

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

March 19, 2007

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

Middle Creek Home to Thousands of Migrating Birds, Video Blog Special

Each year the Game Commission's Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area on the Lebanon-Lancaster county line near Kleinfeltersville, PA hosts hundreds of thousands of migrating geese, swans and ducks.

Drew Lambert, PA Game Commission, talks about Middle Creek and the record 2007 season and the year-round activities that make the Area an attraction for wildlife enthusiasts.



And learn the story behind one of the Golden Eagles displayed at the visitors center by tuning into this **Video Blog** story: [The Golden Eagle At Middle Creek](#).

The Middle Creek Visitors Center is open Tuesday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.

For updated information on current "visitors" to Middle Creek, go to the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area webpage and checkout the webpage for its sister facility—the Pymatuning Wildlife Learning Center in Crawford County from the Game Commission's [Watchable Wildlife webpage](#).

Video Blog: [Middle Creek Home to Thousands of Migrating Birds](#)

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Session Schedule

The House returns to voting session March 19, 20, 21 and then breaks until April 16. The Senate returns as well March 19, but also has session the week of March 26 and then breaks until April 16.

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

- Exhibitors Show Off Watershed Initiatives at Schuylkill Watershed Congress
- Chesapeake Bay Foundation Promotes Help For Farmers and the Environment

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- Applications Due for Tulpehocken, Quittapahilla Creek Watershed Grants
- 2007 Watershed Snapshot Looking for Volunteers in April
- Regional Water Management Task Force Releases Phase I Report, Meetings Set
- Tour of Blue Valley Fish Culture/Acid Mine Drainage Treatment Plant March 25
- Youth Fishing, Aquatic Education Get Boost from Fish & Boat Commission Grants
- Students Head to Spring Break for a Different Kind of Sand, Water
- NOAA Offers Chesapeake Bay Summer Science Camp for Students
- Call for Presentation Proposals for October 3 Rivers Wet Weather Conference
- ClearWater's 11th Annual Watershed Cleanup Day April 21
- Reminder: Register Now for Great PA Cleanup – Let's Pick It Up PA!
- Philadelphia Recycling Education Campaign Features Teens
- Organics Recycling Workshop Set for March 26 in Susquehanna County
- Philadelphia Public Schools to Undergo Voluntary Environmental Review
- Berks Conservancy Honors PA Environmental Council for Local Work
- 4 Townships Receive EAC Achievement Awards, Climate Change Issue Highlighted
- DCNR Carbon Sequestration Advisory Group Considers Policy Options
- EPA Workshop to Help Small Businesses Get Funds for Tech Research

Spotlight

- Small Business Solutions for Combating Climate Change – Energy Efficiency as a Solution, *By Christopher J. Lynch, Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers*
- Strengthening Pennsylvania Agriculture, Protecting Water Quality – A Necessary Investment in the Commonwealth's Future, *By Lamonte Garber, Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

Feature

- Wood Ducks Spring Spectacle Almost Passes Unnoticed, *By Patrick McShea, Carnegie Museum of Natural History*

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

Online Video

Exhibitors Show Off Watershed Initiatives at Schuylkill Watershed Congress

Dozens of exhibitors at the 2007 [Schuylkill Watershed Congress](#) show how they work to protect and restore their local piece of the Schuylkill River Watershed. Watch this series of Video Blog stories to learn more....

Pete Goodman, President of the [Valley Forge Chapter Trout Unlimited](#), highlights some recent projects by the Chapter in watershed assessment and restoration in Crabby Creek with [LandStudies, Inc.](#), working with the Turnpike Commission and private developers to better treat and manage stormwater. Contact Goodman by ending email to: PeteG@bee.net.

Video Blog: [Valley Forge Trout Unlimited Protects Watersheds.](#)

John Johnson, 81, immediate past president and chair of the West Chester Fish, Game & Wildlife Association, talks about the group's mission to not only raise thousands of trout to stock local streams, but also educate the public about protecting vital wildlife and watershed resources. Contact John Johnson at 610-873-9062.

Video Blog: [West Chester Wildlife Association Enhances Wildlife Resources.](#)

Matt Royer, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, talks about the proposed Resource Enhancement and Protection Act tax credit program to promote the installation of best management practices on farms to control nutrient runoff and for stormwater management.

Royer said best management practices are particularly important to the Schuylkill River because it provides drinking water for millions of people, including the City of Philadelphia. For more information, visit the [CBF REAP webpage](#).

Video Blog: [REAP Promotes Clean Drinking Water](#)

Dr. R. Dean Foster, Vice President & West Campus Administrative Officer for the [Montgomery County Community College](#) talks about how MCCC Pottstown has been actively engaged with the [Schuylkill River Heritage Area](#) and developing a new environmental education center and hosting the annual Schuylkill RiverFest, this year on October 13 (*contact Dr. Foster if your group is interesting in participating as a sponsor or participant*). Contact Dr. Foster at 610-718-1846 or send email to: dfoster@mc3.edu or visit www.mc3.edu .

Video Blog: [Montgomery County Community College Host Schuylkill Congress](#)

Matt Genchur, Source Water Protection Specialist, [PA Rural Water Association](#) outlines how the Association helps rural drinking water and wastewater plant operators improve their operating skills by providing education and technical assistance programs.

Genchur also talks about the importance of source water protection in keeping water supplies clean to lower treatment costs. Contact Genchur at 814-353-9302 or send email to: mgenchur@prwa.com.

Video Blog: [PRWA Helps Local Water/Wastewater Systems](#)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation Promotes Help For Farmers and the Environment

Lamonte Garber, Senior Agricultural Consultant with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, presented comments before the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee this week supporting a state tax credit program to help farmers install conservation practices (REAP) and additional financial help for nutrient and sediment reduction in the proposed federal Farm Bill.

Garber presented the remarks at the Ephrata, Lancaster County Listening Session on Rural Issues sponsored by the Committee. ([Remarks available online.](#))

The Committee is chaired by Sen. Mike Brubaker (R-Lancaster) and Sen. Mike O’Pake (D-Berks), who are both sponsors of the Resource Enhancement and Protection Act (REAP) in the Senate. House sponsors include Rep. Jerry Stern (R-Blair) and Rep. Peter Daley (D-Washington).

For more information, contact the Chesapeake Bay Foundation at 717-234-5550 or visit the [REAP Program](#) and the [CBF Farm Bill Strategy](#) webpages.

Video Blog: [Help Farmers Help the Environment](#)

On the Hill

On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House both return to voting session on March 19

House

Committees: the Game and Fisheries Committee meets to consider [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-R-Allegheny) further providing for the liability of landowners toward recreational users; the Consumer Affairs Committee holds an informational meeting with members of the Natural Gas industry;

Senate

Calendar: [Senate Bill 355](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) requiring additional public review of Air Quality State Implementation Plans and their publication on the Internet.

Committees: the Appropriations Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 356](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) establishing the PA Center for Environmental Education in statute.

Senate/House Bills Moving

These environmental bills moved in the Senate and House last week...

Wild Resource Conservation Fund: [Senate Bill 99](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) repealing the prohibition on General Fund dollars going to the Wild Resources Conservation Fund was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and re-referred to Senate Appropriations.

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Air Quality Plans: [Senate Bill 355](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) requiring additional public review of Air Quality State Implementation Plans and their publication on the Internet was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and is on the Senate Calendar for action.

PA Environmental Ed Center: [Senate Bill 356](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) establishing the PA Center for Environmental Education in statute was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and was re-referred to Senate Appropriations.

Conservation Districts Day: [House Resolution 98](#) (Hanna-D-Centre) designating March 12 as “PA Association of Conservation Districts” Day was adopted by the House.

Bills Introduced

Several more environmental bills were introduced this week, here’s the rundown...

Landslide Insurance: [Senate Bill 279](#) (Costa-D-Allegheny) establishing a Landslide Insurance and Assistance Program within the PA Emergency Management Agency.

Home Energy Assistance: [Senate Bill 352](#) (Robbins-R-Mercer) establishing the Home Energy Assistance in Time of Need program to expand the LIHEAP grants.

Riparian Forest Buffers: [Senate Bill 453](#) (Rafferty-R-Montgomery) establishing the PA Riparian Buffer Ordinance Act authorizing municipalities to enact local land use ordinances to protect and preserve riparian buffers.

Energy Efficiency/Awards: [House Bill 772](#) (Hershey-R-Chester) establishing an energy efficiency and pollution reduction initiative within the Department of Environmental Protection, establishing the Keystone Energy and Environmental Excellence Award and providing funding to the Small Business Advantage Grant Program. *(text not yet online)*

Sludge Testing: [House Bill 792](#) (George-D-Clearfield) authorizing municipalities and the Department of Environmental Protection to conduct sludge testing. *(text not yet online)*

MTBE Ban: [House Bill 793](#) (George-D-Clearfield) prohibiting the sale or distribution of gasoline containing MTBE. *(text not yet online)*

Lyme Disease Task Force: [House Bill 798](#) (Phillips-R-Northumberland) establishing a task force on Lyme disease carried by deer ticks. *(text not yet online)*

Nuclear Power Plant Fees: [House Bill 829](#) (Fairchild-D-Montour) increasing fees on nuclear power plants and for transportation of nuclear materials. *(text not yet online)*

LIHEAP Expansion: [House Resolution 122](#) (George-D-Clearfield) petitioning the President and Congress to increase funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Senate Committee OKs DiBerardinis for DCNR, Moves Bills

The [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee](#) unanimously reported out the nomination of Michael DiBerardinis to be Secretary for Conservation and Natural Resources with a recommendation it be approved by the full Senate as well as these three bills March 13—

- [Senate Bill 99](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) repealing the prohibition on General Fund dollars going to the Wild Resources Conservation Fund;
- [Senate Bill 355](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) requiring additional public review of Air Quality State Implementation Plans and their publication on the Internet; and
- [Senate Bill 356](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) establishing the PA Center for Environmental Education in statute.

[Secretary DiBerardinis' opening statement is available online.](#)

Senate Committees Recommend Confirming Other Rendell Cabinet Picks

Several other nominees picked by Gov. Rendell to lead state agencies were also given positive recommendations for confirmation this week by Senate Committees. They included the Secretaries for Agriculture, Transportation, Community and Economic Development and Health.

