

# -PA ——— Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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## **Dr. Cliff Jones, Former DER Secretary, Public Servant, Birdwatcher, Passes**

Dr. Clifford L. Jones, who served six Governors in a variety of cabinet-level and executive positions, including as Secretary of the Department of Environmental Resources from 1979 to 1981, passed away this week.

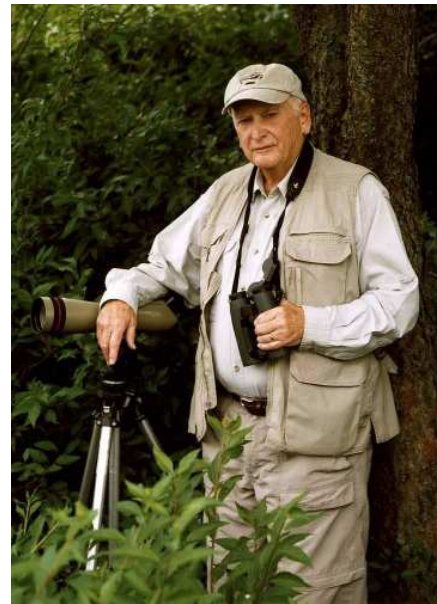
Dr. Jones was a public servant, community leader and conservationist who worked to promote intelligent and effective public policy as well as business growth and job creation, while maintaining environmental responsibility.

He was not only Secretary of DER during the Three Mile Island Accident in 1979 just months after taking office, but during his tenure as the second Secretary of DER, major new environmental programs were created, including passage of the Solid Waste Management Act, amendments to state surface coal mining laws to comply with the federal Surface Mining Act, the Coastal Zone Management program, the first comprehensive regulations to regulate dams, encroachments and wetlands, passage of a \$300 million drinking water, stormwater and unsafe dam repair bond issue under the Water Facilities Loan Board and the creation of the Wild Resources Conservation Program to protect rare, endangered and non-game species.

Dr. Jones also served as Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of the Department of Labor and Industry, chairman of the Public Utility Commission, President of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, chair of the Republican State Committee and served on the boards of the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, The Nature Conservancy, the Pennsylvania Audubon Society, Pennsylvania Wildlife Federation, the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation and was an original member of the advisory committee to the Wild Resources Conservation Fund.

In his spare time, Dr. Jones served as an adjunct professor at Messiah College and Penn State University.

An avid birdwatcher, Dr. Jones has a lifetime bird list totaling 3,800 world sightings, 714 North America sightings and 350 world mammal sightings from his travels to 55 countries, 30 states and 8 Canadian provinces.



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Though humble about his many accomplishments, Dr. Jones was honored by the [Pennsylvania Society](#), named [Conservationist of the Year](#) by the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy, received the [Fox Calhoun Award](#) from the Pennsylvania Resources Council, was the 1986 winner of the [James McGirr Kelly Award](#) from the PA Chapter of the National Association of Water companies and receive many other accolades.

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation recently created a special [Cliff Jones Land Acquisition Fund](#) in his honor and Audubon Pennsylvania is developing the Cliff Jones Field Station at the [Waggoner's Gap Hawk Watch](#) in Cumberland and Perry counties to remember his many accomplishments for birding and wildlife.

**Video Blog:** [Watch a Overview of the Life of Cliff Jones, In His Own Words](#)

Gov. Rendell and other public officials expressed their condolences on his passing.

"Cliff was the ultimate public servant who worked for the benefit of Pennsylvania citizens under six governors, in numerous roles, including several Cabinet positions. Early in my administration, Cliff headed the Governor's Action Team -- a position at which he excelled -- and helped launch Pennsylvania's remarkable economic recovery," said Gov. Rendell. "His environmental advocacy earned him the Fox Calhoun Award from the Pennsylvania Resources Council in 2006 for protecting and repairing the environment. And, he was named 'Conservationist of the Year' by the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy.

"He also worked tirelessly for Pennsylvania's military installations by serving as co-chairman of the Pennsylvania Base Development Committee from 1996 through 2005. I have no doubt that Cliff's leadership on this committee was paramount to maintaining so many jobs in Pennsylvania during the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process. As recognition of Cliff's service, he received the Pennsylvania Meritorious Service Medal.

"At the 108th Pennsylvania Society dinner last December, Cliff was recognized with the Society's Distinguished Citizen of the Commonwealth Award. It was a well-deserved tribute to his lifetime of service. I will miss Cliff's leadership, experience and service – as will all of Pennsylvania."

"Pennsylvania has lost a good friend and a cherished and devoted public servant. After more than four decades in public service, Cliff will be remembered for his innumerable contributions to the Commonwealth and to central Pennsylvania," said DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty. "I came to know Cliff early in Gov. Rendell's administration, and will always be grateful to him for his insight and counsel. Cliff was a champion for the environment. A guiding principle throughout his professional life was that environmental protection and good economic policy could work hand-in-hand.

