient credit trading program is significantly reformed to address a number of outstanding issues."

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One of the most significant issues was the lack of targeted state and federal funding to implement the Strategy and a reduction in staff or lack of staff in county conservation districts and within DEP to handle the permits needed to implement the Strategy.

Fisher noted the nutrient credit trading program is particularly important to builders faced with new rules which require them to offset any increases in nutrients they generate. Many builders are also facing serious sewer capacity limitations. Both combine, he said, to make an already shaky housing market more difficult.

Fisher recommended creating a Nutrient Credit Trading Bank to provide a predictable source of credits at a fixed cost to developers interested in securing nutrient reductions over 20 or 30 years.

Fisher also said funding should be better targeted, noting that wastewater treatment plants are being asked to spend up to \$1 billion when they are only 11 percent of the nitrogen load and agriculture is 63 percent of the nitrogen load. Each sector that contributes needs to have funding support, he said.

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council urged support for a credit trading program that enables wastewater plants and farmers to get the help they need for reducing nutrients to cleanup the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

[Brian Hill](#), President and CEO, and Matthew Ehrhart, Senior Vice President for Watersheds and Working Lands, presented the Council's comments.

"We believe that nutrient trading will provide a flexible and voluntary option for achieving net water quality improvement to the Chesapeake Bay," said Hill. "We recognize that it is not a panacea, but it is an important tool to help improve water quality."

Reducing nutrient discharges from wastewater treatment facilities will be expensive, so PEC is promoting a nutrient trading program in which farmers and other landowners who can remove extra nutrients through their land-management activities could then sell "credits" to those who cannot meet their required reductions, potentially in a cost-effective way.

"We understand that trading presents several challenges, including credit estimation, certification, and market confidence," Hill said. "However, the Council believes that nutrient trading can work. The Council has learned that partnerships and communication are the key ingredients for the success of the trading program."

Hill based his comments on the Council's extensive experience in nutrient management. PEC currently is working with the World Resources Institute to develop NutrientNet, an on-line trading tool that will provide a central, standardized marketplace where farmers, sewage-treatment-plant operators and others will be able to post "buy" or "sell" offers for nutrient credits. The tool will determine the amounts of these credits based on best-management practices (BMPs) involving crop and pasture land, streambanks and conservation tillage.

PEC has also demonstrated how nutrient trading credits work through several its Conestoga River Reserve Auction Project, the Antrim Township Nutrient Trading Project, Exelon-Lancaster Health System Forested Riparian Buffer Project and other projects. PEC is also developing a best-management practices manual for golf courses and other projects.

"We recognize that there are several challenges that remain, including the significant expense for upgrading wastewater treatment facilities and the need for securing long-term sources of nutrient reduction credits to meet the demands of the development community," Hill said. "The Council supports additional funding for wastewater

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infrastructure improvements and also recommends a focused effort to find long-term sources of credits for new developments.”

Noting that Maryland and Virginia have together provided wastewater treatment plants with over \$1.7 billion in funding assistance, Kim Patten Pennsylvania Deputy Director Chesapeake Bay Foundation, told the Committee in comments, “We urge Pennsylvania to follow the lead of its sister Bay states by closing the existing funding gap that municipalities currently face as they seek to move forward on plant upgrades.

CBF also said Pennsylvania needs to provide additional funding to farmers to help them install conservation practices on their farms. DEP itself identified a \$174.2 million annual gap between existing funding levels and the funding that is necessary to meet Tributary Strategy requirements for agriculture.

Patten added there were also [funding shortfalls for county conservation districts](#) in Gov. Rendell’s proposed budget for 2008-09. Districts provide significant help to farmers in planning and installing conservation practices.

CBF thanked the General Assembly and Gov. Rendell for supporting the Resource Enhancement and Protection Act (REAP) farm conservation tax credit program which provided \$10 million in initial credits to farmers this year, but said much more needs to be done. CBF is recommending REAP funding be increased to \$50 million this coming year.

[Peter Hughes](#), Red Barn Trading Company, said his company was formed in 2005 to take advantage of the DEP nutrient trading policy. So far the company has approximately 450,000 DEP-certified nutrient credits for sale in large or small purchases or on a long-term basis.

The Senate Republican Policy Committee is chaired by Sen. Jake Corman (R-Centre).

NewsClips: [Sewage Plant Upgrade Come at High Price](#)
[Altoona Sewer Rates Stable, At Least for Now](#)
[Nobody Gets a Free Pass on Chesapeake Bay Mandate](#)
[Hearings Set on High Costs of Bay Cleanup](#)
[East Pennsboro Fights Bay Cleanup Rules](#)
[Op-Ed: Make Bay Cleanup Rules Fair](#)
[DEP Outlines Federal Chesapeake Bay Obligations](#)

Audio Clips: [Remarks by Sen. Vance](#)
[Remarks by Sen. Eickelberger](#) (R-Blair)

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- Chesapeake Bay Foundation: More Funding for PA Waters Cleanup
- Nutrient Credit Trading Valuable Tool to Reduce Water Quality Cleanup Costs

Grants & Awards

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On the Hill

Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to voting session the week of March 10. The Senate and House will hold hearings on Gov. Rendell's proposed budget in the interim.

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 March 10—

Calendars

House (March 10): [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.

The Special Energy Session Calendar includes: [Special Session House Bill 1](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing a grant program and authorizing indebtedness for Energy Development Authority; [Special Session House Bill 13](#) (Bennington-R-Mifflin) amends the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act to provide for increased use of

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energy efficiency, extends the compliance period from 15 to 21 years and providing additional milestones for the use of alternative energy.

Senate (March 10): [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 1264](#) (Boscola-D-Lehigh) providing for geologists in training; [Senate Bill 1248](#) (Rhoades-R-Schuylkill) providing for a home heating oil rebate program; [House Bill 1214](#) (Surra-D-Elk) changing the terms of Game Commissioners from eight to four years

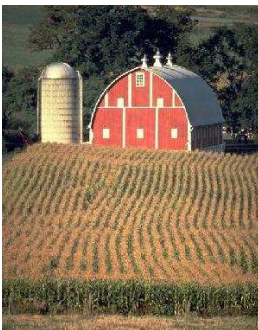
Committees

House: Appropriations Committee Budget Hearings on Public Utility Commission, PEMA, Homeland Security, Fire Commissioner, Department of Community and Economic Development, Department of Transportation, Office of Consumer Advocate and Small Business Advocate, the Appropriations Committee, **Subcommittee on Economic Impact and Infrastructure** holds a hearing on Municipal Water, Sewer & Natural Gas Infrastructure in Langhorne; the **Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee** informational meeting on alternative energy.

Senate: Appropriations Committee Budget Hearings on the Department of Insurance, Department of Agriculture, Department of Health and with the Budget Secretary

Other: Joint Legislative Budget and Finance Committee meeting on [House Resolution 193](#) (Haluska-D-Cambria) fiscal impact of future increased value of the assets of Game Commission.

County Conservation Districts Present Budget Concerns to House Appropriations



[MaryAnn Warren](#), Second Vice-President of the [Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts](#) testified this week before the House Appropriations Committee concerning funding for the 66 Pennsylvania conservation districts.

Other witnesses included [testimony by Dennis Wolff](#), Secretary Department of Agriculture, [Brian Dietrich](#), PA Farm Bureau, [Dr. Timothy LaSalle](#), Rodale Institute and [Archie Trader](#), a sheep farmer.