Here are links to each of the nominees opening statements from their confirmation hearings. They provide a quick snapshot of what the nominee feels are his (or her) most important accomplishments over the last four years—

- [Agriculture Secretary Wolff's opening statement](#)
- [Transportation Secretary Biehler's opening statement.](#)
- [DCNR Secretary DiBerardinis' opening statement.](#)
- [DCED Secretary Yablonsky's opening statement.](#)
- [Health Secretary Dr. Johnson's opening statement.](#)

Senate hearings on other nominations by the Governor continue next week.

House Democrats Lay Out Priorities for This Year

House Democratic Leaders Rep. DeWeese (D-Greene) and Rep. McCall (D-Carbon) this week, flanked by the chairs of all the House committees, announced a series of more than 60 issues they plan to address this year.

They noted resolving the state budget was the biggest issue they faced, but others included (by committee)—

- **Agriculture:** dog law regulations, weights and measures, helping farmers to compete and succeed;
- **Consumer Affairs:** rate caps under electric deregulation;
- **Environmental Resources & Energy:** alternative and renewable energy, electric deregulation;
- **Game & Fisheries:** landowner liability reform, feeding of wildlife;
- **Local Government:** land use and local government cooperation;
- **Tourism & Recreational Development:** historic preservation, lodging at State Parks, innkeepers rights;

- **Transportation:** mass transit and road and bridge funding;
- **Urban Affairs:** abandoned property and vehicle regulations, urban renewal; and
- **Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness:** emergency preparedness cooperation, volunteer fire department grant program.

[A copy of the complete announcement is available online.](#)

House Consumer Affairs Committee Looks at Electric Deregulation, Rate Caps

The House Consumer Affairs Committee this week held two informational meetings on electric deregulation, rate caps, energy conservation and other issues related to public utilities in Pennsylvania.

The Committee is chaired by Rep. Joe Preston (D-Allegheny) and Rep. Bob Godshall (R-Montgomery).

Public Utility Commission [Chairman Wendell Holland](#) and other commissioners presented an overview of issues facing the PUC this year, including implementing the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards, electric deregulation and other issues.

PECO Senior Vice President of Regulatory and External Affairs [Lisa Crutchfield](#) presented comments to the Committee on three issues: electric competition, PECO's safety and reliability performance and PECO's credit and collection operations and low-income programs.

Crutchfield said Pennsylvania's electric competition law has worked to encourage companies to improve operating performance, reduce operating costs, construct new generating capacity and reduce wholesale prices. As an example, she said over the last 10 years, PECO's parent company Exelon has doubled the effective output of its existing nuclear power plants.

[Robert Geneczko](#), Vice President of Customer Service and President of PPL Gas Utilities Corp, PPL Electric Utilities Corp, said PPL has budgeted nearly \$1 billion over the next five years to upgrade PPL's infrastructure, much of which was installed in the 1960s and 1970s.

Allegheny Power President [David Flitman](#) said a regional approach to restructuring was needed and a balanced policy for price, reliability and environmental stewardship saying one leg of the stool cannot stand without the other.

[J. Michael Love](#), President of the Energy Association of Pennsylvania, said there is no magic bullet for dealing with the coming end of electric rate caps, but said energy conservation and efficiency efforts can lessen the magnitude of electricity price increases. He also recommended increasing funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program to help low income Pennsylvanians.

Several other companies were also invited to talk about Pennsylvania's deregulated electricity market. Presenting comments were: [Frank Lacey](#), Director Government and Regulatory Affairs for Direct Energy, [Richard Hudson](#), Regulatory Affairs Manager for Strategic Energy and [Richard Rathvon](#), Vice President for Reliant Energy.

[Sonny Popowsky](#), Consumer Advocate of Pennsylvania, complimented the Public Utility Commission and electric companies for the programs they have to deal with low income energy issues saying he thought they were the best in the country.

Popowsky said the best way to provide a "soft landing" for consumers when electric rate caps come off in 2010 is to require electric distribution companies to buy a portfolio that includes long and short-term electricity contracts, renewable and non-

renewable resources and make investments in demand side (energy conservation) programs.

Former PUC Commissioner [John Hanger](#), now CEO of PennFuture, said electricity rate caps have already fully ended in three electric service territories in Pennsylvania without the kind of electric rate shocks that other states have experienced. (*The exception being in Pike County where initially [electric rates increased 129 percent.](#)*)

“In fact, electricity restructuring in Pennsylvania has led to substantially lower rates for most consumers, with residential customers using 1,000 kilowatt-hours per month paying in constant dollars from 11 percent less to 38 percent less in 2007 than they were in 1991,” Hanger said.

Hanger promoted Gov. Rendell’s proposed [Energy Independence Program](#) as a way to diversify how electricity is made and its energy conservation policies.

Next week the House Consumer Protection Committee holds an informational meeting on issues surrounding the natural gas industry. (*See [Calendar of Events for details](#)*)

NewsClip: [PPL Says Competition Lowers PA Power Prices](#)

Other News

Study of Forest Regeneration Shows Little Recovery from Deer Browsing



[A new study](#) by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources shows deer herd size in State Forests still does not allow adequate recovery of forests from over-browsing by deer.

DCNR’s Bureau of Forestry conducted widespread habitat browsing surveys across the State Forests in late winter 2006 to assess forest regeneration conditions and the current levels of overwinter deer browsing.

Plot data from 41,657 individual plots providing 88 percent coverage of the State Forest System were included in the study. The results were tabulated by each DCNR Forest District.

With only 24.45 percent of the test plots showing desirable regeneration and 44.45 percent with no woody regeneration, the results indicated that browsing has not been down long enough for widespread regeneration response. 43.70 percent of the plots show undesirable woody regeneration was prevalent.

DCNR said this study will serve as a baseline for future studies of the impacts of overbrowsing by deer.

DCNR also recently posted its updated [2007 State Forests Deer Management Plan](#) which concluded, “despite all the advances of the deer management program, meaningful population reductions have not been documented on a statewide level....”

The plan also notes the conclusion of other recent research—

“The most notable research to date has been the hunter movement study (Diefenbach 2004). This study documented hunter behavior over two hunting seasons, finding most hunters hunted on relatively flat areas within 1/3 mile of a road within the

study area. It also validates the perception of our (DCNR) staff that there are large areas with virtually no hunting pressure that will require additional tools and incentives.”

A 2005 study commissioned by Audubon PA, [Managing White-tailed Deer in Forest Habitat From an Ecosystem Perspective](#), made this dramatic statement about the impact of deer on the Commonwealth’s forests, “(the) regeneration of most tree species does not occur unless the affected areas are fenced to exclude deer.”

High deer populations have greatly altered forest understories. The abundance of native wildflowers and other forest-floor plants has been greatly diminished, shrub species have been dramatically decreased or eliminated, and the variety of tree species has declined.

To the casual observer the woods still look green, but they are much altered. In place of the diverse, multi-storied vegetation that was the norm, there are just a few species, either not preferred by deer or resilient to repeated browsing.

Consider these other facts from a House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee hearing on deer and wildlife damage in 2006—

- There is an estimated \$90 million in crop loss and \$73 million in damage to our forests every year by deer, according to the Department of Agriculture;
- Over \$78 million in property damage occur in the over 39,000 deer/car collisions each year in Pennsylvania, not counting the deaths and injuries to the people involved. This is the highest of any state in the nation;
- The incidence of Lyme disease, a debilitating and sometimes fatal illness spread by deer ticks, has increased by over 9,000 percent between 1987 and 2004, according to the Department of Health; and
- State taxpayers lose \$18 million a year in deferred and lost timber stumpage sales.

A copy of [Browsing Impact Report for the Pennsylvania State Forests is available online](#).

Link: [The Game Commission Released Its 2006-07 Deer Harvest Numbers](#)

Deer Density and Carrying Capacity Workshop Set for March 24

The Penn State Cooperative Extension in cooperation with the DCNR’s Bureau of Forestry will present a Deer Density and Carrying Capacity workshop on March 24 at the Governor Dick Park Environmental Education Center in Mt. Gretna, Lebanon County.

The workshop, designed for anyone interested in learning more about white-tailed deer biology and management as it relates to the carrying capacity of the habitat, is a hands-on, in-the-field experience that will get participants in the woods collecting deer-population and habitat data.

"Participants will learn how to calculate the deer density in a given forest setting; how to evaluate the condition of deer habitat; and how the condition of the habitat relates to deer biology, deer numbers and deer carrying capacity," says Dave Jackson, a forest specialist with Penn State Cooperative Extension. "This is an opportunity to talk to wildlife biologists and foresters who have experience in implementing various forest and wildlife habitat management strategies."

The program will run from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$15 per person and includes refreshments, lunch and handout materials. The Governor Dick Park is located in Mt. Gretna.

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Pre-registration for this workshop is required prior to March 19. Space is limited, so please register early.

To register, or for more information, contact the Cooperative Extension office in Centre County at 814-355-4897 or by e-mail at CentreExt@psu.edu.

Woodcock Festival to Put Spotlight on Vanishing Habitat on March 31

The declining American woodcock and the migratory game bird's vanishing habitat will be showcased at a public program March 31, at [Bald Eagle State Park](#), Centre County.

The American Woodcock Festival will feature speakers representing the [Ruffed Grouse Society](#), [State College Bird Club](#), Game Commission and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

A tour of woodcock habitat and observation of the popular game bird's courtship flights will highlight the second annual event.

"DCNR is proud to showcase this partnership with the Ruffed Grouse Society and others to aid not just woodcock but ruffed grouse and many rare and declining songbirds that nest at Bald Eagle State Park," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "The park is one of the most intensive woodcock, songbird and native habitat restoration projects in the state."

Festival sponsors include the Ruffed Grouse Society, DCNR's Bureau of State Parks, and Pennsylvania State University's [Recreation, Park and Tourism Management Department](#).

Based at the park's Environmental Learning Classroom, the festival will also feature displays and discussion of park habitat management, an invasive plant and shrub walk, bird walks, children's crafts, and a walk to observe the woodcock's mating display.

Drawn to moist soils rich in earthworms -- the birds' staple food -- breeding woodcock are found in large numbers on Bald Eagle's 5, 900 acres near Howard.