"As secretary of the Department of Environmental Resources under Governor Thornburgh, it was Cliff's leadership that helped the Commonwealth respond effectively to the crisis at Three Mile Island in 1979. On behalf of the Department of Environmental Protection, I offer our deepest condolences to his family."

"Cliff Jones understood the wonder of nature and, as a result, became a tireless advocate for the protection of our special places and natural areas in Pennsylvania. Those of us in the conservation community will dearly miss his advice, mentoring and support," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "As an avid birder, he knew the need to protect habitat and ecosystems. Throughout his career and in his personal life, he worked to educate others and advocate for land protection and wildlife management. He touched the lives of so many of us, and for that we will always be grateful. Our thoughts are with his wife and family, who shared his love of the outdoors, for their tremendous loss."

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“Cliff was one of those unique people who was equally at home in the board room, his state office or leading travelers through a South American jungle to catch a glimpse of a rare bird,” said former DEP Secretary David E. Hess. “He expressed his love of nature not only through his leadership on public policy issues, but personally through his own actions, photography and poetry. He was truly a Renaissance man when it came to the environment and I shall miss his counsel, his always encouraging words and his ability to bring out the best in people.”

In lieu of flowers, the Jones family has requested Cliff’s life and contributions be celebrated through gifts to The Cliff Jones Field Station at Waggoners Gap, c/o Audubon Pennsylvania Development Office, John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove, 1201 Pawlings Road, Audubon, Pennsylvania 19043 (online at [www.audobon.org/chapter/pa](http://www.audobon.org/chapter/pa)); or The Clifford and Carole Jones Public Service Internship Fund at Messiah College (online a [www.messiah.edu/development](http://www.messiah.edu/development)); or the Cliff Jones Fund for Good Government (checks made payable to PSU-Harrisburg) W-110 Olmstead Building, 777 West Harrisburg, Pike, Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057.

**NewsClips:** [GOP, Midstate Leader Cliff Jones Dies](#)  
[Former GOP Chairman, State Official Dies at 80](#)  
[Remembering Cliff Jones](#)  
[Conservationist/State Leader Clifford L. Jones Dies](#)  
[Editorial: Cliff Jones Was a Doer](#)

### **Farmers Plant 40,000 More Acres of Corn, Soybeans Increasing Conservation Needs**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture [reported farmers](#) in Pennsylvania intend to plant 40,000 more acres of corn and soybeans (a record) than they did last year. And with increased planting of row crops means increased demand for conservation services.

Across the Chesapeake Bay Watershed farmers intend to grow nearly 500,000 additional acres of corn, wheat and soybeans than they did just two years ago, an increase of more than 7 percent.

That's good news for farmers, who are responding to record high commodity prices caused by increased global food demand, crop failures in other parts of the world and a growing thirst for ethanol and other biofuels in the United States.

But as the row crop acreage increases, so does the potential for increasing nutrient and sediment runoff to Pennsylvania waters and the Bay.

A coalition of environmental, farm, businesses and municipal groups recently announced the [Pennsylvania Fair Share for Clean Water Plan](#) to help wastewater plant ratepayers and farmers finance improvements needed to address Chesapeake Bay and statewide water quality improvement mandates while preserving economic opportunity for future homeowners and businesses.

The groups include: Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Pennsylvania Builders Association, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. In addition, the Pennsylvania Association of Realtors and the Federation of Sportsmens Clubs voiced their support for the plan.

The seven-year plan includes \$500 million to help finance a portion of the upgrades needed by 184 wastewater treatment plants in the region and \$390 million to help farmers install conservation practices.

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It's unclear from the USDA report where the additional acres will come from. But corn, soybeans and wheat-which account for the overwhelming majority of cropland in the region-are all relatively high runoff crops, meaning the land conversion could result in more nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution unless efforts to curb runoff are stepped up.

"The planting intentions report shows further intensification of production, and whether it is corn or soybeans or wheat, when added together, there is an increase in high nutrient loss crop production," said Tom Simpson, a soil scientist with the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources who chairs the Bay Program's Nutrient Subcommittee.

"Since I feel safe in assuming that acreage is not coming from orchards or vegetables, it has to be coming from pasture, idle lands or hay, which are low nutrient loss lands," Simpson said.

Last year, corn acreage in the region increased dramatically as prices jumped to \$4 a bushel-driven in part by increasing demand for ethanol-and raised concerns about its impact on the Bay.