“Today’s conservation districts have evolved to provide expertise in almost every area of natural resource conservation. Conservation districts continue to help people and communities manage the natural resources in their area,” Warren stated. “They provide landowners with the knowledge and the experience to successfully implement state law and regulatory requirements on their land and agricultural operations.”

Funds for Pennsylvania conservation districts are appropriated on the local and state level. The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee and the State Conservation

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Commission have indicated that 50 percent of certain personnel financing should be state appropriated, and 50 percent county funded.

Typically the Commonwealth does not provide 50 percent of the costs. In Westmoreland County, for example, 76 percent of the total conservation district funding is derived from the county and only 14 percent comes from the state.

PACD is advocating an \$ 11.615 million state appropriation in the 2008-2009 fiscal year for conservation districts. Last year the state appropriated less than one-half of these much needed funds. The Governor's proposed 2008-2009 budget also calls for significantly less funding than PACD believes is needed to adequately provide technical assistance.

Ms. Warren also told House Appropriations Committee members that future consideration should be given to provide conservation districts with a dedicated source of funding.

“Dedicated funding would greatly simplify conservation district annual budgeting processes,” Warren stated. Additionally Ms. Warren distributed a paper entitled, “[Achieving Pennsylvania's Energy Independence Goals](#) While Strengthening Conservation in Pennsylvania; The Critical Role of Pennsylvania's Conservation Districts.”

This report shows that Conservation District technical services will be increasingly necessary as emphasis on bio-fuel production alters farm operations and the need for updated and improved conservation plans.

Warren concluded, “An additional \$10 million will be necessary for the next 5 years to assist the Commonwealth as we strive to become a leader in renewable energy resources.”

Link: [Full Copy of PACD Testimony Presented PACD 2008-09 Budget Request](#)

Professional Geologists Urge Restoration of Funding for Digital Mapping

The [Pennsylvania Council of Professional Geologists](#) is urging its members and users of the state's digital mapping program [PA MAP](#) to contact their legislators to restore funding for what they said is a vital state program.

The PAMAP Program has been under development by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the past six years and has reached a critical point where online and continuously updated map information is available for all.

In fact, DCNR announced recently PA MAP information is now being provided to [Google Earth for public use](#).

Two thirds of the Commonwealth has been mapped, but the eastern third of the state, our most developed and heavily populated portion, may not be completed as planned. In addition, updating of the western and central thirds of the state will not take place as planned.

A lack of state funding to continue the PA MAP Program will adversely affect all users of digital maps including geologists, environmental professionals and state, county and local governments in Pennsylvania, said the Council.

A complete copy of the [call to action](#) is available online.

February Edition of Environmental Synopsis Now Online

The February edition of the [Environmental Synopsis](#) newsletter published by the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee is now online.

This month's issue features stories on the RecycleMania college recycling contest, world ethanol production, State of Green Business, global energy use increase, PA greenhouse gas emissions, Great Lakes water diversion ban and a rundown on future events.

The next Environmental Issues Form sponsored by the Committee will be on March 17 and features a presentation by the Northampton Generating Company, a co-generation plant that generates electricity from waste tires and other alternative fuels.

The chair of the [Joint Committee](#) is Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) and the vice-chair is Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne).

Other News

60 PA Hunting, Angler Groups Ask for Action on Climate Change – Video Blog



At a special ceremony this week in Harrisburg, Ed Perry, PA Outreach Consultant for the National Wildlife Federation, praised the 60 hunting and angler groups in Pennsylvania that have [signed a letter](#) calling on Congress to pass federal legislation to address the issue of global warming.

“In all, 60 Pennsylvania sportsmen's groups, fly fishing guides and fly shops have signed the letter, second-most of any state in the nation, asking

their elected leaders in Congress to confront global warming so future generations have the same opportunities to enjoy the outdoors that we do now,” said Perry. “Across America, more than 670 sportsmen's groups, representing millions of Americans who hunt and fish, have added their name to the sportsmen's letter to Congress.”

Video Blog: [Ed Perry on PA Groups and Climate Change](#)

“Pennsylvania sportsmen want America to lead on global warming solutions,” said Perry. “We've used cap-and-trade systems – and American ingenuity – successfully in the past to cut pollution. Measures like the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act, coming before the Senate this spring, will not only protect our heritage, but also bring new jobs to our cities and rural communities while bolstering a stronger economy.”

Perry was joined at the ceremony by Ken Undercoffer, President, Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited and Don Robertson, President, Pennsylvania Division Izaak Walton League.

“Trout need clean, cold water in order to survive. Now global warming promises to reduce even further the number of streams left in Pennsylvania that can support wild trout populations,” said Ken Undercoffer, President of the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited. “Sportsmen and women and others who spend time outdoors can already see the effects of climate change. This is not a conservative or a liberal issue. We are all responsible for finding solutions and the time to act is now.”

Video Blog: [Ken Undercoffer on Climate Change Impact on Fish Resources](#)

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An Environmental Protection Agency report shows that if the temperature increases as scientists predict, Pennsylvania will lose over 50 percent of its trout fisheries.

Some of Pennsylvania's world-class smallmouth bass fisheries are also feeling the impacts of climate change. Mini-droughts coupled with high summer water temperature have lowered dissolved oxygen levels in the past few years in the Susquehanna and Juniata Rivers, stressing smallmouth bass and making them vulnerable to bacterial infection. In 2005 and 2007, these conditions caused major kills in the Susquehanna and Juniata Rivers where Columnaris infected nearly 50 percent of the Juniata River's juvenile smallmouth bass.

"We can no longer sit on the sidelines and not ask them (members of Congress) to do something," said Robertson. "Our view on global warming is there is a threat to migratory birds and that threat could undo all the work we have done in the past 80 years. Fish and wildlife are already feeling the affects."

Video Blog: [Don Robertson, Izaak Walton League, Urges Climate Action](#)

According to the US Fish & Wildlife Service's 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife, in Pennsylvania 982,000 participants spent over \$1.2 billion on fishing and more than 1 million participants spent over \$1.4 billion on hunting.

For more information, visit the [Global Warming and PA webpage](#) or contact Ed Perry by sending email to: PaGlobalWarmingOutreach@gmail.com.

NewsClip: [State Groups Lend Support to Climate Change Letter](#)
[PA Considers Putting Carbon in Old Mines, Abandoned Oil Wells](#)
[Editorial: Next President Must Address Climate](#)
[Editorial: Too Few Paying Attention to Climate Change](#)
[Editorial: Global Warming Balance](#)

Links: [Global Warming and Pennsylvania](#)

[PA Hunters, Anglers Seeing Signs of Global Warming - Survey](#)

Mercer County Company Saves Over \$500,000 in Energy Costs

[Joy Cone](#), a Mercer County-based company that makes ice cream cones, recently saved more than \$500,000 in energy costs due to recommendations made by Penn State's [Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program](#) and [The Energy Management Institute](#).

An audit of Joy Cone operations evaluated motors, compressors, lighting, and energy accounting suggestions based on load requirements and electricity and gas use and cost.

The study resulted in an estimated annual savings opportunity of 16,039 MCF of natural gas and an estimated annual reduction of 651,743 kWh of electricity. These natural gas and electricity savings represent a total annual energy savings of 19,626 million BTU/yr, which equates to a potential total annual energy cost savings of \$482,684.