Birding enthusiasts describe the woodcock's aerial courtship display as one of the most fascinating spectacles in nature. Biologists will attempt to capture a woodcock with mist nets during its courtship display so festival participants can get a close look.

DCNR's partners in the park's habitat management efforts have included the Ruffed Grouse Society, Game Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, International Paper, California University, PA Parks and Forests Foundation, and the Pennsylvania State University.

For more information, call Bald Eagle State Park Environmental Education Specialist Spring Reilly at 814-625-9369, or Ruffed Grouse Society Biologist Mark Banker at 814-867-7946.

Pennsylvania Declares March 18-24 Wildfire Prevention Week

Warming temperatures and drying March winds have again combined to prompt a call for increased vigilance of rising fire dangers across Pennsylvania's as part of [Wildfire Prevention Week](#) March 18-24.

"Last spring brought many brush and woodlands fires, showing us how quickly our wealth of forest resources can be endangered by carelessness," Gov. Rendell said. "People cause 98 percent of wildfires. A mere spark by a careless person can touch off a devastating forest blaze when conditions are ripe."

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Nearly 85 percent of Pennsylvania's wildfires occur in March, April and May, before the greening of state woodlands and brush lands.

Communities in heavily wooded areas are urged to follow wildfire prevention and suppression methods of the [Pennsylvania Firewise Community Program](#) to safeguard life and property.

For more information on Wildfire Prevention Week activities, contact local district foresters, call the Bureau of Forestry at 717-787-2925; or visit DCNR's [Wildfire Prevention webpage](#).

Rep. Stern, John Dawes Receive Susquehanna Watershed Protection Awards

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission this week presented its Frederick L. Zimmermann Award to Rep. Jerry Stern (R-Blair) and the William W. Jeanes, Sr. Award for Environmental Excellence to R. John Dawes of the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program.

The [Zimmermann Award](#) is to honor elected officials who demonstrate excellence in watershed management, and the Jeanes Award honors organizations and individuals who contribute to the protection of water quality.

Rep. Stern received SRBC's sixth Zimmermann Award for his commitment to watershed management, his unwavering support of the Commission's water resource management activities and his leadership for an appropriation to enable projects intended to compensate for

consumptive water use by farmers in the Pennsylvania portion of the Susquehanna River Basin. One of those projects, the Barnes and Tucker facility, will also improve water quality in the West Branch Susquehanna River.

SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz said, "Rep. Stern truly understands that rivers and groundwaters do not recognize political boundaries, and it is best to manage the water resources of the Susquehanna basin on a watershed basis. That was the vision of Frederick Zimmermann, and his legacy lives on today through the exemplary work of elected officials like Rep. Stern."

Rep. Stern is serving his 8th term in the Pennsylvania General Assembly, representing portions of Blair County. As the Caucus Secretary for his party, he helps establish the assembly's legislative agenda. He is a life-long resident of Blair County and he currently resides in Martinsburg.

John Dawes of Alexandria, Huntingdon County received SRBC's fifth [Jeanes Award](#) for his contributions to water quality protection and support of watershed groups, particularly as Administrator of the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program, which provides financial support and guidance to local watershed and volunteer-based organizations.



Top: Ken Lynch, SRBC
Commissioner, Rep. Stern
Bottom: Paul Swartz, SRBC, John
Dawes, Cathy Myers, DEP

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Dawes also was cited for his leadership in several watershed organizations and for working tirelessly in 2006 with a coalition that assisted in the landmark reauthorization of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act.

Swartz said, “John Dawes has devoted himself, both professionally and in his personal life, to watershed restoration and protection. The Commission is pleased to honor and recognize his countless contributions toward the reduction of abandoned mine drainage, streamside litter, nonpoint source pollution, and other sources of water quality impairment.”

Bay Foundation Sponsors Lancaster Town Meeting on Funding Farm BMPs



On March 22, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation will sponsor a town hall meeting in Lancaster to discuss how Pennsylvania can encourage farmers to install best management practices on farms through the proposed [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act \(REAP\)](#).

This year Pennsylvania’s legislators have an historic opportunity to reduce pollution, protect the Commonwealth’s waterways and strengthen our economy by giving farmers better tools to reduce

nutrient and sediment runoff.

REAP, sponsored in the House by Rep. Stern (R-Blair) and Rep. Daley (D-Washington) and in the Senate by Sen. Brubaker (R-Lancaster) and Sen. O’Pake (D-Berks) would give farmers tax credits of up to 75 percent of the cost of installing best management practices like forested stream buffer, stream fencing and other measures.

Pennsylvania has over 13,400 miles of rivers and streams that do not meet water quality standards and REAP is another tool that can help reduce pollution going into these streams and help the Commonwealth meet its commitment to cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay.

Sen. Brubaker, chair of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, will attend the event and other state legislators have been invited.

The town hall meeting will begin at 6:30 at the [Lancaster Farm & Home Center](#), 1383 Arcadia Road in Lancaster.

This is one of a series of town hall meetings the Bay Foundation will sponsor to educate farmers, watershed groups and other interested citizens on this important issue.

RSVP to Trudy Uffleman by sending email to: REAP@cbf.org .

Video Blog: [REAP Promotes Clean Drinking Water](#)

Video Blog: [Stern Sponsors Innovative Approach to Reduce Nutrients](#)

Video Blog: [Daley on Water Quality Challenges Faced by Farmers](#)

Video Blog: [Helping Farmers Help the Environment](#)

Video Blog: [Help Farmers Help the Environment –Senate Ag Committee](#)

PA Conference on 2007 Farm Bill By National Wildlife Federation

On April 21, the National Wildlife Federation will sponsor a conference in Harrisburg about the Congressional reauthorization of the federal Farm Bill.

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Farm Bill programs provide for protecting and improving fish and wildlife habitat, but the program has been historically under-funded.

For example, in 2004 nearly 75 percent of the applications from farmers and forest owners to participate in Farm Bill conservation programs were rejected due to lack of funds. Despite the lack of funding, Pennsylvania leads the nation in having 173,000 acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

Pennsylvania receives only 4 cents per dollar value of farm production from federal Farm Bill programs, while the national average is 9 cents and some large Midwest states receive 23 cents or more.

In February, a coalition of 16 conservation groups, headed up by the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, released a report entitled: [Growing Conservation in the Farm Bill](#).

Groups with diverse interests such as the National Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, Pheasants Forever and Ducks Unlimited all found significant value in Farm Bill programs for fish and wildlife conservation.

Those interested in attending the conference and learning more about a fish and wildlife-friendly farm bill may contact NWF's outreach person, Ed Perry at 814-880-9593 or email at paglobalwarmingoutreach@gmail.com

Apply Now for State Wildlife Grants To Improve Habitat

The Fish and Boat and Game Commissions this week announced they are again accepting applications for the [State Wildlife Grants Program](#) to help address conservation needs for high-priority conservation projects for endangered, threatened and at-risk species across Pennsylvania.

Project proposals are due May 4. About \$2 million is expected to be available.

“Based on the limited resources of our agencies, nongame species are greatly underfunded,” Game Commission Executive Director Carl Roe said. “SWG funding, as well as the former Wildlife Conservation and Restoration Program, has provided a much-needed infusion of federal funds for wildlife conservation in Pennsylvania.”

“We look forward to working with our conservation partners across the state to develop the best projects for long-term conservation benefits to the Commonwealth,” Dr. Doug Austen, Executive Director of the Fish and Boat Commission said. “This program provides us with a great opportunity to protect these animals, which are important indicators of environmental health.”

The federal dollars for this program are awarded to the two agencies from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service through the State Wildlife Grants Program.

For more information and an application packet, visit the [State Wildlife Grant Program webpage](#) on the Fish and Boat Commission website or the [State Wildlife Grant Program webpage](#) on the Game Commission website.

Chesapeake Bay Trust Pioneer Grant Program Requests Pre-Proposals

The Chesapeake Bay Trust is accepting pre-proposals for requests up to \$150,000 for the [Pioneer Grants Program](#).

The deadline is May 4.

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The program is designed to encourage and promote innovative ideas, creative partnerships, and cutting-edge projects that advance Bay restoration, focusing on best management practices in agriculture and land development that reduce nutrient and sediment pollution.

Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Jana Davis 410-974-2941 Ext. 5 before applying. For more information, visit the Trust website [Pioneer Grants Program webpage](#).

Applications Due for Tulpehocken, Quittapahilla Creek Watershed Grants

The Fish and Boat Commission announced that \$109,400 is now available [through a grant process](#) for stream restoration, habitat enhancement and recreational enhancement activities on streams located in the Tulpehocken and Quittapahilla Creek watersheds.

Applications are due June 25.

This funding is available through a settlement agreement between the Fish and Boat Commission and AES Ironwood, L.L.C. related to the operation of an electric generation facility located in South Lebanon Township, Lebanon County.

Only project proposals located within the Tulpehocken and/or Quittapahilla Creek watersheds will be considered. These monies can be used for stand-alone projects or to supplement other funding for larger projects that are designed to improve aquatic habitat, water quality, or recreational use.

Examples of acceptable activities include fishery habitat restoration or enhancement; fish stocking; fishing access; maintenance or creation of facilities to encourage, improve or expand recreational use of the fishery; or studies related to these issues.

The program will continue on a regular basis throughout the life of the AES Ironwood Power Plant.

For more information about applying for this grant program, contact the PFBC at 814-359-5147 or [download an application](#).

2007 Watershed Snapshot Looking for Volunteers in April

The 2007 [Watershed Snapshot](#) will be held from April 20-29 in Pennsylvania and around the United States and you and your watershed group or organization are invited to participate by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Watershed Snapshot is a survey of Pennsylvania's water bodies and watersheds that happens every year around Earth Day. This year DEP will focus on gathering data from April 20-29, but the database will accept data for a two-week window of time before and after those dates.

Participants may assess any stream in the state, using whatever monitoring tools they have. If you have no monitoring tools, many things can simply be observed and reported.

Watershed Snapshot 2007 has undergone some major changes. The changes DEP made to Watershed Snapshot will make the information more accessible and will streamline the reporting process. There will be no mass mailings of reminder cards or participation packets. All information, including field data sheets, is available on the DEP [Watershed Snapshot webpage](#).