This year, corn plantings in the region are projected to drop 130,000 acres from last year to 3.6 million acres, but will remain 175,000 acres above 2006. Corn acreage is projected to decline in Maryland, Virginia and Delaware, but increase in Pennsylvania and remain the same in New York.

Corn is a particular concern because it has a reputation for being especially "leaky" in terms of fertilizer. It loses more nitrogen under typical growing conditions than any other major crop.

Corn prices have continued to rise, approaching a record \$6 a bushel this year. But the national surge in corn production last year, which came in part at the expense of other crops, sharply boosted the price of soybeans and wheat as well.

Soybean acres are predicted to jump 190,000 acres in the five states to 1.85 million acres, with record plantings predicted in both Pennsylvania and New York. That's a concern because, although little nitrogen is applied to soybeans-it "fixes" what it needs from what's in the atmosphere-which leaves large amounts of the nutrient in the soil after harvest.

Wheat acres are expected to jump from 777,000 acres in 2007 to 940,000 acres this year.

Wheat generally leaks less nitrogen than corn and soybeans, but when wheat and soybeans are grown back to back on the same field in the same year-a practice known as double-cropping-the nitrogen losses can be similar to that of corn.

Altogether, the number of acres planted in the five Chesapeake Bay states is expected to increase by 223,000 acres over 2007, and by 472,000 acres over 2006.

That doesn't necessarily mean the acreage of land used for crops will grow by that amount. Some of that increase is likely caused by an increase in wheat-soybean double crops in the southern portion of the watershed, where the growing season is longer. Nonetheless, the figures suggest an increase in the amount of land used for crops of several hundred thousand acres.

The report doesn't say where the plantings will take place. But if past patterns are followed in the states, nearly 60 percent of the additional acres would be planted in the Bay watershed.

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Higher crop prices can provide a powerful incentive to help keep land in agriculture rather than being developed. But increased acreage could add up to more nutrient pollution reaching the Bay unless efforts are stepped up to control runoff.

"At a minimum, it would require greater costs to implement more best management practices to offset the increased acreage," Simpson said. Because there's already a shortfall in public money available to fund such runoff control practices, the increased implementation isn't likely to happen, he added.

A particular concern is that some new crop land will come from Conservation Reserve Program and [Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program](#) lands. In those programs, the USDA pays farmers to take environmentally sensitive lands out of production. In the decade-old CREP program, streamside lands were also planted with buffers to filter pollution.

But the 10-year contracts for the initial lands enrolled in CREP come up for renewal this year and officials have expressed concern that soaring crop prices could spur some farmers to return that acreage to production. That, they say, would result in a double blow to water quality, with streamside buffers being lost as high runoff crops are planted.

The annual USDA report is based on surveys of 86,000 farmers taken during the first two weeks of March. The estimated figures are usually within a few percent of the actual plantings, which are reported at the end of June.

"One thing farmers have told us this year, and something I've seen myself, is that growers are facing tremendously higher input costs-particularly for fertilizer and diesel fuel," Litterer said. "We need access to more affordable sources of natural gas for fertilizer production and we're concerned about the impact of higher crude oil prices on farmer profitability."

For more information on the Pennsylvania Fair Share Plan for Clean Water, visit the [Fair Share Plan webpage](#). *(Major portions of this article were reprinted from the [Chesapeake Bay Journal](#), May 2008)*

**Video Blog:** [Remarks By Coalition Partners on the Fair Share Clean Water Plan](#)

**Links:** [Coalition Proposes Fair Share Clean Water Funding Plan](#)  
[16,000 Miles of Polluted Streams Add Urgency to Call for Clean Water Funding](#)  
[CBF, Other Groups Ask State to Be a Partner in Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Plan](#)

### Water Infrastructure Task Force Meets, Sets Regional Input Sessions

The [Governor's Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force](#) this week announced it will hold seven public input sessions around the state designed to get a better idea of water infrastructure needs and creative solutions to meeting those needs.

The meetings will be held--

- May 15 – 6 p.m.-8 p.m., Lincoln Room, Best Western Inn, 1600 Industrial Highway, Pottstown;
- May 19 – 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m., Connan Room, University Center (Building #28), Carnegie Mellon University, 500 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh;
- May 21 – 1 p.m.-3 p.m., Rhoades Auditorium, Robert W. Rhoades Center, Clarion University Venango Campus, 1801 W. First St., Oil City;

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- May 22 – 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m., Terrace Room, Clarion Hotel DuBois, 1896 Rich Highway, DuBois;
- May 27 – 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m., Crown Room, Convention Hall, 1073 Oak St., Pittston;
- May 28 – 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m., Town Hall Room, Bethlehem City Hall, 10 E. Church St., Bethlehem; and
- May 29 – 6 p.m.-8 p.m., Mazie Gable Elementary School, 100 E. Prospect St., Red Lion.