Also identified were another \$38,300/yr of non-energy related savings, bringing the total identified estimated savings opportunities to \$520,984/yr.

The total implementation cost for the measures will be approximately \$147,505, giving an average simple payback of 3.4 months.

The Energy Management Institute located at ETAC at Northampton Community College provides manufacturing companies with the skills necessary to effectively manage

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energy efficiency through reductions in energy consumption and costs through investment-grade energy audits.

For more information, please contact Pete Roberts, EMI Manager, 610-861-5367 or send email to: plroberts@etctr.com.

Workshop on Environmental, Safety Issues Facing Contractors, Engineers March 5

The 14th annual Northeast Regional Contractors/Engineers Workshop will be held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., on March 5, at Keystone College, Route 6, in LaPlume, Lackawanna County.

The workshop is a partnership among the Department of Environmental Protection; the Wyoming, Luzerne and Lackawanna county conservation districts; and the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

“In order for contractors, engineers, public works departments, well drillers and developers to protect our environment, we need to educate them on our environmental and safety regulations,” said DEP Northeast Regional Director Michael Bedrin. “That’s the goal of this workshop.”

The workshop will feature sessions on underground safety laws and PA One Call, commercial vehicle safety, land clearing, demolition waste handling procedures, alternative best management practices for soil disturbance, timber harvesting planning, and flood control.

Registrations must be made by March 1. The cost is \$5, which includes lunch and refreshments.

For further information or to register, contact Carol Owens at the Wyoming County Conservation District at 570-836-6063, or send email to: carol.owens@pa.nacdnet.net.

Society of Women Environmental Professionals Conference in Harrisburg

The [Society of Women Environmental Professionals](#) Capital Chapter’s “Making Environmental Connections” conference is slated for March 6 at Harrisburg Area Community College’s C. Ted Lick Wildwood Conference Center.

Registration deadline is February 22.

The theme of this year’s conference is “Understanding Your Carbon Footprint: Global, National, and Local Perspectives”. The daylong conference will include educational panel presentations by top industry professionals on how transportation choices, waste generation, electricity consumption, and consumer preferences have an impact on our carbon footprint.

Local college and university students will have the unique opportunity to participate in an information exchange with environmental professionals attending the conference. Environmental practitioners from the public and private sectors will share their experiences with students during a special one-on-one career mentoring session.

Sarah Hetzecker from SunTechnics will deliver the luncheon keynote address. Ms. Hetzecker, an entrepreneur and one of Pennsylvania's "Best 50 Women in Business" is a recognized leader in the solar business community.

Under Ms. Hetzecker’s leadership, Falls Township, Pennsylvania will soon be home to one of the nation's largest solar-energy installations, a 16.5-acre array of 17,000 panels that should produce enough power to meet the annual needs of up to 400 homes.

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More information, visit the [Making Environmental Connections Conference](#) webpage or call 717-705-4921.

Grants by Greater Philadelphia Society of Women Environmental Professionals

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals is now accepting applications for its [2008 Environmental Grant Program](#) to help fund organizations or programs that creatively address local environmental issues.

Applications are due March 21.

Grants of between \$1,000 and \$2,000 will be awarded to groups addressing locally defined needs to create, enhance, restore, or protect the natural environment or to provide environmental awareness through educational sessions.

The grant awards will be announced during National Environmental Education Week-- April 13 -19.

To be eligible for the grant, applicants and projects must be located within southeast Pennsylvania or northern Delaware. Eligible applicants may include non-profit organizations, education centers, youth groups, and individuals.

Many different types of projects will be considered; however, preference will be given to projects related to local environmental issues, projects involving women's and/or girl's organizations, and projects fostering the involvement of women and/or girls in environmental issues, the sciences, or engineering.

For more information, visit the [2008 Environmental Grant Program](#) webpage or contact Kathy Zvarick by sending email to: KZvarick@EnvStd.com.

Trash Challenge Forces Participants to Lug Their Weekly Trash

Edna Baehre, Ph.D., president of HACC—Central Pennsylvania's Community College, Douglas Neidich, CEO of Powers & Associates, and Kimberly Hummel, chair of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals (Capital Chapter) will take part in [The Trash Challenge](#) where they get to carry around the trash they generate over a week to dramatize the environmental impact of garbage.

Beginning February 22, these local leaders will not only find out how much garbage they generate, they will carry it with them everywhere they go for an entire week.

The Trash Challenge is the brainchild of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals who is testing the amount of garbage produced by individuals in a one-week time period.

While the national average is 4.5 pounds of garbage per day, a final weigh-in for participants will be held at HACC's Midtown Campus at 10 a.m. February 29, to see how Central Pennsylvania fares.

Participants will then report on their challenges at SWEP's Making Environmental Connections Conference on March 6 at HACC's Wildwood Conference Center.

Denise Brinley, SWEP Program Chair, explains further, "The idea of the Trash Challenge is to get citizens and students engaged and thinking about how much waste they actually generate. What better way for people need to understand what a difference waste reduction, recycling, and composting can make than to carry your trash around with you?" Brinley added, "Reducing the amount of waste you generate is one simple way to

contribute to a cleaner environment. If our project helps just one person send less waste to a landfill, then we'll feel like we have done our job."

Baehre, Neidich and Hummel, along with students in HACC's environmental program, will be required to collect and carry with them all waste produced at their workplaces and in their homes, with the exception of things that will be reused, composted or recycled. In other words, the less garbage that goes in the recycle bin or reused, the more garbage they will be carrying with them during the challenge week.

Every participant in the Trash Challenge will quickly discover the consequences of their habits.

For more information, visit the [Trash Challenge webpage](#) or call 717-705-4921.

Lancaster Solid Waste Management Authority Achieves ISO 14001 Certification

The [Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority's](#) integrated solid waste management system has earned ISO 14001 certification from the international certification body Lloyd's Register Quality Assurance Ltd for its environmental management system.

The scope of the EMS includes the activities, and services of LCSWMA for the disposal or processing of collected household hazardous, municipal and residual wastes which includes the Resource Recovery Facility, the Frey Farm Landfill and the Transfer Complex Facilities, including the Transfer Station and transfer operations, the Household Hazardous Waste Facility and the Maintenance Facility.

LCSWMA is only the second integrated solid waste management system in the United States to have achieved [ISO 14001 certification](#).

Jim Warner, LCSWMA's Executive Director said, "This certificate distinguishes our Authority from our peers in the degree of care and responsibility we undertake in the management of solid waste and recyclable material. We continually strive to improve our environmental management systems for the ultimate benefit to the Lancaster County community."

For more information, visit the [Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority website](#).

Youth Bass Anglers Conservation School Invites Students to Apply



Interested young anglers from across the state are invited to register, beginning March 1, for the [Bass Anglers Conservation School](#), Pennsylvania's unique learning experience for young students with a passion for fishing and a thirst for warm-water

fishery knowledge.

The school will be offered July 13-17 on Lake Perez at Pennsylvania State University's Stone Valley Recreation Area, Huntingdon County.

"We are proud to again 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 Department of Conservation and Natural Resources 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."

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The five-day, four-night program will include sessions on fishery biology, fisheries management, habitat improvement, boating safety, fishing skills and techniques, fish and boating law enforcement, fisheries and conservation careers and tournament angling. Other conservation-related and hands-on activities also are planned.

Students will learn from experts and professionals in various conservation fields from across Pennsylvania and the nation. Instruction will be 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.