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To participate and to get your field sheets, go to the website and click on the “Snapshot Participation” box, which is on the top of the menu on the left side of the screen. Next, click on “Field sheets” and download and print the forms. Then go to any water body to study and complete as much of the information as you wish.

Remember, there is no need to do all of the testing and measuring listed on the form. You decide what to test, measure, and observe based on the time and equipment you have available! All data is welcome!

Later, to enter the information collected, go back to the website and click on the “Snapshot Participation” box, and then on “database”. Within 30 days after collecting the information you should enter your findings into the simple database! DEP will use your data to develop a summary report, which will be posted on the same website at a later date.

If you have questions, contact the Citizens’ Volunteer Monitoring Program at 717-772-5807. If you have trouble entering data into the database, you may mail your forms and photos to DEP at: Snapshot - CVMP, P.O.Box 8555, Harrisburg PA 17105-8555.

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

Regional Water Management Task Force Releases Phase I Report, Meetings Set

The Institute of Politics' [Regional Water Management Task Force](#) at the University of Pittsburgh has released a report summarizing the research completed since the task force's inception last summer.

It also is announcing plans to hold public meetings from March 28 through May 17 in all 11 counties within its geographic scope to seek public input on ways to improve how the region addresses its water-related problems.

Each of the 14 scheduled public meetings will include a presentation of the task force's work thus far, with the bulk of the two-hour meeting allotted for public comment and open discussion.

The first meeting will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. March 28 in Stover Hall at Waynesburg College in Greene County, 51 W. College St. [A complete list of meetings](#) is attached and also is available on [the task force website](#).

The task force, an 11-county effort to improve how Southwestern Pennsylvania addresses its water and sewage challenges, will use the report to inform its outreach and educational activities to be conducted over the next six months.

“What we have learned so far should help us not only to explain how serious our water and sewage problems are, but also to show that these problems can be solved through well-conceived, collaborative efforts,” said Jared Cohon, Carnegie Mellon University president and chair of the task force.

Highlights of the task force's research findings include the following.

- **Benchmarking insights.** Task force researchers visited four U.S. metropolitan areas recognized for their effectiveness in water-resource planning and found that, through partnerships with state legislative and regulatory bodies, these regions have been able to make significant progress in solving their water problems at a very modest planning cost, sometimes less than \$1 per person per year.
- **Local case studies.** Case studies of several management entities within Southwestern Pennsylvania identified best practices in collaboration and management, while also illustrating the serious challenges facing many communities that have deferred ongoing maintenance of deteriorating infrastructure.

- **Survey results.** The task force's survey of local governments and municipal authorities uncovered a strikingly wide range of customer rates and capital investments. Water and sewage rates in the region are generally modest, with the highest rates usually occurring in outlying areas that recently have become connected to public systems.
- **Significant investment.** Survey results and other sources suggest that Southwestern Pennsylvania already has invested \$3 to \$4 billion in its water and sewage infrastructure in the past 10 years—a number that makes the multibillion-dollar estimates of repair needs seem less intimidating.

During its outreach phase, the task force will seek stakeholder and public input on possible approaches to regional collaboration. Among the possibilities are enhanced cooperation among entities that serve the same watershed, the establishment or designation of a regional entity to guide and provide consistency to water and sewage planning decisions, and the creation of subregional financing and management entities.

Groups interested in a presentation from the task force or in [viewing its nine-minute video](#) on Southwestern Pennsylvania's water resource challenges can visit the [Regional Water Management Task Force website](#) or contact the project team at 412-624-7792.

Online Video: [Southwestern Regional Water Management Task Force](#)

Tour of Blue Valley Fish Culture/Acid Mine Drainage Treatment Plant March 25

There will be a public tour of the [Blue Valley Fish Culture/Acid Mine Drainage Treatment Plant](#) in Brandy Camp, PA (near Brockway) starting at 2:00 p.m.

Due to limited parking, visitors are asked to park at the Holy Cross, St. Tobias or Brockway Presbyterian Churches where they will be taken by bus to the facility.

For more information, contact Kim Lanich, Watershed Specialist, Elk County Conservation District, by sending email to: klanich@elkoes.ncentral.com or calling 814-776-5373.

Photo Feature: [Dedicating Blue Valley Facility](#)

Youth Fishing, Aquatic Education Get Boost from Fish & Boat Commission Grants

Sport fishing, boating and aquatic resource education programs aimed at youth received a boost this week with the awarding of more than \$67,000 in grants from the Fish and Boat Commission.

Eighteen organizations received [Sportfishing and Aquatic Resource Education Grants](#) from the PFBC to develop or expand programs that teach fishing and boating skills or educate participants about waterways and the organisms that live within them. A total of 47 applications were received from sportsman's clubs, school districts, community groups and county agencies, with funding requests exceeding \$194,000.



"The Sportfishing and Aquatic Resource Education Grants program expands on the Commission's long-standing commitment to youth education. Supporting grass roots efforts such as those receiving grants enables the Commission to accomplish its goals in angler recruitment and angler retention while leveraging our dollars," said Dr. Doug Austen, PFBC Executive Director. "I'm excited to see some of the outcomes of these projects as research shows that good, well-structured education programs such as these lead to kids increasing their interest in fishing and boating more, improving their skills, and helping them build a greater sense of aquatic stewardship and outdoor ethics."

Statistics from the National Survey of Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife Recreation show that in 1980, 26 percent of the Pennsylvania kids aged 6-15 fished. In 1995, that number climbed to 41 percent, but dropped to 35 percent in 2000.

The Commission currently spends about \$450,000 annually on such efforts. Currently 45,000 children receive the [Pennsylvania League of Angling Youth \(PLAY\)](#) newsletter from the PFBC four times a year; 8,000 Pennsylvania school teachers have been trained and use the PFBC's aquatic education curriculum; and more than 400 PFBC fishing skills instructors teach thousands of children in angling basics annually. In addition, the Commission provides equipment and support for 41 free tackle loaner sites statewide.

Increased funding for grassroots initiatives is one of the cornerstones of a Commission initiative to dramatically expand youth-oriented programming with revenues generated from a proposed low-cost fishing license for anglers 12-15 years of age. This approach, said Austen, will enable the program to grow not only in dollars distributed, but in the number of youth as well as adults benefiting from new and expanding programs.

"The volume and quality of applications we have received in the two years we've offered Sportfishing and Aquatic Resource Education Grants shows there's clearly a demand for even more of this type of programming in Pennsylvania. The challenge is to provide the resources necessary to re-engage youth in outdoor activities. Succeeding in this effort is critical to the future of sportfishing and building a more environmentally connected citizenry," Austen said.

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

Students Head to Spring Break for a Different Kind of Sand, Water

One student group's Spring break this week involves sand and water, but it won't include the revelry that's normally associated with this annual rite of college.

A band of eight Penn State students in ENGR 497C "Leadership and Innovation For Meeting 21st Century Water Resource Challenges" has journeyed to Morocco on a mission to close a cultural divide and understand the role water plays in Arabic society.

Richard Schuhmann, the course's instructor and head of the engineering leadership development minor, said, "My primary goal is to get American engineers and Arab engineers together to look at global problems."

The weeklong workshop in Rabat brings together Penn Staters with their student counterparts from Morocco's Ecole Mohammadia d'Ingenieurs to study leadership, innovation and entrepreneurship in the context of water resource management.

Brandon Groff, a student in the College of Information Science and Technology, signed up for the trip hoping someday to be an international leader. "I believe globalization is coming whether we like it or not," said the senior from Martinsdale, in Lancaster County.

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Schuhmann developed the course and workshop with help from 25 years worth of contacts and connections he's made in his travels to Morocco and other parts of the Middle East. The class is what he terms "service learning."

As part of the workshop, the students will learn about historic trans-border water issues, current technology for water treatment and future global water resource challenges.

Though oil has been given most of the press as a declining resource, Schuhmann believes water will overshadow it. "I can go for two weeks without gas, but I can't go that long without water," he explained. "To me, water is going to be the most critical problem in the 21st century."

Since the start of the semester, Schuhmann has been teaching the students about Moroccan culture as well as demystifying Western stereotypes of Arabs.

Schuhmann's lessons include nonverbal communication (it's rude to point the sole of your shoe to someone), cultural norms (it's perfectly normal for heterosexual men to hold hands) and religion (Jesus plays a major role in the Islamic faith and is prominently mentioned in the Koran). The students also learned basic conversational Moroccan Arabic in preparation for the trip.

For mechanical engineering senior Jonathan Weidner, it will be the first time the Mifflinburg native will leave the country.

"We live sheltered lives here while in other parts of the world water is a major concern," he said. "We take a lot of things for granted, like clean water from a faucet." When the students get to Morocco, they'll each stay with host families for the duration of the experience.

Groff, a Mennonite who also will be leaving the United States for the first time, said he's very cognizant of the fact he's representing America in his travels. "I'm the face of this university, the face of this state and the face of this country," he said. "What they know of us they see in places like Al-Jazeera, so the bar for us is set pretty low."

Many of the students have been working on ways to dispel stereotypes Moroccans have of the West. In addition to his Arabic language classes, Weidner created a series of Arabic flash cards for himself.

"I want to show them that we care and are trying," Weidner explained.

Funding for the course and trip came from Roberts Filter Group, General Electric and Dow Chemical.

Andrew Gillott, a mechanical engineering senior and student in the engineering leadership minor, said, "I think I'll come back with an appreciation for what I have as well as an appreciation of Arab culture."

In the end, Schuhmann believes the Moroccan experience will be more than just a week-long trip taken during spring break. "I'm hoping this course starts a process for students," he said.

NOAA Offers Chesapeake Bay Summer Science Camp for Students

July 9-13 the [NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office](#) and [Nauticus National Maritime Center](#) in Norfolk, Va. will co-sponsor a [summer science camp](#) for children ages 9-12 to explore the life of the bay on a kayaking trip following the footsteps of Capt. John Smith of the Jamestown Settlement.

The deadline to apply is April 30.

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Students will examine artifacts from the USS Monitor shipwreck; build and operate ROVs (remotely operated vehicles); dissect crabs and oysters; conduct water quality analyses; and navigate on a NOAA research vessel.