"Safe, reliable drinking water and effective wastewater treatment systems are paramount to the health and welfare of our citizens, as well as the vibrancy of our economy," said Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty, who chairs the task force. "With Pennsylvania facing a nearly \$20 billion funding shortfall to upgrade our water-related infrastructure, we must find alternatives to expensive capital construction projects. This issue impacts every community, every business and every citizen of the commonwealth, and that's why their input is essential."

DEP said Task Force members want to hear recommendations from the public about what issues the task force should consider; what existing statutory, regulatory or public policy barriers prevent the long-term sustainability of Pennsylvania's water infrastructure; and possible new revenue streams that could help meet the state's infrastructure needs.

Thirteen people testified at this week's meeting, including representatives of utility contractors, financial management companies, water resources groups and municipal authorities.

Bern Sweeney, [Stroud Water Research Center](#), pointed to the need to consider forested stream buffers as "green infrastructure" because they are a primary determinate of stream health. Buffers also significantly lower the cost of treating drinking water quoting a recent study which demonstrated that a watershed with 60 percent forest cover resulted in water treatment costs of \$37 per million gallons, while a watershed with 10 percent forest costs \$115 per million gallons.

Sweeney also said the [Pennsylvania Fair Share for Clean Water Plan](#) was an important proposal to help fund the placement of buffers and many other green infrastructure projects in the Commonwealth.

A coalition of environmental, farm, businesses and municipal groups recently announced the Pennsylvania Fair Share for Clean Water Plan to help wastewater plant ratepayers and farmers finance improvements needed to address Chesapeake Bay and statewide water quality improvement mandates while preserving economic opportunity for future homeowners and businesses.

The groups include: Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Pennsylvania Builders Association, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. In addition, the Pennsylvania Association of Realtors and the Federation of Sportsmens Clubs voiced their support for the plan.

The seven-year plan includes \$500 million to help finance a portion of the upgrades needed by wastewater treatment plants in the region and \$390 million to help farmers install conservation practices.

184 wastewater treatment plants have or will have in the very near future specific nutrient limits imposed on their NPDES permits requiring them to make decisions on how to upgrade their facilities starting this year.

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Gov. Rendell created the task force with Executive Order 2008-02 in February and charged members with developing a report by October 1 that provides recommendations and financing options that may support water-related services in the Governor's fiscal year 2009-10 budget proposal.

The Governor's Task Force convened for the first time in April and formed five work groups to address the most pressing issues: needs assessment, innovative measures, financial resources, financial sustainability and legislative and regulatory needs.

For more information, visit the [Governor's Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force webpage](#) or contact Marcus Kohl, DEP, 717-783-7404 or send email to: [mkohl@state.pa.us](mailto:mkohl@state.pa.us).

For more information on the Pennsylvania Fair Share Plan for Clean Water, visit the [Fair Share Plan webpage](#).

**NewsClips:** [Task Force Seeks Public Input on PA Water Infrastructure Needs](#)  
[Water Infrastructure Needs Topic of Red Lion Meeting](#)  
[Governor Urges Federal Infrastructure Investment](#)

**Video Blog:** [Remarks By Coalition Partners on the Fair Share Clean Water Plan](#)

**Links:** [Coalition Proposes Fair Share Clean Water Funding Plan](#)  
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### Department of Revenue Projects \$437 Million Budget Surplus

With April state tax collection figures now in, the Department of Revenue this week projected the current fiscal year will end with a surplus of \$437 million on June 30 that could be used to provide much-needed [funding for clean water mandates](#) or for other programs.

**NewsClips:** [April Tax Collections Brought Surplus for PA Coffers](#)

### Video Blog Feature

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#### Forest Buffer Project Brings Out 60+ Volunteers Near Mt. Joy, PA

Last week more than 60 eager volunteers helped to plant over 1,000 trees in a new forest stream buffer on the Al Wenger Farm near Mt. Joy, Pa.

The tree planting was coordinated by the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#), [Tri-County Conewago Creek Watershed Association](#) and the [Trees for the 21st Century Program](#).

Kim Patten, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, explained the important role forested stream buffers play in reducing nutrient and sediment runoff and in helping to improve water quality in Conewago Creek.



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The buffer project on the Wenger Farm, explained Patten, was funded with the help of the [Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program](#) that pays for plant materials and provides an annual land rental payment to the farmer for the land kept in the buffer.

**Video Blog:** [Kim Patten, Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#)

A key partner in the buffer project is the Tri-County Conewago Creek Watershed Association, whose members, along with local boy scouts, made up a good part of the work crew.

Matt Royer, President of the Association, outlined some of the threats to water quality in the watershed and importance of projects like this to improving water quality.