"Excellent angling programs have helped create not only better anglers, but also better citizens," said Fish and Boat Commission Executive Director Doug Austen. "Research clearly shows that good, well-structured youth fishing programs like this help kids increase their skills, fish more, and build a greater sense of aquatic stewardship and outdoor ethics."

The Youth Bass Anglers Conservation School is a cooperative effort by DCNR's Bureau of State Parks, the PFBC, [PA Bass Federation Inc.](#), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pennsylvania State University 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."

A total of 20 students will be selected. Students are encouraged to seek organizational sponsorship through sporting, community or civic groups to cover the \$200 enrollment fee.

The application and enrollment process for students ages 14-17 continues through April 30. Applicants must submit a one-page essay addressing: "What fishing means to me; the importance of conservation; and why I want to attend the school." A letter of recommendation from a teacher or close associate also is required.

Enrollment applications and more details can be obtained at the [Bass Anglers Conservation School](#) webpage or from Bureau of State Parks Environmental Education Specialist Spring Reilly at 814-625-9369, or send email to: spreilly@state.pa.us.

Applications Now Being Accepted for Boating Facilities Grant Program

The Fish and Boat Commission is now encouraging county and municipal governments interested in the planning, acquisition, development, expansion, or rehabilitation of public boating facilities to apply for funding through the [Boating Facility Grant Program](#).

The deadline for applications is September 30.

The program is designed to help local governments provide or improve recreational boat access facilities in their communities that are open to the public. Private businesses, non-profit or not-for-profit organizations, and service clubs are not eligible for direct funding, but are encouraged to partner with their local government for funding.

Applicants can seek grants for site acquisition, project design and engineering, development, expansion and major rehabilitation of recreational boat access facilities. Activities must benefit and directly support public recreational boating.

Eligible projects must be constructed on public lands owned by the project sponsor or leased for at least 25 years where ownership rights must provide for permanent control

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of the property commensurate with the proposed development. Eligible construction projects include: boat ramps, courtesy floats, restrooms, access roads, parking areas, landscaping in direct relation to access development, transient tie-up floats, and signs. Grant funds are to be used only for major site improvements and not for any routine maintenance or operation activities.

The PFBC gives highest priority to the rehabilitation of existing facilities, followed by expansion of existing facilities and then acquisition and development of new boating facilities. Since funding for the grant program is derived principally from fees on registered motorboats, the highest funding priorities are those projects that serve or provide direct benefits to this user group.

Since many access sites are used by both motorized and non-motorized boats, the Commission will give priority to projects that have 70 percent or more motorized use based on a review of existing use at the site or nearby sites. The Commission will grant projects based on local, regional and statewide needs such as boat use and number of boaters served, relationship to adjacent or nearby public and private boating facilities (ramps and/or marinas) and needs based on strategic statewide, regional or local plans.

Successful applicants must agree to provide a 25 percent grant match and be willing to enter into a long-term agreement to keep the facility open to free public use. The PFBC will give priority funding consideration to applicants that provide more than the required 25 percent match, thereby, reducing the total amount of grant funds required to complete the projects. The PFBC recognizes that in some instances, matching funds will not easily be obtained by the applicant. In some of these select instances, the Commission may approve up to 100 percent of the construction costs.

The Boating Facility Grant Program is a reimbursable grant program. Grant funds will be disbursed to the applicants/recipients only after completion of the project occurs and agency staff has verified that the work has been completed.

Program grant funds are available in each annual state fiscal period as authorized and allocated by the PFBC. All work funded for this round of grants should be completed by December 31, 2010.

The Commission may adjust the amount of funds available, application, and consideration dates to meet existing needs or opportunities that may occur. Large projects may be phased in over several fiscal years to maximize leverage, distribution, and availability of funds.

The Boating Facility Grant Program funds are derived from boat registration fees, state fuel taxes collected on fuel used in motorboats, and taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel from the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program. No general state funds are used for any Commission programs.

For more information, visit the [Boating Facility Grant Program webpage](#).

Save the Date: West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium July 18-19

The 2008 [West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium](#) will be held on July 18-19 at the Nittany Lion Inn, State College, Pa.

Anyone interested in restoring the West Branch is invited to attend this premier event which serves as a regional forum for exchanging information and networking for



volunteers, policy-makers, technical experts and students.

While actively involved with acid mine drainage cleanup in the Kettle Creek watershed, Trout Unlimited took its AMD remediation work to the next level and established the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Initiative in 2004.

This initiative is aimed at the restoration of coldwater streams and the ultimate recovery of the West Branch Susquehanna River. As the lead non-profit organization for this initiative, TU is working with numerous local, state, and federal government and non-government organizations on a coordinated, strategic, and cost-effective AMD cleanup approach for the entire river basin.

Trout Unlimited is also providing organizational support to the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition, a group that represents the collective efforts of watershed groups, Trout Unlimited chapters, county conservation districts, businesses, and others that are working to address AMD problems throughout the West Branch Susquehanna River basin.

For more information, [download the Symposium Brochure](#) or call 570-726-3118 or contact Amy Wolfe, Director of Abandoned Mine Programs, or send email to: awolfe@tu.org or Rebecca Dunlap, West Branch Project Manager, or send email to: rdunlap@tu.org .

Links: [West Branch Symposium Attracts Over 140](#)

Video Blog: [Amy Wolfe Talks About the West Branch Project](#)

Pennsylvania Reduces Toxic Chemical Releases by 3.3 Million Pounds

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week released the 2006 Toxics Release Inventory which reports Pennsylvania reduced its toxic releases by 3.3 million pounds between [2005](#) and [2006](#).

The TRI provides information on toxic chemicals used and released by utilities, refineries, chemical manufacturers, paper companies, and many other facilities across the nation.

“This valuable information provides community residents with a snapshot of facilities in their neighborhoods,” said Donald S. Welsh, EPA mid-Atlantic regional administrator. “It has also been credited with encouraging facilities to reduce their releases of toxic chemicals into the environment through source reduction or pollution prevention measures.”

In EPA’s three state mid-Atlantic region, the 2006 TRI data indicate a small decrease (0.3 percent) of 1.1 million pounds of on/off site chemical releases as compared with 2005.

A total of 382.1 million pounds of chemicals were released on and off-site during 2006 to the air, water or landfills by facilities in the mid-Atlantic region, which is comprised of Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Releases in this same geographic area totaled 383.3 million pounds in 2005.

When compared with the 2000 TRI data of 464.7 million pounds released, the 2006 figures represent a 17.8 percent reduction in toxic pollutants released by facilities in the region. This was accomplished by process modifications, raw material substitution and pollution control equipment.

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On a national level, total releases reported to TRI from 2001 to 2006 decreased by 24 percent. The data include information on releases and other wastes from more than 650 chemicals and chemical compounds that companies are required to report under EPA's TRI. Included are chemicals that were released at companies' facilities and those transported to disposal facilities off site.

This is the second year in a row that TRI data is being made available to the public earlier in the year. Continued increases in electronic reporting and improvements in data processing and analysis make earlier announcements possible.

It is important to note that these chemical emissions are reported to EPA under the TRI and generally do not reflect illegal discharges of pollutants to the environment.

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

Goldschmidt Industrial Chemical Latest EPA Performance Track Member

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced this week that [Goldschmidt Industrial Chemical Corp.](#) of McDonald, Pa is one of 42 new members of [EPA's Performance Track Program](#) bringing total membership nationwide to over 500.