A limited number of [Student Scholarships](#) available for qualified students. Contact Andrew Larkin at Andrew.w.larkin@noaa.gov or visit the [summer science camp webpage](#) for more information.

Call for Presentation Proposals for October 3 Rivers Wet Weather Conference

The organizers of the 2007 [3 Rivers Wet Weather](#) Conference are seeking proposals for presentations at the October 3-4 event in Pittsburgh.

Proposals are due April 13.

Examples of presentations include: case studies of approaches to water-quality testing, citizen testing and source tracking, public engagement approaches to MS-4 compliance, design considerations for stormwater “best management practices,” wet weather satellite treatment, cost benefit analysis of sewer rehabilitation projects, case studies on inter-municipal cooperation approaches to compliance with the municipal consent orders, specifically: hydraulic characterization; feasibility studies; modeling, challenges to system consolidation, including: utilization of CCTV and other assessment activities to define system “assets,” and untangling municipal revenues and expenditures from sewer revenues and expenses; sewer infrastructure asset management.

Please include the following in your speaking proposal: name of speaker(s), title, company name, address, phone, fax and e-mail, title of presentation, description of the presentation content in 400 words or less. Emphasize the educational elements of the presentation. Co-presentations (with no more than 2 speakers, please) and case studies are encouraged. Most sessions are 30-45 minutes.

Sales-oriented presentations will not be considered.

Presentations must provide unbiased, valuable information about technology, approach, case study, etc. Learning outcomes: list at least three goals or outcomes of the presentation. What will participants have learned by the time they leave your session? Short biographical sketch of the speaker (50-75 words). Previous presentations the speaker has given. Please list the conference/seminar, date and topic.

Please forward proposals to: Attn: Conference Speaking Proposal 3 Rivers Wet Weather, 3901 Penn Avenue, Building #3, Pittsburgh, PA 15224 or forward via fax—412-578-8065—or e-mail in a Word document to cszeg@achd.net .

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact 3 Rivers Wet Weather at 412-578-8375.

ClearWater's 11th Annual Watershed Cleanup Day April 21



Each year, the [ClearWater Conservancy](#) participates in the world-wide recognition of Earth Day by organizing a Watershed Cleanup Day to eliminate the excess waste plaguing Centre County's watersheds. This year the Cleanup will be held April 21.

Volunteers gather (rain or shine) to remove harmful material from sinkholes, roadsides, illegal dumpsites, and

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stream banks. Removing such material helps rid groundwater of dangerous pollutants, strengthening the surrounding environment and reducing the need for local governments to spend unnecessary tax dollars on cleanup that can easily be taken care of by Centre County residents.

Last year nearly 300 volunteers who answered the call last year, and helped the Conservancy rid the land and water of Centre County of tons of garbage.

The Cleanup was started in 1997 with the collection and disposal of 17 tons of trash in the Spring Creek Watershed, over 1,000 tons of trash from Spring Creek, Halfmoon Creek, Beech Creek, Penns Creek, and Little Fishing Creek Watersheds with an amazing 410 tons in 2005 and 343 tons in 2006 alone.

To volunteer please call Geoff Smith, ClearWater's new Water Resources Coordinator at 237-0400 or email him at geoff@clearwaterconservancy.org.

In the past, ClearWater has received financial support for this project from the Department of Environmental Protection, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, Centre County Community Foundation, Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy, the MS4 Partners (College, Ferguson, Harris, and Patton Townships; State College Borough; and Penn State University), and several other local municipalities and local/national businesses, including Wal-Mart.

ClearWater thanked The Dansko Foundation for their first-time support of Watershed Cleanup Day!

Reminder: Register Now for Great PA Cleanup – Let's Pick It Up PA!



Cleanups are already underway across Pennsylvania, but there is still time to register for the [4th Annual Great PA Cleanup](#), and get free cleanup trash disposal for your group.

Groups who register by April 20 will be eligible for the free trash disposal, plus the group will be eligible for gift cards from Pennsylvania businesses sponsoring the Great PA Cleanup.

The Great PA Cleanup website has lots of information on how to set up an event, links to other cleanup organizations in your area, logos and T-shirt iron-on transfers you can use and lessons plans for teachers to help students learn about the impact litter and rural dumping can have on the environment.

Don't wait, register now at the [4th Annual Great PA Cleanup webpage](#).

Philadelphia Recycling Education Campaign Features Teens

Beginning March 19, Philadelphians will meet the future of recycling as the Philadelphia Streets Department's [Recycling Office](#) launches a new public service campaign to encourage increased participation in the City's residential curbside recycling program.

Inspired by the real comments of Philadelphia's teenagers, the public service campaign features three area teens stepping up to take responsibility for their own recycling habits while encouraging the adults in their lives to follow their lead.

Communicating the messages, "Count on me to make it happen," "We can do

this," and "It starts here with me," Philadelphia teenagers Christian Aviles, 13, Saladin White III, 14, and Essie Wilson, 17, inspire and motivate Philadelphia's youth to do their part in diverting valuable materials from the waste stream.

"Our kids are indeed the future of recycling. Educating our youth to become avid, life-long recyclers is critical in protecting our environment for generations to come," stated City of Philadelphia Streets Commissioner Clarena I.W. Tolson. "We are sure to see more people understanding the need and contributing to help conserve our natural resources for this next generation."

The Philadelphia Recycling Office's public service campaign includes 15- second television announcements airing on WPVI-TV and WXTF-TV and transit posters which will be displayed in city buses and on subway platforms (EL Subway and Green Line routes).

The public service announcements may also be viewed on the [Philadelphia Recycling Office's website](#).

For more information about recycling, please contact the City of Philadelphia Streets Department's recycling hotline at 215-685-7329.

Organics Recycling Workshop Set for March 26 in Susquehanna County

The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania, the Northern Tier Coalition, the Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center, DEP and DCED are sponsoring an [organics recycling workshop](#) in Susquehanna County on March 26.

The workshop will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the County Office Building, 31 Public Ave., in Montrose. The session will include a field trip to a compost site.

Yard waste contributes significantly to filling up landfills in Pennsylvania, and recycling organic material can help reduce the waste stream. Helping municipalities required by Act 101 to collect yard waste and compost facility operators better manage organics recycling is the topic of a workshop.

The course is intended to help compost facility operators and others who deal with organics recycling implement or improve their programs or facilities, minimize costs, and better understand all their composting options.

Cost of the session is \$59, which includes tuition, materials, a field trip, and food. Continuing education credits are offered through Penn State and the Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania Recycling Professional Certification Program. The registration fee is \$35 per person for those not interested in professional certification credits.

To register, go to the [PA Local Government Training Partnership website](#).

Philadelphia Public Schools to Undergo Voluntary Environmental Review

The School District of Philadelphia is the first public school district in the nation to voluntarily sign up for a comprehensive environmental health check of its school buildings under an agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Philadelphia school district will audit 62 of its schools for compliance with federal environmental regulations. In addition, all of the district's facilities will be assessed

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for compliance with asbestos requirements. The agreement is part of a national initiative by EPA to ensure that schools, colleges and universities meet environmental regulations.

“By agreeing to self-police their environmental compliance, the Philadelphia public schools will reap positive benefits for students, teachers, and the environment,” said EPA Regional Administrator Donald S. Welsh. “Their commitment to correct any deficiencies they find will lead to healthier school environments across the city.”

“We are very grateful for the opportunity to work closely with the EPA on this very important agreement,” said Paul G. Vallas, chief executive officer of the school district of Philadelphia. “The voluntary environmental review process provides us with the right set of incentives to quickly assess the environmental quality of our buildings and further invest in the improvement of our schools. We are very grateful to Donald Welsh and his leadership team.”

Under this agreement, EPA will reduce or eliminate penalties for violations found during self-audits if they are disclosed, promptly corrected and steps are put in place to prevent recurrence. The school district has agreed to complete its asbestos audits within three years and complete the comprehensive audit of 62 schools within four years.

[EPA’s self-audit policy is available online.](#)

Berks Conservancy Honors PA Environmental Council for Local Work

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council has received a 2007 Community Excellence Award from the Berks County Conservancy for the Council’s work to expand the [Environmental Advisory Council Network](#) in Berks County.

The council has helped establish EAC’s in Berks County, including the Berks County EAC, the first county-wide EAC ever.

“I’m delighted with the recognition, but it is important to know that our success in Berks County would not have been possible with our partners like Berks County Conservancy and others,” state Jeanne Barrett Ortiz, the Council’s Director of EAC Programs. The council maintains technical assistance programs for EAC’s and holds annual conferences and workshops around the state.

The goal of the EAC network is to assist municipalities with sustainable development, farmland preservation, and conservation planning. Municipalities are authorized to establish EACs through Act 177 of 1996, originally Act 148 of 1973.

By promoting the establishment and support of EACs across the Commonwealth, the EAC Network is helping local officials to make sound environmental decisions within and across municipal boundaries.

Environmental Advisory Councils are appointed volunteers at work protecting the environment through project implementation, site plan and ordinance review and community education. PEC has helped establish more than 100 EAC’s across the Commonwealth.

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council is also pleased to announce that Khiet Luong, Watershed/EAC Programs Associate, has been selected as one of 24 Fellows for the Environmental Leadership Program’s Delaware Valley Regional Network of Fellows Class of 2007.

The Environmental Leadership Program is an organization that nurtures the next generation of environmental leaders and stimulates a broad discussion of the future of the environmental movement.

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As a member of the 2007 Class, Khiet will undergo intensive training and have the opportunity to collaborate with an array of current and emerging environmental leaders through three retreats held over six months. As an ELP Fellow, Khiet will be expected to devote an average of 8-10 hours a month on ELP activities and communications, including the creation of a Personal Leadership Plan, completion of a variety of assignments, and participation in small group learning “pods.”

“Personally, I’m excited to use this opportunity to talk about my Vietnamese American eco-theology ontology,” said Luong, “it is also an opportunity for the Council to integrate our work with other initiatives in the region.”

4 Townships Receive EAC Achievement Awards, Climate Change Issue Highlighted

Four [Environmental Advisory Council](#) Achievement Awards were presented to townships in Southeastern Pennsylvania last weekend at the Pennsylvania Environmental Council’s Tenth Annual Regional EAC Conference.