**Video Blog:** [Matt Royer on Tri-County Conewago Creek Watershed Assn.](#)

Co-founder of the Association, Hal Royer, said he helped start the watershed group because he was a life-long resident of the area and wanted to see what he could do to improve his watershed.

He noted that he grew up with Al Wenger, the owner of the farm, illustrating how personal relationships help get the job done locally. And yes, Matt Royer is his son.

**Video Blog:** [Hal Royer, Co-Founder Conewago Creek Watershed Assn.](#)

Trees for the 21st Century, a program administered by The Future of Life, uses tree-planting programs to help children ages 6 to 18 understand the value of the environment and expand the world inventory of trees.

Amanda Benner said they often work with scouting groups, like the boy scouts participating in this buffer project, to help them become better stewards of the environment.

**Video Blog:** [Amanda Benner, Trees for the 21st Century](#)

Local volunteers made up most of the crew, but planting organizers got a surprise when a couple from Connecticut stopped by to lend a hand. They had been in the area and thought it would be great to help out!

Although more than 2,000 miles of forested stream buffers have been planted in Pennsylvania through the efforts of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and many other partners in the last few years, many more miles of projects of this kind are needed.

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## **Online Training**

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### **EPA Issues Online Training Materials to Improve Watershed Group Financing**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds has released a set of online training materials designed to help nonprofit watershed organizations develop and implement sustainable funding plans to finance their watershed projects.

The materials outline six key steps to funding plan development, introduce fundraising options, and provide success stories as examples to successful financing. Watershed organizations will be able to create their own financing plans, ensure their own sustainability, and protect the nation's water quality.

[Developing a Sustainable Finance Plan](#) is available free online.

## **On the Hill**

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### **On the Senate/House Agenda/Session Schedule/Bills Introduced**

Here's what's coming up on the Senate and House agenda for next week, as well as the voting session schedule through June 30.

#### **Session Schedule**

The Senate and House will return to voting session on May 12.

#### **House 2008 Session Days—**

May 12, 13, 14

June 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30

#### **Senate 2008 Session Days--**

May 12, 13, 14

June 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30

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

#### **Calendars/Committees**

The Senate and House published committee schedules and floor Calendars for next week--

## Calendars

**House (May 12):** [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate gas and energy prices; [House Resolution 627](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging federal government to provide more heating assistance funding; [House Bill 934](#) (Scavell-R-Monroe) authorizing counties to impose up to a \$4/ton solid waste management fee to support local recycling, anti-litter programs.

[Special Session House Bill 13](#) (Bennington-R-Mifflin) amends the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act to provide for increased use of energy efficiency, extends the compliance period from 15 to 21 years and provides additional milestones for the use of alternative energy; [Special Session House Bill 17](#) (McIlvaine Smith-D-Montgomery) excluding purchase price of hybrid electric vehicles from sales and use tax.

**Senate (May 12):** [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to protect the Appalachian Trail through land use controls; [Senate Bill 1317](#) (Waugh-R-York) providing incentive payments for cellulosic ethanol production.

## Committees

**Senate:** the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 2](#) (Earll-R-Erie) provides \$750 million for drinking water, wastewater, flood control and high hazard dam projects, [Senate Resolution 244](#) (Rhoades-R-Schuylkill) urging Congress to investigate the high cost of energy, [Senate Resolution 283](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) recognizing the accomplishments of Franklin & Marshall professors Robert Walter and Dorothy Merritts on their research into legacy sediments; the Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee holds a hearing on energy efficiency and demand side response programs.

**House:** the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1242](#) (Goodman-D-Schuylkill) establishing additional siting criteria for municipal and residual waste landfills, [House Resolution 712](#) (Hutchinson-R-Venango) re-establishing the Forestry Task Force, [House Resolution 719](#) (George-D-Clearfield) endorsing request for federal funding for PA river basin commissions; the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1020](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) updating the county conservation district law; the Labor Relations Committee holds a hearing on the Hazardous Material Emergency Planning and Response Act.

**Other:** the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#), presents a program on the [Environmental Management Assistance Program](#) provided by the PA Small Business Development Centers.

## Bills Introduced

These environmental bills of interest were introduced this week—

**H20 PA Infrastructure:** [Senate Bill 2](#) (Earll-R-Erie) provides \$750 million for drinking water, wastewater, flood control and high hazard dam projects.

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**Conservation District Funding I:** [House Bill 2491](#) (Miller-R-York) putting a surcharge on fines and penalties collected by the DEP to be deposited in the Conservation District Fund.

**Conservation District Funding II:** [House Bill 2492](#) (Miller-R-York) appropriating \$10 million to Conservation Districts to provide conservation assistance to farmers raising biofuels.