[Nineteen facilities](#) in Pennsylvania now belong to the program.

Performance Track recognizes facilities that have a strong record of environmental compliance, set three-year goals for continuous improvements in environmental performance beyond their legal requirements, have internal systems in place to manage their environmental impacts, engage in community outreach and consistently report results.

Performance Track facilities must meet all environmental regulatory requirements and typically set four goals for environmental improvement (facilities with less than 50 full-time employees set two goals).

Since the 2000 launch of this facility-based program, Performance Track membership has grown to 538 members in 49 states and Puerto Rico, and those members have set more than 3,500 goals to benefit the environment in both regulated and unregulated areas.

Through goals that have been set since the inception of the program, Performance Track members have reported greenhouse gas reductions of 310,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, reductions in nitrogen oxides of 13,000 tons, and reductions of hazardous waste of 52,000 tons.

For more information, visit [EPA's Performance Track Program webpage](#).

New Brownfield Environmental Covenants Law Now In Effect

The new [Uniform Environmental Covenants Act](#) became effective this week that is designed to give residents and businesses greater confidence that protective measures required as part of the state's contaminated sites cleanup program will stay in place, even after properties change hands and over long periods of time.

"Pennsylvania has been a national leader in land recycling, and approximately 1,600 environmental remediation actions have been completed at contaminated industrial and commercial sites since 2003," said DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty. "Our new Uniform Environmental Covenants Act will make it easier for DEP to track whether measures taken to make the property safe are maintained over time. This measure will

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protect the public health and give businesses the confidence they need to invest in these sites and return them to productive use."

When contaminated sites are cleaned up under Pennsylvania's Land Recycling and Environmental Remediation Standards Act, the remediation plans may control on-site contaminants with physical barriers like water-tight caps, or limit the property's use by prohibiting the use of well water for drinking.

However, such measures must remain in place and followed in order to protect the public.

The new Uniform Environmental Covenants Act, or Act 68 signed into law in December, and creates a legal covenant that is recorded in the county where the property is located. The covenant is signed by the property owner and DEP at the time the remediation measures are put in place.

The covenant—which is perpetual until terminated through state law—remains with the land, so whoever owns the property is subject to it.

DEP has developed tools to implement Act 68, including a model covenant and model notice of environmental covenant. The agency is also working to develop a publicly accessible Environmental Covenant Registry.

The registry will include information on the property's location, including county, municipality, and other location information; the date the covenant was recorded by a county's recorder of deeds; and a listing of the engineering and institutional controls that were required for any cleanup conducted under Pennsylvania's applicable environmental laws.

Using the registry will allow neighbors of remediated sites to determine whether measures safeguarding their health are still in place, regardless of the amount of time that has elapsed or number of owners associated with the property.

For businesses, the key to the land recycling process is release from liability once the contaminated site has been remediated in accordance with state law. Prospective buyers and sellers of the property need to know that any required engineering and institutional controls are in place so to preserve the release from liability.

Act 68 is part of a national effort by states to standardize the creation, documentation and enforceability of institutional controls on contaminated sites. The new law affects Pennsylvania's Land Recycling and Environmental Remediation Standards Act, the Storage Tank and Spill Prevention Act, the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act, the Clean Streams Law and the Solid Waste Management Act.

Businesses operating in multiple states will have greater confidence given the protection from liability available under this uniform approach.

For more information, visit the [Uniform Environmental Covenants Act webpage](#).

Pittsburgh OKs Environmental Charter School at Frick Park

Pittsburgh Public Schools this week approved a new charter application for The Environmental Charter School at Frick Park...An Imagine School.

In support of the recommendation, the Review Team noted that The Environmental Charter School at Frick Park “has demonstrated sustainable support from the community for the charter school plan, has the capability to provide comprehensive learning experiences to students, and has the potential to serve as a model to other schools in the District.”

The findings of the District's [Charter Review Team](#) are available online.
NewsClip: [Board Approves New Charter School](#)

Students Can Tackle Real Environmental Problem in New Challenge Competition

As part of its 101st [Annual Conference & Exhibition](#), the Pittsburgh-based Air & Waste Management Association is challenging undergraduate and graduate students to try their hand at solving the types of environmental questions faced by professionals in the industry.

“The [student Environmental Challenge](#) is a new kind of experience that allows students to showcase their knowledge, discover what types of skills they still need to develop, and potentially catch the eye of industry leaders who manage some of the world’s biggest environmental programs,” said Adrienne Carolla, A&WMA Executive Director. “Our members are excited about how the ECi will allow them to share their experiences and interact with future professionals.”

The ECi requires students to build an interdisciplinary team of no more than five people to study a “true-to-life” environmental problem based on the experiences of A&WMA members.

The 2008 problem asks teams to consider how sustainable energy sources could replace a proposed fossil fuel-based Integrated Gasification Combined Cycle (IGCC) power plant in the Pacific Northwest, which was denied a permit. Teams will examine the issues surrounding the problem, discuss approaches to solving its challenges, and draft a presentation that will offer their potential solutions to judges during A&WMA’s Annual Conference & Exhibition in Portland, OR, June 24-27, 2008.

“The ECi committee has done its best to craft a competition that best simulates what environmental professionals face in their work,” said Steve Rybolt of the Port of Seattle, Chairman for A&WMA’s 2008 ECi. “We’ve even engineered a mechanism through which student teams can experience the twists, turns, and unexpected issues that almost always impact projects with environmental consequences.”

Student teams should expect some “late breaking” news on the problem that could require alterations to their proposals. Students will need to network among A&WMA members during the Annual Conference & Exhibition to evaluate the changes to the problem, and modify their presentations.

In addition to offering high-quality exposure to potential employers, student teams are eligible to win more than \$15,000 in cash prizes. The ECi is sponsored by URS Corp. and the chapters of A&WMA’s Pacific Northwest International Section.

Student housing is available at Portland State University. Additionally, student teams should check with local A&WMA sections and chapters regarding the availability of funding for students attending the Annual Conference & Exhibition.

As part of the Annual Conference & Exhibition, students can submit an abstract for A&WMA’s student poster competition, attend panel discussions and tours designed for new professionals, and tour the exhibit hall.

For more information, visit the [student Environmental Challenge](#) webpage or contact Steve Rybolt by sending email to: rybolt.s@portseattle.org.

Help Wanted: PRC Eastern Regional Director

The [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) is seeking a Regional Director for its eastern office located in Ridley Creek State Park in Delaware County.

The Regional Director is responsible for managing staff, environmental resource conservation programs, budgets and facilities. PRC conducts a variety of environmental education and public outreach programs with schools, communities and businesses on topics such as litter prevention, recycling, waste reduction, energy conservation and watershed awareness.

Successful candidates must have B.S./B.A., Environmental or Business Management, Public Relations, or related program with 5 to 10 years work experience in related field and minimum of 3 years management history

Resumes may be submitted to Larry D. Myers, 320 Allison Drive, Greensburg, PA 15601 or send e-mail to: myers@prc.org

Spotlight

Chesapeake Bay Foundation: More Funding Needed to Cleanup PA Waters



Kim Patten, Pennsylvania Deputy Director of the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#), provided comments to the Senate Republican Policy Committee this week on the funding needs for cleaning up Pennsylvania's waterways leading to the Chesapeake Bay. Here are her comments--

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation is pleased to submit this statement in advance of the Senate Majority Policy Committee's public hearing on the Chesapeake Bay

Tributary Strategy on February 21, 2008.