Doylestown, Schuylkill and Wallace townships, and Media Borough received awards. Projects ranged from solar panel installation to open space restoration to environmental education areas. All represent the communities’ value of environmental practices and exemplify the work that EAC’s are doing all over the Commonwealth.

Doylestown EAC was honored for creating a unique environmental learning environment, using a 23 acre parcel of donated land next to its popular Central Park. The land, featuring wetlands and wooded areas, provides habitat for birds, butterflies and bats, among other wildlife.

Residents learn about local plants and wildlife, invasive species and stormwater management from five information kiosks located throughout the park. Those who are a bit more adventurous experience the bat boxes, bird blinds and butterfly garden.

Kate McGovern of the Doylestown EAC described it as “designed to preserve open space and animal habitats and encourage the exploration of the natural environment while providing a recreation area for residents of all ages.”

Media, often referred to as “the solar capital of Pennsylvania,” installed 5kW photovoltaic systems on public buildings. The project demonstrates large scale solar production in an urban setting. The panels generate about six percent of the buildings’ energy, save about \$10,688 per year, and are the environmental equivalent planting 100 mature trees annually.

Additional benefits include eliminating green house gases, improving the quality of air, creating jobs in a new technological field, and decreasing national dependence on imported oil.

EAC Chair Walt Cressler said “a strong statement has been made to the entire region, Commonwealth and country about the uses and benefits of solar energy, creating a sustainable environment for the present and further.”

Schuylkill EAC set out to revitalize Pickering Preserve, which had fallen into disarray in the years after the township preserved the land. With a minimal budget, the EAC relied on the volunteer efforts of local residents to make the project successful.

Revitalization efforts included planting native hardwood trees, installing nest boxes, coordinating an Adopt-A-Tree program, removing dead trees, and creating a walking trail through a meadow. Plans for 2007 include an improved parking area, native planting demonstrations and a community fishing spot.

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Andrew Krieder of the EAC said “soon the Pickering Preserve will be the passive recreation park it was intended to be. By keeping the project a community-based effort, the EAC will help restore our residents’ connection to and respect for the natural beauty of Schuylkill Township.”

Wallace Township’s ordinance changes responded to the community’s value of trees and habitat, and increased development pressures. The ordinances, which are near completion, aim to protect up to 60 percent of the forest canopy, retain higher quality species, apply a tiered approach to tree replacement requirements, and create GIS maps to identify and classify the size and quality of woodland parcels within the township.

The EAC worked in collaboration with many partners including township landowners, the Parks Commission, Planning Commission, Board of supervisors and several scientists.

“The investment of considerable time and funds reflects recognition by everyone involved of the great value contained in properly managed woodlands. A value for which there is no substitute,” said EAC member Mark Eschbacher.

EAC Achievement Awards are presented by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council to EACs whose programs best demonstrate originality, community involvement, effectiveness and response to an environmental concern.

The EAC Conference, which focused on climate change and sustainability issues, brought together more than 100 EAC members from Southeastern Pennsylvania and beyond, reflecting a growing number of EACs in the Commonwealth.

Nancy Cole, Deputy Director of the Global Environmental Program for the Union of Concerned Scientists, served as the keynote speaker. She presented the latest findings from UCS’s recent report on climate change in the northeast. While she reported that Pennsylvania’s climate could feel more like northern Georgia in 50 years, Cole was quick to assuage fears of cataclysmic disaster.

“When we talk about global warming, there is a step between denial and despair. That step is action,” Cole said.

Additionally, the EAC Conference featured speakers from the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, Bucks County Foodshed Alliance, SmartPower, Onion Flats, Penn State and the Clean Water Fund. With support from PEC, the Commonwealth and other EACs, participants shared best practices and learned new ways to improve the environment where they live.

EACs are appointed volunteers at work protecting the environment. Established by ordinance, EACs advise elected and other municipal officials about environmental matters; help draft plans and ordinances; review site plans; help protect water and open space resources; remediate brownfields; and raise funds to support these and other environmental projects.

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council established the EAC Network in 1990 to promote the establishment of EACs throughout PA, provide technical assistance and promote EACs as a mechanism for local government involvement in conservation.

For more information, visit the [Environmental Advisory Council Network online](#).

DCNR Carbon Sequestration Advisory Group Considers Policy Options



The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' [Carbon Management Advisory Committee](#) met again this week to review proposed policies designed to allow Pennsylvania to take advantage of opportunities for carbon sequestration to reduce climate changing greenhouse gases.

The meetings are being facilitated by the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) and the [Center](#)

[for Climate Strategies](#).

The group [heard an update on activities](#) from the [Midwest Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership](#) presented by David Ball from Battelle who reviewed the status of several carbon sequestration pilot projects. Pennsylvania is a member of the MRCSP group.

The Partnership has undertaken 35 field projects ([24 geologic](#) and [11 terrestrial](#)) to either calculate the carbon sequestration benefits of practices like [no-till farming](#), [wetland restoration](#) or [mine reclamation activities](#) as well as several projects to demonstrate deep geologic sequestration of carbon dioxide gas.

One example of a geologic demonstration project is the [First Energy R.E. Burger power plant](#) near Shadyside, OH which has geology similar to Pennsylvania where geologic reservoirs 8,000 feet below ground offer good opportunities to sequester carbon dioxide.

The group also heard an update on the Pennsylvania Greenhouse Gas Inventory now underway, as well as discussed proposed policies for geologic and forestry carbon sequestration opportunities in the Commonwealth.

The next meeting of the group will be in late April or early May and the final recommendations are due in August.

For more information and for copies of presentations and proposed recommendations, visit DCNR's [Carbon Sequestration Management Plan webpage](#).

NewsClips: [Poll Says Climate Change Not Critical to Americans](#)
[AEP CEO Says Politics Settled on CO2 Regulation](#)

Link: [The Future of Coal – MIT Study](#)

EPA Workshop to Help Small Businesses Get Funds for Tech Research

Small, high-tech firms interested in developing and commercializing cutting-edge energy and environmental technologies can attend a free workshop on March 22 to learn how to win funds to hone their concepts.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will host a workshop on March 22 from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. to share information about the [Small Business Innovation Research \(SBIR\) program](#) which awards up to \$70,000 to small firms to investigate the scientific merit and technical feasibility of new concepts.

The workshop will be held at EPA's regional office at 1650 Arch St., in Philadelphia.

“EPA and Department of Energy seek novel, low-cost, and effective technologies to address energy and environmental priorities,” said Donald S. Welsh, EPA’s mid-Atlantic regional administrator. “We can all benefit from innovations championed by small businesses.”

A small business is defined as a for-profit organization with no more than 500 employees. Through the SBIR program, EPA and the Department of Energy will solicit applications from small businesses whose research is conducted in the United States.

Winning companies that successfully complete the investigation phase can compete for a total of up to \$415,000 from EPA or \$850,000 from DOE to conduct the testing and research and development needed to commercialize the new technology or product.

EPA’s solicitation opens March 22 and closes May 23. Call the EPA HELPLINE for more information at 800-490-9194 or see last year’s solicitation at the [Small Business Innovation Research Program webpage](#).

The workshop will emphasize the critical elements of the program, including writing winning proposals and sources of assistance. Call 215-204-3856 or email to sbtrain@temple.edu for information or to register.

Space is limited, so register as early as possible.

Spotlight

Small Business Solutions for Combating Climate Change – Energy Efficiency as a Solution

By

Christopher J. Lynch

Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers



In looking for small business opportunities to help address climate change, small business energy efficiency needs to be at the top of the list. Why? Because energy efficiency offers the greatest potential for immediately reducing small business climate change emissions; because small business energy efficiency can have a positive bottom-line impact for the business; and because the technologies already exist and can be implemented quickly.

To stretch existing domestic energy supplies and decrease the need for building new capacity, energy efficiency needs to be looked upon as a valuable and reliable energy source in its own right.

Since America’s 25 million small businesses create more than 50 percent of the non-farm private gross domestic product, one could also assume that small business energy consumption is also about half of the total energy used for commercial and industrial purposes.

In analyzing energy consumption in Pennsylvania, we found small businesses consume about 50 percent of the total output from all of the state’s coal-fired power plants. Assuming a 50 percent level of usage, national data from the U.S. Department of Energy’s [Commercial Buildings Energy Survey \(CBECS\)](#) indicates that if small commercial and industrial businesses were to improve efficiency to achieve realistic energy consumption reductions of 20 to 30 percent – targets we have easily see with our clients in Pennsylvania

and which are also supported by the national experience of U.S. EPA's [ENERGY STAR Small Business Program](#) – then small businesses could help the United States reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 93.8 to 140.7 million tons per year while at the same time saving themselves an estimated \$12.5 to \$18.75 billion on annual energy costs.

But to achieve these dramatic results there are two primary challenges I would like to bring to your attention. First, small businesses have a significant need for technical assistance in order to analyze their energy use and make wise decisions regarding energy efficiency investments. Second, as you are well aware, small businesses typically have limited capital and financial incentives are often needed to help small businesses implement energy improvements.

With regard to technical assistance, the U.S. EPA's ENERGY STAR Small Business Program is an excellent destination for information and a limited amount of unbiased technical assistance; especially for do-it-yourself business leaders. Expanding ENERGY STAR Small Business so the program can enter more outside partnerships and develop more industry-specific guidance would be a great benefit to the small business community.

But additional technical assistance is often required. With modest pilot funding from ENERGY STAR Small Business, in 1997 the [Pennsylvania SBDC Environmental Management Assistance program](#) launched an energy efficiency outreach and education campaign. What we quickly found, however, was that information and education alone were often not enough to see energy efficiency projects implemented – in our case primarily because the ability to refer interested small businesses to sources of additional technical assistance had become virtually non-existent because the state energy office had been shuttered, electric utilities had eliminated energy efficiency programs in preparation for deregulation, and private service providers lacked interest in working with businesses with less than 100,000 square feet of facility space.

In response to this assistance void, the Pennsylvania SBDC obtained state funding to not only maintain our outreach and educational capabilities beyond the pilot but also to develop and offer more advanced technical assistance. Starting in about 2003, our energy efficiency services were significantly expanded upon to provide clients with comparative energy intensity analyses, on-site energy assessments, and customized technical reports with recommendations for cost-effective improvements.