**Drinking Water Week:** [House Resolution 741](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) designating May 4-10 “Drinking Water Week” in Pennsylvania and was adopted by the House.

### On the Governor’s Desk

The General Assembly took final action on this legislation of interest and it now goes to the Governor--

**Phosphate Ban Extension:** [Senate Bill 1017](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) extending the Phosphate Detergent Ban to dishwashing detergent was passed by the House without change and now goes to the Governor for his action.

### Senate and House Bills Moving

These bills of interested were the subject of action by the Senate and House this week-

#### Senate

**Cellulosic Ethanol:** The Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee amended and reported out [Senate Bill 1317](#) (Waugh-R-York) providing incentive payments for cellulosic ethanol production. The bill is now on the Senate Calendar for action.

**Appalachian Trail:** [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to protect the Appalachian Trail through land use controls was removed from the table and is now on the Senate Calendar for action.

**Brownfields:** [Senate Bill 1062](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) providing for the reimbursement of developers for reuse of brownfield sites was referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

**Coal Bed Methane:** [Senate Bill 1330](#) (D.White-R-Indiana) providing for the resolution of coal bed methane rights disputes was referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

**Allegheny Forest:** [Senate Resolution 294](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) affirming the consent of the Commonwealth to the acquisition of Allegheny National Forest Lands is conditioned on the preservation of state and private property rights was adopted by the Senate.

## House

**Phosphate Ban Extension:** [Senate Bill 1017](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) extending the Phosphate Detergent Ban to dishwashing detergent was passed by the House without change and now goes to the Governor for his action.

**Elk Damage:** [House Bill 1078](#) (Hanna-D-Centre) providing compensation for elk damage was referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

**Hazleton Soil:** [House Bill 771](#) (Hershey-R-Chester) officially designating the Hazleton soil series as the official soil of the Commonwealth was reported from the House State Government Committee and referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

**Permit Notification:** [House Bill 146](#) (Belfanti-D-Northumberland) requiring state agencies to notify municipalities when they issue permits was referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

**Drinking Water Week:** [House Resolution 741](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) designating May 4-10 “Drinking Water Week” in Pennsylvania and was adopted by the House.

## Senate Agriculture Committee Moves Biofuels Incentive Bill

The Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee this week amended and reported out [Senate Bill 1317](#) (Waugh-R-York) that would provide a financial incentive to farmers to plant biomass for biofuel production.

"We are still in the Special Session on Energy Policies and discussing ways in which we can implement a sustainable alternative energy policy for Pennsylvania," Sen. Brubaker (R-Lancaster) Majority Chair of the Committee said. "Sen. Waugh's Farms to Fuels Initiative offers yet another option for our consideration, and I applaud the Senator for his initiative in this matter."

"Planting of such crops is a long term risk that would involve the removal of good cash crops from production," said Sen. Waugh. "Development of bioenergy crops takes between 2-3 years, which can present a difficult decision for farmers that are considering replacing cash crops such as corn or soybeans with bioenergy crops."

"While switch grass is growing in popularity as an alternative to corn for the use in ethanol production, there are many other crops that are just as suitable and beneficial," said Sen. Waugh. "So, it was important to me to expand the reach of my legislation."

"Although I have traditionally not been a proponent of subsidies, I believe these are warranted because cellulosic ethanol provides a very real opportunity for our farmers and the Commonwealth," said Sen. Waugh. "If we intend to make Pennsylvania a leader in the production of fuel from these crops within the next few years, then this measure is critical."

The bill is now on the Senate Calendar for action.

Sen. Mike Brubaker (R-Lancaster) serves as Majority Chair and Sen. Michael O’Pake (D-Berks) serves as Minority Chair.

### **House Committee Meets on Landfill Siting, Forestry, River Basin Bills**

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets May 13 to consider legislation establishing additional landfill siting criteria, reestablishing the Forestry Task Force and requesting federal funding for river basin commissions.

The bills include: [House Bill 1242](#) (Goodman-D-Schuylkill) establishing additional siting criteria for municipal and residual waste landfills, [House Resolution 712](#) (Hutchinson-R-Venango) re-establishing the Forestry Task Force and [House Resolution 719](#) (George-D-Clearfield) endorsing request for federal funding for PA river basin commissions.

Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) serves as Majority Chair and Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) serves as Minority Chair.

### **Senate Committee to Consider \$750 Million Infrastructure Funding Bill**

The Senate [Environmental Resources and Energy Committee](#) meets May 13 to consider [Senate Bill 2](#) (Earll-R-Erie) that would provide \$750 million for drinking water, wastewater, flood control and high hazard dam projects over ten years.