CBF is the largest non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay, its tributaries, and its resources. With the support of over 190,000 members, our staff of scientists, attorneys, educators, and policy experts work to ensure that policy, regulation, and legislation are protective of the quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed.

Various media reports in recent weeks have focused on the high costs to municipal wastewater treatment plants of complying with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy. Threats of litigation challenging the Tributary Strategy have been discussed. What has not often been clearly reported, however, is that compliance with the Tributary Strategy is required by the federal Clean Water Act.

The Clean Water Act requires states to establish water quality standards necessary to protect their waters, and update these standards every three years. In 2005, the state of Maryland established new water quality standards for the Chesapeake Bay. The Clean Water Act requires all point source discharge permits to meet downstream water quality standards, even the standards of another state.

Because Pennsylvania's wastewater treatment plants contribute to the water quality problems of the Bay in Maryland, these plants are now legally required to limit their output

of nitrogen and phosphorus - the main polluting agents contributing to the violation of Maryland's water quality standards. Any permit issued to a wastewater treatment plant in the Bay watershed that does not contain these limits would be in violation of the Clean Water Act.

In order to meet Pennsylvania's legal obligation to clean up the Bay, the Pennsylvania Tributary Strategy allocates overall nutrient load reductions to the various sources based on their scientifically determined fair share. For example, wastewater treatment plants contribute approximately 18 percent of the total phosphorus and 11 percent of the total nitrogen load. Accordingly, plants are expected to make proportional nutrient pollution reductions necessary to meet Pennsylvania's Bay clean up requirements.

The same holds true for agriculture which represents about 50 percent of the total phosphorus and 63 percent of the total nitrogen load and also must make comparative reductions.

The cost of achieving compliance with these nutrient load reductions is high for all sectors. The most recent cost estimates for point source compliance ranges from \$620 million (PA DEP estimate) to \$1 billion (PMAA estimate). The cost for farmers to comply with the required reductions from agriculture is \$593 million (PA DEP). Given these high burdens on municipalities and farmers—both sectors with limited financial resources and significant regulatory obligations—CBF believes that the Commonwealth must provide funding to help them achieve Clean Water Act compliance.

Municipalities in Pennsylvania are currently facing the full financial brunt of constructing upgrades necessary to meet new nutrient limits in their NPDES permits. To the best of our knowledge, Maryland has provided roughly \$133 million in funding, and plans to spend at least an additional \$617 million, toward the total compliance cost estimated at \$1 billion. In Virginia, where the total cost of Chesapeake Bay compliance is about \$1.09 billion, the state has provided or committed over \$980 million to assist plants in making the necessary upgrades. We urge Pennsylvania to follow the lead of its sister Bay states by closing the existing funding gap that municipalities currently face as they seek to move forward on plant upgrades.

Pennsylvania also needs to provide additional funding to farmers to help them install conservation practices on their farms. In 2005, DEP identified a gap of \$174.2 million annually between existing funding levels and the funding necessary to meet Tributary Strategy requirements for agriculture.

At the state level, we can build on recent and important successes. Last year, thanks to widespread bipartisan support and leadership, Pennsylvania enacted the [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act \(REAP\) program](#), a new tax credit program and the first of its kind in the country, to help farmers implement practices to improve water quality. The \$10 million in tax credits available in 2008 was gone within the first 10 days of the enrollment period. And that \$10 million in state tax credits leveraged nearly another \$10 million in private investment by farmers. With demand exceeding supply for this successful program, and a daunting funding gap still remaining to achieve Chesapeake Bay clean up goals for agriculture, we look forward to working with state leaders to expand REAP to \$50 million in this year's state budget to meet the demand of the agriculture community to help protect Pennsylvania's clean water.

Cuts to Conservation District funding as proposed in the Governor's budget request for this year will set back Pennsylvania's ability to meet its Tributary Strategy requirements for agriculture. Conservation Districts should be funded at levels required to

ensure they are fully staffed and operational and capable of delivering the assistance needed to help farmers put conservation practices on the ground.

There are also significant federal level opportunities that should not be ignored for increasing conservation funding for farmers. Environmental and agricultural partners alike have been working hard to secure additional conservation dollars for our region’s farmers through the federal Farm Bill, which to date has not yet been reauthorized.

Delay in implementing the Tributary Strategy is something Pennsylvania can no longer afford. Simply put, timely implementation is required by federal law. DEP has issued the NPDES permits to the major wastewater treatment plants in the Bay watershed which include the nutrient limits necessary to meet Maryland water quality standards for the Bay. These permits have 5-year terms, and require compliance with nutrient limits by 2010. Where additional time beyond 2010 is needed to accommodate construction needs, the permits have provided it in the form of 1 to 3 year compliance schedules as permitted by law.

We are concerned that any litigation challenging the Tributary Strategy would only delay compliance with mandatory Clean Water Act provisions, and may place municipalities in an even more difficult position financially to ultimately meet these requirements. Quick action to provide a substantial funding source to assist Pennsylvania’s municipalities and similar financial assistance to increase implementation of agricultural conservation practices may go a long way toward preventing this waste of time and resources and ensuring that the Commonwealth continues on the path toward meeting its Chesapeake Bay clean up obligations.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this issue. Our staff is happy to answer any questions that you may have regarding these issues. Please feel free to contact us.

For more information, visit the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation/Pennsylvania webpage](#).

Spotlight

Nutrient Credit Trading Valuable Tool to Reduce Water Quality Cleanup Costs

Brian Hill, President & CEO of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and Matthew Ehrhart, Senior Vice President for Watersheds & Working Lands, provided the Senate Republican Policy Committee this week with an overview of their work on the nutrient credit trading program in Pennsylvania. Here are their comments—

The Council is active in the development of nutrient trading policy and the nutrient trading program in Pennsylvania. We also coordinated and managed the first nutrient credit trade at the New Street Park in Lititz in 2004 with Pfizer, Inc. We believe that nutrient trading will provide a flexible and voluntary option for achieving net water quality improvement to the Chesapeake Bay.



Little Conestoga Project

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We recognize that it is not a panacea, but it is an important tool to help improve water quality. We understand that trading presents several challenges, including credit estimation, certification, and market confidence. However, the Council believes that nutrient trading can work. The Council has learned that partnerships and communication are the key ingredients for the success of the trading program.

The Council is currently managing the development of an online nutrient trading marketplace, pilot projects, and third party nutrient trading proposal review services in coordination with the Department of Environmental Protection (Department) as part of the overall effort to develop a functioning nutrient trading market for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed in Pennsylvania.

The Council has led or is leading several efforts to further the development of the nutrient trading program in Pennsylvania. These efforts are described below:

NutrientNet Online Trading Tool

The Council is working with the World Resources Institute to develop an online marketplace for nutrient reduction credits available for sale from both point sources like wastewater treatment plant and nonpoint sources like farms. The marketplace is called [NutrientNet](#) and was originally developed by WRI to provide a central standardized nutrient trading credit exchange or marketplace where nutrient trading parties can post offers to buy and sell certified nutrient reduction credits in watersheds across the country.

WRI is also working in Michigan, West Virginia and the District of Columbia to develop trading tools similar to the tool being developed for the Bay Watershed in PA.

PA NutrientNet includes a nutrient reduction credit calculation tool which will enable a farmer or a Conservation District to estimate how many nutrient reduction credits can be generated by agricultural best management practices such as stream bank fencing or conservation tillage.