Demand for energy efficiency services has steadily grown ever since, especially as transportation fuels, natural gas, and oil costs have risen. The recent spotlight on electricity rate increases as rate caps expired in Maryland, Delaware, and Pike County, Pennsylvania (where rates increased over 70 percent), has also served to increase the interest in controlling energy costs. While the majority of Pennsylvania's electricity consumers still benefit from partial rate caps, the remaining caps are due to expire in the next two to three years and people are starting to prepare.

In 2004, the Pennsylvania SBDC Environmental Management Assistance Program had about 38 percent of its clients request energy efficiency assistance. The following year, this number increased to 49 percent. Last year, of the 428 businesses assisted by the program more than half, a full 60 percent, sought assistance with energy efficiency issues.

Based on the results of approximately 300 energy on-site assessments conducted to date, it is estimated SBDC-assisted businesses can reduce their energy consumption and associated utility costs between 25 and 30 percent if all recommendations are

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implemented; for the typical small business this amounts to about \$1,100 to \$1,500 annually.

Clients achieving such reductions have been well recognized; in 2006, [six of our energy efficiency clients](#) won the prestigious ENERGY STAR Small Business award given out to just eight small businesses nationally.

When it comes to the implementation process, the Pennsylvania SBDC not only attempts to connect business owners with contractors (often other small businesses) who can install the recommended upgrades but we also work with the business owners to evaluate options for project finance.

This brings me to my second point – the need for small business financial incentives. Many small business owners lack the up-front capital needed to make energy efficiency improvements, or they need a little extra incentive to make the investment.

In 2004, we suggested and worked with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to create a micro-grant program, offering a 50 percent cost share up to \$7,500, for small business environmental and energy improvements. Demand on this grant program has been very strong and a significant backlog has developed.

In 2004, the Department exhausted initial program funding of \$1 million in just over six months. In the second year of grant availability, the same level of funding lasted just over five months.

This current fiscal year, with a little over \$780,000 available for grants, the Department stopped accepting grant applications after just 10 weeks. Many potential applicants were turned away; the Pennsylvania SBDC Environmental Management Assistance Program was aware of at least fifty small business owners who were in various stages of completing the grant application package when the announcement was made that applications would no longer be accepted.

Implementation of energy efficiency projects by Pennsylvania SBDC-assisted small businesses has increased with the availability of this grant funding and the estimated returns appear promising.

Helping business owners prepare the technical and financial data required for grant applications has resulted in a high rate of awards with 58 SBDC-assisted grant applications receiving awards totaling just under \$360,000. These grants have been leveraged to implement projects totaling over \$792,000. Most significantly, it is estimated these 58 projects will ultimately save the small businesses more than \$273,000 per year on energy costs.

Outside of targeted micro-grants, on-bill financing through energy utilities offers another potential avenue for helping small businesses overcome the issue of initial capital constraints. Although this financing option exists in some New England states and California, it is not currently available in Pennsylvania.

Under this concept, a utility provides the initial financing to implement an energy efficiency improvement and extends the eligible small business a zero percent or low interest loan. Once the efficiency project is installed, the business does not see an immediate drop in its energy bill but instead continues paying bills at historic levels of consumption and effectively “shares” the cost savings with the utility until the loan is paid off.

The attraction of on-bill financing is that it requires no up-front capital and loan repayment is done on the utility bill – the same one bill and one payment as usual. Once the energy efficiency improvement has literally paid for itself, the business receives all of

the savings in the form of lower bills. Hopefully, more states will soon consider creative financing assistance like this.

Based on the Pennsylvania SBDC's experience, we are convinced small business owners have the interest and desire to become more efficient users of energy and additional government investment can help significantly. With the right mix of educational and technical and financial assistance tools, energy efficiency holds the promise of not only reducing greenhouse gas emissions associated with small business energy consumption; it also helps the businesses control their energy expenditures.

The importance of this latter point is highlighted by a July 2006 survey by the National Small Business Association in which 75 percent of respondents indicated they had been moderately to significantly impacted by rising energy costs. When asked how they were coping with those rising energy costs, an alarming 18 percent indicated they had already reduced their work force. Offering energy efficiency assistance to help these types of existing businesses reduce costs, while reducing climate change emissions at the same time, makes sense and is urgently needed.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you this morning. I am encouraged by your leadership to specifically include the small business community in the debate on climate change and energy independence.

Christopher Lynch is Director of the [Environmental Management Assistance Program](#) at the Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers and was invited to appear before the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship on March 8 to offer this testimony. He can be contacted by sending email to: clynch@wharton.upenn.edu.

Link: [Copies of Other Testimony Presented at the Same U.S. Senate Hearing](#)

Spotlight

Strengthening Pennsylvania Agriculture, Protecting Water Quality – A Necessary Investment in the Commonwealth's Future

**By
Lamonte Garber
Chesapeake Bay Foundation**

Reducing nutrient and sediment losses from Pennsylvania farms is a critically important step toward improving water quality here and in the Chesapeake Bay.

But we also recognize that there are many other sources of water quality impairment that need our attention including sewage treatment, industrial discharges, stormwater runoff, acid mine leachate and land use. The responsibility for safeguarding our waterways falls to all of us.



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But reducing pollution is only part of the picture. We understand that a healthy future for our farms will be necessary to protect the long term health of our watersheds and drinking water supplies. This is not empty rhetoric but a reality that must inform our policy decisions.

Farms supply much more than food and economic growth. They provide very real environmental services, including water recharge, carbon sequestration and open space, and these services are lost when development takes the place of working farms.

Farms are expected to meet acceptable standards of environmental protection and most are willing to do so. But rising production costs coupled with weak commodity prices limit the options available to producers as regulations expand.

For example, while TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) watershed plans are being developed to assign where nutrients must be reduced, and phosphorus-based nutrient management plans are required of certain producers, we know that many will have trouble complying on their own.

Producers need assistance in meeting environmental standards while maintaining their bottom line. States across the country are struggling to develop effective runoff programs for agriculture, but Pennsylvania has some unique challenges.

We have a very diverse agriculture sector, including many small and large farms with livestock, a large number of Amish and Mennonite farms using traditional farming methods, many acres of highly-erodible cropland and more miles of streams than nearly every other state in the country. Meeting this challenge will require a variety of approaches. Clearly, this is not a “one-size-fits-all” matter.

This brings us to an important opportunity, the proposed Resource Enhancement and Protection Act or “REAP.” The Foundation applauds Representatives Stern and Daley, Senators Brubaker and O’Pake, and the many co-sponsors for bringing this new, statewide initiative forward for consideration in the General Assembly.

We are convinced that REAP will be one of the most important water quality programs ever enacted in the state and in the history of the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort.

REAP would provide transferable tax credits to those farms and sponsoring businesses that install eligible Best Management Practices (BMPs). And it would expand conservation funding in a way that involves the private sector, including any Pennsylvania business that wants to participate.

REAP would enable businesses to become new partners with Conservation Districts, NRCS and other agencies in working with producers. County conservation districts and the NRCS have done an outstanding job with the modest resources with which they have to work and their continued leadership is essential.

But in order to achieve the Commonwealth’s commitments and goals we also need to engage the creativity, efficiency, and entrepreneurial spirit of the private sector.

The basic incentive offered by REAP is straightforward: provide producers state tax credits – worth up to \$150,000 per farm – to offset some of the costs of adopting of Best Management Practices.

Tax credits have been available to other industries in the Commonwealth under the Education Improvement and the Research and Development Tax Credit Programs for some time, so the basic concepts contained in this legislation are not new.

The legislation targets resources toward water quality measures that offer the best “bang for the buck.” For example, improving conditions in a dairy farm’s barnyard and

pasture areas not only provides a terrific and immediate improvement for a local stream, it also provides the modern, sanitary conditions for livestock that veterinarians recommend.

Best Management Practices such as barnyard improvements, forested riparian buffers, stream bank fencing and treatment of legacy sediments are included. The bill tasks the State Conservation Commission with specifying additional BMPs that would be eligible for support.

This system would follow through on the recommendations of the Chesapeake Bay Commission's Cost Effectiveness Study by targeting resources where they can improve water quality in the most cost-effective fashion.

All BMPs would have to meet NRCS guidelines and be maintained for the lifespan of the practice as defined by NRCS. The State Conservation Commission would evaluate the program's effectiveness.

Producers could choose to participate in REAP through one of several options that would best suit their particular operation--

1. Producers could use the REAP tax credits to reduce their own state taxes, dollar for dollar. They could use these tax credits all in one year, or over multiple years, carrying over remaining credits for up to 15 years;
2. Producers could sell unused tax credits on the open market to any taxpayer – individual or corporation - for most of the face value of those credits; or
3. Producers could participate through REAP's sponsorship program by partnering with a business that is willing to help finance environmental projects and in turn receive a tax credit instead of the producer.

But our efforts cannot end with the passage of REAP. This and other state programs are important, but insufficient on their own. The need is simply too great.

For example, DEP has estimated that approximately \$215 million per year in agricultural conservation funding is needed to meet the Commonwealth's commitment to reduce water pollution to the Bay. All programs combined currently amount to about \$45 million – leaving a \$170 million dollar per year gap, and that's just in Pennsylvania's portion of the Chesapeake Watershed (about half the state).

The costs will also climb under new TMDL plans that are mandated by the Federal Clean Water Act. The estimate for one small impaired watershed in Bradford County is \$1.2 million. The estimate for another small watershed in south-central Pennsylvania is \$4 million. The statewide total will be hundreds of millions in the impaired watersheds alone. Drinking water quality and our treatment systems are at stake.

Almost 8 million Pennsylvania residents' drinking water comes from surface waters, many of which are supplied by agriculturally-rich watersheds.

The Schuylkill Action Network is a group working to improve water quality for the 1.5 million Pennsylvania residents who draw drinking water from the Schuylkill River. The network estimates that over \$2 billion in watershed improvements, much of it agricultural, needs to be implemented.

Finally, farmer demand for assistance is well beyond current program capacity. In 2004 the NRCS had conservation funding requests from Pennsylvania farmers for \$37.5 million more than was available. This figure does not account for the many farmers who have given up applying after being turned away.