The Committee will also consider [Senate Resolution 244](#) (Rhoades-R-Schuylkill) urging Congress to take action to control the high cost of energy and [Senate Resolution 283](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) recognizing the accomplishments of Franklin & Marshall professors Robert Walter and Dorothy Merritts on their research into legacy sediments.

The infrastructure legislation would use economic development funds set aside under the Gaming Law as a revenue stream to float a \$750 million bond issue.

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

### **May 12 Environmental Form: Environmental Management Assistance**

The May 12 Environmental Issues Forum sponsored by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) will hear a presentation on the SBDC's Environmental Management Assistance Program.

The program will begin at noon in Room 205 of the Ryan Building in Harrisburg.

Christopher Lynch and Associate Director Nancy Crickman from the PA Small Business Development Centers [Environmental Management Assistance Program](#) will speak about the program's services, tools and results, and examine environmental trends and issues that small businesses in Pennsylvania are facing.

EMAP is a statewide program providing free and confidential environmental assistance to small businesses. Such areas of assistance include compliance with environmental regulations, helping new environmental technology and alternative energy businesses with start-up issues, aiding existing businesses to "go green" and save money by reducing energy consumption and waste disposal costs, and helping find funding sources for new projects and environmental upgrades.

Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) serves as Chair of the Committee and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) serves as Vice-Chair.

## Other News

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### DCNR Carbon Management Plan Available for Public Comment



Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis this week announced recommendations in the agency's [Carbon Management Advisory Group](#) are now available online for public comment.

Comments are due June 15.

The report makes recommendations on policy options that DCNR might pursue, using Pennsylvania's land and geology, to address global warming.

"Climate change is perhaps the single, biggest, long-term threat to Pennsylvania's existing natural heritage and the sustainability of our economy," Secretary DiBerardinis said. "Our goal is to understand Pennsylvania's forest, its geologic and biomass resources, and open the way for future innovation in a world where carbon dioxide emissions are tightly controlled.

"We commissioned this report and seek public comment on the final product to get the best information with which to make decisions that elevate the value of open space protection and stewardship of private land and, at the same time, give Pennsylvania a competitive advantage in a world that restricts carbon emissions to address climate change," Secretary DiBerardinis said.

The recommendations are in four categories:

**Geologic Sequestration:** Develop protocols for siting and operating geologic sequestration projects in Pennsylvania; Develop a pilot project to demonstrate geologic sequestration in western Pennsylvania; and Develop a pilot project to show geologic sequestration in conjunction with coal bed methane production in the anthracite region of northeastern Pennsylvania.

**Forest Management:** Consider planting vegetation on underutilized land, such as abandoned mine lands, oil and gas well sites, brownfields, marginal agricultural land and riparian areas; Increase sequestration on managed forests in Pennsylvania; Consider using local wood for small scale local district combined heat and power and liquid fuel production, but pay close attention to biomass supply; Provide incentives to process wood into durable wood products; and Plant trees in urban areas.

**Landscape Conservation:** Consider direct DCNR acquisition and protection of forest land; and Develop incentives to protect forests from development.

**Registries:** A registry would serve the following purposes: Support implementation of comprehensive statewide climate mitigation actions related to forestry and geologic resources; Establish quantitative implementation baselines for current and future state policies, programs and projects; Report and track progress of current and future state policies, programs and projects in terms of greenhouse gas emissions reductions made in

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implementing state mitigation actions; and Enable reciprocal disclosure, recognition and reward of climate mitigation actions at the local, state and multi state level.

The Carbon Management Advisory Group is a collaborative project that started in 2006 with the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) and the [Center for Climate Strategies](#) to show the potential costs and carbon benefits of different management options. Sixty-five stakeholders representing non-governmental organizations, academia and state government participated in preparing the report.

Comments should be sent to the DCNR Office of Strategic Initiatives, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17105.

**Video Blog:** [DCNR to Release Carbon Management Plan](#)

**Links:** [DCNR Continues Work on Carbon Strategy](#)  
[DCNR Carbon Sequestration Group Considers Policy Options](#)

### 2008 Western PA Environmental Award Winners Announced

Five environmental programs were the winners of the 2008 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards, announced this week by [Dominion](#) and the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#).

The five programs address a wide range of local and regional environmental issues, including acid mine drainage, building sustainability, wildlife protection and hazardous waste management and were chosen from entries submitted earlier this year.

With these awards, each winner will designate a \$5,000 cash prize to be used in support of a nonprofit environmental program of their choice.

The winners will be honored at the Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards Dinner and Awards Ceremony on May 28 at the Westin Convention Center Hotel downtown. [More information on tickets is available online.](#)

The winners are:

**Children's Museum of Pittsburgh – Pittsburgh:** The \$29 million expansion of the [Children's Museum](#) was a project in environmental sustainability, resulting in the museum receiving a Silver LEED certification in 2006. The building's green features not only reduce its overall environmental impact, but have also become the focus of educational programs and features for the museum's 220,000 visitors each year. Through this expansion, the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh is now a showcase of environmental sustainability and advocacy.