The tool includes 10 crop and pasture BMPs, four streambank BMPs and a manure management BMP as part of the credit estimation component. The tool will provide a marketplace for farmers or wastewater treatment plant operators to post "buy" or "sell" offers for sale for DEP certified nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment reduction credits at variable prices. The tool will automatically convert nutrient and sediment reductions at their source, either a wastewater treatment facility or farm, and apply the appropriate nutrient trading ratios as specified by PA trading policy.

A trial version of the website will be delivered in the spring of 2008. The Council will coordinate with the Department and project partners to publicize the deployment of the NutrientNet tool.

Currently, County Conservation Districts are reviewing draft phosphorous reduction calculation spreadsheets for agricultural best management practices. Following their review, the spreadsheets will be installed as part of the online nutrient trading tool analysis. Members of the Technical Subcommittee of the Agricultural Workgroup, that reports to the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Steering Committee, including Dr. Doug Beegle and Dr. Barry Evans of the Pennsylvania State University, have assisted the Department, the Council and WRI with development of calculation methodologies for the online nutrient trading tool.

A version of the NutrientNet tool has already been successfully demonstrated in a pilot nutrient trading project in the Conestoga Watershed in Lancaster County with the vital assistance of the Lancaster County Conservation District.

Conestoga River Reverse Auction Project

The Council recently completed the [Conestoga River Reverse Auction Project](#) in Lancaster County using the NutrientNet tool to estimate and rank competing agricultural BMPs on multiple farms based on their cost-effectiveness in reducing phosphorous runoff from crop fields and livestock operations.

The Council used a reverse auction format where multiple sellers (farmers) competed to bid the price down of pounds of nutrient reductions (phosphorous) to a single buyer (PEC). With the assistance of the Lancaster County Conservation District and WRI, the Council solicited bids from over 25 farmers for over 30 different BMP projects. PEC awarded approximately \$481,000 to 13 farms for the installation of the 16 most cost-effective projects that are reducing phosphorous runoff to local streams. The Reverse Auction was supported by a grant from the USDA NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant Program.

Antrim Township Nutrient Trading Planning Project

Beginning in the spring of 2007 the Council, in partnership with [LandStudies, Inc.](#) and Brinjac Engineering, are assisting Antrim Township in Adams County with evaluating nutrient trading options as part of their Act 537 wastewater treatment planning efforts.

LandStudies is proceeding with a detailed evaluation of a floodplain restoration, wetland creation, and legacy sediment removal project in Antrim Township that could generate nutrient and sediment reduction credits to offset the Township's wastewater treatment plant permit requirements. The Antrim Township project is scheduled for completion in June of this year.

The lower Susquehanna and Potomac basins have many legacy sediment sites that could lead to major water quality improvements by restoring floodplains, creating wetlands, and removing sediments created by historic land clearing and mill dam construction activities. The Legacy Sediment Workgroup that also reports to the Department's Tributary Strategy Steering Committee is evaluating the potential for legacy sediment removal as a viable nutrient trading strategy for the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Golf Course Best Management Practices Manual

The Council is also working with LandStudies and golf course industry representatives to develop a [best management practices manual for golf courses](#) in Pennsylvania. The manual will include such practices as buffer installation, floodplain and wetland restoration, and composted manure applications. These practices can reduce maintenance costs while also reducing nutrient and sediment runoff from golf courses.

The manual will enable golf courses to improve stormwater management, aquifer recharge and filtration, water usage, native plant communities, and wildlife habitat, and will help courses and municipalities meet stormwater management requirements. And for those interested in carbon sequestration, such practices may have the potential of sequestering carbon.

The project team will also develop a framework for quantifying nutrient and sediment reduction credits through this process. The final product will be published in a handbook, available in both hard copy and web-based formats.

Third Party Nutrient Trading Proposal Review Services

The Council is also overseeing the third party nutrient trading proposal review services provided by the Penn State Institutes of Energy and the Environment. Dr. Barry Evans is leading the review team which will provide impartial and expert nutrient trading proposal review services through June 30, 2008. This service should help expedite and

streamline the current nutrient trading credit proposal review, approval, and certification process.

The NutrientNet, Antrim Township Planning Project, Golf Course BMP Project and 3rd Party Review Service Projects will be completed by June 30, 2008.

Exelon Partnership: East Hempfield Township Forested Riparian Buffer

In September 22, 2007 the Council, in partnership with Exelon Corporation, Lancaster General Hospital, Little Conestoga Watershed Alliance, Lancaster County Conservancy, Environmental Resources Trust, and RETTEW Associates, planted a forested riparian buffer along 1,100 feet of an unnamed tributary to the Little Conestoga River in East Hempfield Township, Lancaster County.

The project will demonstrate how a privately-funded conservation effort can generate transferable carbon sequestration and nutrient reduction trading credits by implementing agricultural best management practices.

With the support of Exelon Corporation, the Council will transfer title to the environmental credits from the property owner, Lancaster General HealthCare Foundation, to the Exelon Corporation for a period of 25 years. The forested buffer will be placed under a conservation easement held by the Lancaster County Conservancy for the 25-year term. (See [Video Blog feature on this project](#))

Poultry Manure for AML Restoration Project

The Council is leading an effort to demonstrate an innovative mine reclamation process at a 30-acre commercial-scale mining operation by using excess poultry manure and poultry manure compost to grow warm-season grasses for biomass production at an operating coal mine or abandoned mine land site. Up to 1,500 tons of poultry manure will be needed for the reclamation of the mined property.

The project will include assistance to those farmers who are eligible to generate nutrient reduction credits through manure export from their operations with participation in the nutrient trading program. (See [Video Blog feature on this project](#))

Conclusion

In Conclusion, we recognize that there are several challenges that remain, including the significant expense for upgrading wastewater treatment facilities and the need for securing long-term sources of nutrient reduction credits to meet the demands of the development community. The Council supports additional funding for wastewater infrastructure improvements and also recommends a focused effort to find long-term sources of credits for new developments.

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council was founded in 1970 and serves the entire state through offices in Meadville, Wilkes-Barre, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia. For more information visit www.pecpa.org or call 717-230-8044.

Grants & Awards

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 29**— [Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants](#)
- **February 29**— [Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Grants](#)

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- **February 29--** [Schuylkill River Heritage Area Regular Grants](#)
- **March 12—** [PEC Western PA Environmental Awards](#)
- **March 17—** [Community Action for a Renewed Environment Grants](#)
- **March 21—NEW.** [Society of Women Environmental Professionals 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—** [Write On! Wetlands Challenge Student Competition](#)
- **April 2 –** [WREN Water Resources Education Project Grants](#)
- **April 4—** [Schuylkill River Heritage Area Mini-Grants](#)
- **April 25—** DCNR [Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grants](#)
- **May 1—** [PA CleanWays’ Sue Wiseman Student Scholarship](#)
- **May 20 –** PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **June 20—** DEP [Section 902 Recycling Development Grants](#)
- **September 20—NEW.** [Fish & Boat Commission Boating Facilities Grants](#)

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

Quick Clips

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

[DEP Recognizes Second-Place Radon Poster Winner](#)

[Nothing is Not an Option on Climate Change](#)

[Climate Talk Heats Up at PSU](#)

[PA Considers Putting Carbon in Old Mines, Abandoned Oil Wells](#)