Federal Farm Bill

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Given the tremendous need and farmer demand, a strong federal role in conservation funding is required. CBF is actively engaged in efforts to reform the 2007 Farm Bill – an opportunity that comes around only once every five years.

The Foundation was pleased to be able to work with Senator Brubaker (prior to his taking office) to conduct 14 “listening sessions” in 2005, where hundreds of producers across the state shared their views about agricultural policy. Most producers voiced a willingness to do their part by adopting conservation practices such as riparian buffers, nutrient management plans, and cover crops. But we also heard how their efforts are hampered by a lack of funds and technical assistance.

Chief among our recommendations for the Farm Bill is a call for \$200 million in additional federal conservation assistance per year for all of the states in the Bay region. Currently, just \$65-70 million in federal money is available to farmers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed for water-related conservation practices.

No one wants to see unnecessary spending at the federal level. But this increase would barely nudge the lopsided spending priorities currently in place. States like Pennsylvania are at a particular disadvantage, where we grow a smaller share of the commodities that garner most of the farm payments.

The lack of equity is startling; for every dollar in farm sales from 2000 to 2005, Pennsylvania farmers received just three cents in federal support. During the same time period, the national average was nine cents on the dollar, and North Dakota received almost twenty three cents per dollar!

We’re not recommending more handouts. We’re asking for a level playing field for Pennsylvania farmers.

Obviously, the federal Farm Bill is not in the direct purview of the Pennsylvania Senate. But we do ask that members of the General Assembly respectfully urge Pennsylvania’s Congressional Delegation to work diligently with all relevant parties to change key provisions of the 2007 Farm Bill to meet the needs of Pennsylvania producers.

I’ll conclude with this: strong conservation programs provide direct benefits to all communities in the Commonwealth. Here is a local example.

A few years ago, the Ephrata Area Joint Authority approached CBF to work on forested buffers along Indian Run. The reason? One of the most costly components of operating their drinking water treatment process was treating odor and color from manure contamination during storm events.

Protecting watersheds in communities like Ephrata just makes good economic sense. EPA estimates that, on average, every \$1 spent on source water protection saves \$27 on water treatment. An analysis of the Gettysburg source water protection program yielded a much greater cost ratio of 127:1 for watershed improvements. Clearly, these are wise investments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. We look forward to working with you to advance proposals like REAP and the many other innovations, both public and private, that will insure a strong future for Pennsylvania agriculture as we protect our watersheds and drinking water supplies.

Lamonte Garber is Senior Agricultural Consultant with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, presented these remarks before the PA Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee in Ephrata at a Listening Session on Rural Issues sponsored by the Committee. For more

information, contact the Chesapeake Bay Foundation at 717-234-5550 or visit the [REAP Program](#) and the [CBF Farm Bill Strategy](#) webpages.

Feature

Wood Ducks Spring Spectacle Almost Passes Unnoticed

By Patrick McShea

Carnegie Museum of Natural History



Audubon Wood Duck Print

Pittsburgh area creek mouths harbor wood ducks at this time of year. The places where neighborhood streams surrender their flow to southwestern Pennsylvania's big water are among the least accessible stretches of riverfront, so the early spring spectacle passes unnoticed by all but the most ardent river watchers.

Beneath bare branch canopies of sycamore and cottonwood limbs, small flocks of the birds replenish energy spent in recent migration flights. They use their bills to strain tiny invertebrates from the shallow riffles, wander muddy banks in search of acorns washed down from drier slopes, and sunbathe atop river-worn logs deposited during earlier periods of high water.

At rest a drake wood duck presents a gaudy mix of colors. His dark back, bronze flanks, and chestnut breast are topped by a head that sports a drooping, white-striped crest of iridescent green, a carrot orange bill, and fiery red eyes. The comparably drab hen is more strikingly marked than other female ducks by virtue of a broad white eye ring that imparts, to a human observer, an impression of powdery make-up.

Binoculars and a stealthy approach are both necessary to get a good look at these beautiful but wary birds. Because the banks of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio consistently document the variety of floatable debris generated by our throwaway culture, river edge views of wood ducks are often aesthetically marred by the inclusion of tires, mud-stained blocks of Styrofoam, empty beer cans, and all kinds of plastic containers.

Most of the creek mouth birds simply pass through the Pittsburgh area on their way to more secluded nesting sites across a range that stretches north to southern Ontario. For a small and apparently growing number of wood ducks, however, Pittsburgh's rivers are home. Wood ducks nest in tree cavities and this habitat requirement is increasingly met amidst maturing timber on islands, undeveloped sections of bank, and steep river valley slopes.

Unlike our resident mallards and Canada geese, semi-tame birds whose large numbers and propensity for accepting handouts guarantees the presence of a flock at every marina and riverside park, wood ducks avoid encounters with people. Until they depart for their southern state wintering grounds in fall, breeding pairs of wood ducks and their offspring will pass spring and summer here largely unnoticed by thousands of recreational boaters.

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In an account he wrote to accompany his portrait of the species some hundred and fifty years ago, naturalist [John James Audubon](#) describes an Ohio River scene in which an approaching steamboat caused a flock of wood ducks to quietly walk up fallen tree trunk from water's edge to sheltering woods.

During the next six months wood ducks along Pittsburgh's rivers will use that time-honored technique of quiet retreat to minimize detection by the operators and passengers of considerably more numerous watercraft.

Patrick McShea works for the Division of Education at [Carnegie Museum of Natural History](#). He can be contacted by sending email to: McSheaP@CarnegieMNH.Org.

Quick Clips

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

[Lehigh Gap Nature Center Honors Student Ecologists](#)
[Awards Boost Schuylkill Environmental Advisory Council Budget](#)
[Carbon Officials Back Wildlife Center Plan to Acquire Blue Mountain Land](#)
[Poll Says Climate Change Not Critical to Americans](#)
[AEP CEO Says Politics Settled on CO2 Regulation](#)
[Low Interest Loans to Help Float Sewerage Upgrades in Southwest](#)
[Op-Ed: Colleges Should Recycle Food](#)
[Centre County Shares Recycling Rebates to Celebrate Success](#)
[Environmentalists Encouraging the Return of Native Plants](#)
[Southeast to Get Big Land Preserve](#)
[Tract Adds to Unami Preservation](#)
[Land Preservation Relies on Money](#)
[Allegheny, York County Designated for Brownfield Action Team Assistance](#)
[Legislative Task Force to Examine Reasons Behind Kilbuck Landslide](#)
[Legislators Must Ask the Tough Questions on Kilbuck](#)
[PA Landowners Powerless in Drilling Deals](#)
[Op-Ed: Is Ethanol the Answer? Biofuels Boom Raises Tough Questions](#)
[Manure to Become energy in Mount Joy](#)
[Editorial: Commuters Can Reduce Congestion, Fuel Consumption](#)
[Game Commission Confirms Eagles Nesting in Philadelphia](#)
[Outdoors: Check Out River for Bird Views](#)
[More Projects Needed to Help State Game Lands](#)
[Biologists Head Into Bear Dens to Manage Animal's Comeback](#)
[Gardening: Naturalistic Landscaping Offers Plenty to Take Root](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Fulton County Accepting Growing Greener Applications](#)
[Easton Riverwalk Takes Step Toward Approval](#)

[Explorer, RiverQuests' Floating Classroom, Has Broken Down](#)
[Watershed Planning Target of Contractors Workshop](#)
[Cameras Soon to be Placed on Delaware River Bridges](#)
[Residents Work to Stop Windmills in High Quality Watershed](#)
[Union County Conservation District Celebrates 50th Birthday](#)
[DEP Praises Venango County Progress on Flooding, Stormwater Concerns](#)

Regulations

The Independent Regulatory Review Commission published [proposed changes to its practices and procedures](#) and notice it has received the final Environmental Quality Board [Air Quality Rule on New Source Review](#). The Department of Environmental Protection published a revised list of companies certified to perform radon-related activities. (*Pa Bulletin p. 1272*)

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – March 17, 2007](#)

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

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection published final guidance on conducting [Underground Storage Tank Inspections](#).

Final: DEP ID: 257-3120-003. Guidelines for Conducting Underground Storage Tank (UST) Facility Operations Inspections (FOI). This guidance specifies FOI procedures for Department certified third-party inspectors who conduct inspections at underground storage tank facilities regulated under 25 Pa. Code Chapter 245 (relating to administration of the storage tank and spill prevention program).

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

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- [Only Three More Watersheds Data System Workshops Remain](#)

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- **March 18-20:** [Governor’s Outdoor Conference](#). State College.
- **March 19** – Senate Appropriations Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 356](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) establishing the PA Center for Environmental Education in statute. Room 461. 12:30.
- **March 20** – **CANCELLED**. [Environmental Quality Board](#) meeting. The next scheduled meeting is April 17.
- **March 21** – House Game and Fisheries Committee meets to consider [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-R-Allegheny) further providing for the liability of landowners toward recreational users. Room 39 East Wing. Call of Chair.
- **March 21** – Tree Care and Planting Workshop at Gifford Pinchot State Park. 10:00. Contact: Bob Deffner at R.B. Winter State Park to register by sending email to: rbwintersp@state.pa.us .
- **March 21** – [DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting. 6th Floor Conference Room Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **March 22** – House Consumer Affairs Committee informational meeting with members of the Natural Gas industry. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 10:00.
- **March 28** – [DCNR Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **April 4** – **CANCELLED**. [DEP Cleanup Standards Scientific Advisory Board](#) meeting. Next scheduled meeting September 19.
- **April 5-6:** [Preparing for the Storm: Stormwater Solutions for PA Communities](#). State College.
- **April 13-15:** [PA Assn. Environmental Educators “No Child Left Inside” Conference](#). Wilkes-Baree.
- **April 16** - [Environmental Issues Forum](#), Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee featuring Julia Marano, Keep PA Beautiful. Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **April 27-28:** West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium III. Genetti Hotel. Williamsport. Contact: Amy Wolfe at 570-726-3118 or send email to: awolfe@tu.org .
Video Blog: [Amy Wolfe Talks About Restoring the West Branch](#).
- **May 3** – **CANCELLED**. Forestry Task Force (Joint Conservation Committee) will meet. Penn Stater Conference Center, State College. 10:00.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

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

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

Helpful Web Links

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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

[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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