[Editorial: Next President Must Address Climate](#)

[Editorial: Too Few Paying Attention to Climate Change](#)

[Editorial: Global Warming Balance](#)

[Op-Ed: Wind Farms Should Not Damage Environment](#)

[PennFuture Leader Touts Renewable Wind Energy](#)

[Proposed Ethanol Pipeline Crosses Western PA](#)

[PECO Using Local Soybeans to Power Truck Fleet](#)

[Lawmakers Consider Energy Policy, Extending Rate Caps](#)

[State in Dash to Deal with Power Rates](#)

[Get Ready for a Jolt](#)

[Editorial: End of Electric Caps May Aid Conservation](#)

[Editorial: Make Conservation of Electricity Goal, Not Rate Cap Extension](#)

[Big Price Increase Behind Duquesne Light’s Decision to Leave PJM](#)

[DEP, Beaver County Non-Profits Help Residents Stay Warm](#)

[Gas Leasing Admonition: Understand Everything – Gas Leasing Q/A](#)

[Methane Gas Drilling Starts](#)

[PA Oil Production is Up, Doubling Between ’05, ’06](#)

[Big Interest in Gas Leasing, Huge Potential](#)

[Environmentalists Air Concerns Over Air Quality Program](#)

[Environmental Conference Draws a Green-Minded Crowd](#)
[EAC Gives Lehigh Valley Some Green Advice](#)
[PSU Wilkes-Barre Center Eco-Friendly](#)
[Penn State Initiatives Among College Energy Efforts in NWF Report](#)
[Editorial: Birds and Citizen Scientists](#)
[State Keeps Eye Out for Illness Menacing Bats](#)
[Trails Proposed to Criss-Cross Region](#)
[Rocks, Snakes and Beer on the Appalachian Trail](#)
[US Calls for Changes to Forest Drilling Plan](#)
[Editorial: Opportunity to Widen Protection for State's US Forest](#)
[Column: Threatened Amphibians Find Reptiland Haven](#)
[Time to Talk of Tiny Trees](#)
[Editorial: Low-Level Radioactive Waste](#)
[Proposed Mine Safety Bill Draws Criticism](#)
[Illegal Dumping Payment Sought](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[One Small Step: Glazed With What Oozed](#)
[Kids' Contest Focuses on Water](#)
[Teen Gives Fishing More Than a Sporting Chance](#)
[Army Corps Nixes Dam on Susquehanna River](#)
[Proposed Changes Could Unravel Great Lakes Compact](#)
[Op-Ed: Make Bay Cleanup Rules Fair](#)
[Sewage Plant Upgrade Come at High Price](#)
[Nobody Gets a Free Pass on Chesapeake Bay Mandate](#)
[Hearings Set on High Costs of Bay Cleanup](#)
[Clearfield Conservation District Receives Grant for Acid Mine](#)
[Flood Aid Plan Hits Questions on Fund Source](#)
[Official Questions Floodwalls' Worth](#)
[Easement Will Preserve McMichaels Creek Area](#)
[Pine Grove Holding On To 115-Acre Site as Watershed](#)
[Watershed Group Eyes Being Legal Nonprofit](#)
[Bedford Springs Golf Course Honored for Environmental Efforts](#)
[Harvey's Lake Eyes Solutions for Pollution](#)

Regulations

The [Environmental Quality Board this week approved](#) proposed regulations setting NOx emission standards for cement kilns and glass furnaces, adopted a final rulemaking streamlining air quality permits and accepted a petition to redesignate the Loyalsock Creek, Lycoming County for study. The EQB provided notice of these other actions--

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The Environmental Quality Board published notice of a March 27 hearing on a [unsuitable for mining petition](#) in Graham Township, Clearfield County and a notice extending the comment period for the [Triennial Review of Water Quality Standards](#) to March 27.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – February 23, 2008](#)

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 notice of a change in the formula used to calculate [long-term water supply replacement costs](#) related to mining operations.

[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. **NEW** indicates new from last week. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

- [Revised Meeting Schedule for DEP Certification Program Advisory Committee](#)
- [Revised Meeting Schedule for Water, Wastewater Systems Operators Board](#)
- **Watch budget hearings on PCN on cable or [online through your computer](#).**
- **February 14**—**CANCELLED**. [DEP Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board](#) meeting. Next scheduled meeting is May 7. (*Pa Bulletin notice*)
- **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. (**PCN Live Coverage**)
- **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. (**PCN Live Coverage**)
- **February 26**—[PA Chamber Energy Summit](#). Harrisburg Hilton.

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- **February 27**—**NEW**. House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee informational meeting on alternative energy. Room 205 Ryan Building. 2:00.
- **February 27**—**NEW**. Joint Legislative Budget and Finance Committee on [House Resolution 193](#) (Haluska-D-Cambria) fiscal impact of future increased value of the assets of Game Commission. Room 168 Main Capitol. 12:45.
- **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 27**—**NEW**. [DCNR Conservation and Natural Resources Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **February 28**—**NEW**. House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Economic Impact and Infrastructure hearing on Municipal Water, Sewer & Natural Gas Infrastructure. Middletown Township Building, Langhorne. 10:00.
- **February 28**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Agriculture. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00. **(PCN Live Coverage)**
- **February 28**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Health. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 10:30. **(PCN Live Coverage)**
- **February 28**—[Pennsylvania Wild Resources Symposium](#). [Powdermill Nature Reserve](#). Pittsburgh.
- **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**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Environmental Protection. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 3:00.
- **March 3**— [2008 Philadelphia Sustainability Awards Program](#). Philadelphia Flower Show.
- **March 4**—**Changed**. House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Environmental Protection. Room 140. 9:00.
- **March 4**— **Changed**. House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Room 140. 10:00.
- **March 4**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00. **(PCN Live Coverage)**
- **March 4**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Transportation. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 1:15. **(PCN Live Coverage)**
- **March 5**—**NEW**. [DEP Cleanup Standards Scientific Advisory Board](#) Risk Assessment and Vapor Intrusion Subcommittees meeting. 12th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **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.

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- **March 8**— [Southeast PA Environmental Advisory Council Conference](#). Villanova University, Villanova.
- **March 10-NEW**. House Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1360](#) (Casorio-D-Westmoreland) imposing a moratorium on implementation of the vehicle emissions inspection program. Room 302 Irvis Building. 12:30.
- **March 11-NEW**. House Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1360](#) (Casorio-D-Westmoreland) imposing a moratorium on implementation of the vehicle emissions inspection program, [House Resolution 567](#) (Petri-R-Bucks) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study intermodal transit in southeastern PA. Room 302 Irvis Building. 8:30.
- **March 11**— Senate Game and Fisheries Committee information meeting on the Game Commission’s Deer Management Program. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 11:00.
- **March 17**—**NEW**. House Republican Policy Committee hearing on electric rate cap mitigation. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 10:30.
- **March 17**—**NEW**. Environmental Issues Form featuring a presentation on the Northampton Generating Company co-generation plant sponsored by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#). Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **March 18**—**CANCELLED**. Environmental Quality Board meeting.
- **March 19**— Capital Region Water Board Meeting. Susquehanna River Basin Commission Building. 1:00. Contact: Cindy Rock, 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 .
- **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**—PEC [Water Trail Working Session Conference](#).
- **April 19**— 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 .
- **May 13-15**—[PA Water/Wastewater Association](#) annual conference. Valley Forge.
- **May 28**— [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

[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

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

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