**Construction Junction – Pittsburgh:** Since opening in 1999, [Construction Junction](#) has grown dramatically and diverted tons of usable building materials from landfills. More than 14000 doors, 6500 cabinets, 16500 light fixtures, 600 kitchen sets, 6800 plumbing fixtures and 8500 windows are just a portion of the building products that have been recycled into thousands of reuse applications in more than 1000 different communities, helping Construction Junction to grow into a nearly \$1 million business, employing 17 people.

**Suzanne B. DeArment**, Executive Director, [Tamarack Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center](#) – Saegertown: As a volunteer with the Tamarack Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center, Suzanne DeArment has devoted the past 17 years of her life to the care of sick, injured and orphaned wildlife in northwestern Pennsylvania. In the past ten years alone, Ms. DeArment has cared for nearly 8,000 animals, including 29 that are considered endangered species such as bald eagles, peregrine falcons, osprey, short-eared owls, and others. She has also been a prolific educator, having been involved in over 170 wildlife conservation programs that have included over 20,000 participants.

**South Fayette Conservation Group – Bridgeville:** The abandoned Maude Mine was both an environmental and public safety and health hazard to the South Fayette Township community. The [South Fayette Conservation Group](#) has removed all of the remaining coal mining structures, relocated 1.2 miles of a nearby stream which greatly reduced acid mine drainage into the local watershed, eliminated dangerous high walls and buried exposed mine portals. Thanks to the work of community volunteers, the Maude Mine project is a model for abandoned mine reclamation statewide.

**Southwestern Pennsylvania Household Hazardous Waste Task Force – Pittsburgh:** The safe and proper disposal of household hazardous wastes is one of the most serious environmental challenges facing municipalities. But since its formation in 2002, this [multi-agency task force](#) administered by the [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) has collected and disposed of hazardous wastes from over 14,000 households. In 2007, well over 300,000 pounds of such wastes were collected from a six-county area in southwestern Pennsylvania, obtained during community collection events where residents are encouraged to bring wastes they cannot legally or safely dispose of at home. This program also won a 2007 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence.

All entries were reviewed and evaluated by an independent panel of judges and PEC staff on the basis of their relevance, evidence of their impact on the environment, their approach to solving an environmental problem, and the environmental benefit of their work.

The Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards program is open to individuals and organizations that demonstrated a commitment to environmental excellence, leadership and accomplishment, and made significant contributions toward improving Western Pennsylvania's environment.

Dominion and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council sponsor the Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards each year to encourage the community to emulate the achievements of the winning entries, thereby promoting innovative environmental efforts and enhancing the quality of life in Western Pennsylvania.

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

By sponsoring these awards, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Dominion hope to encourage the community to emulate the achievements of the successful



nominees, thereby promoting innovative environmental efforts and enhancing the quality of life in Western Pennsylvania.

### **Fort Indiantown Gap Wins Army's Highest Environmental Award**

The Army National Guard's [Fort Indiantown Gap](#) has won the Secretary of the Army's Environmental Award for Natural Resources Conservation for their work in preserving the rare, regal fritillary butterfly.



Fort Indiantown Gap supports the largest regal fritillary population east of the Mississippi River. The regal fritillary butterfly, a Pennsylvania state species of concern, exists there because of the installation's grassy ranges, but those grassy ranges provide the Army's only live-fire, maneuver training site in the state.

The installation's natural resources conservation team has the challenge of protecting this beautiful insect while providing the landscape in which National Guard Soldiers train for war. And, the team has met this natural resource challenge so successfully

"If we could, we'd just set the grassland aside for the regal fritillary butterfly," said John Fronko, environmental program manager for the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, and leader of the natural resources conservation team. "Since land is a finite resource around here, though, we put our heads together and found a win-win solution for our Soldiers and our butterflies."

One solution is virtual mine fields. Fronko said the installation avoids mechanized training on 219 acres to preserve butterfly habitat by assigning some of that area as virtual 'mine fields' in training exercises.

"That way we are still able to maintain realism and meet our training doctrine requirements at the same time," he said.

Another solution to keep the regal fritillary butterfly off of the endangered species list is transplanting a colony of the regal fritillary butterfly elsewhere in the state. The Gap's natural resources team is working with [The Nature Conservancy](#) to introduce the butterfly at the Gettysburg National Military Park.

In addition to the regal fritillary butterfly, the natural resources team manages 96 other state species of concern on 17,000 acres of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in the state, including forest, grassland, scrubland, savanna, and wetlands.

The Secretary of the Army's environmental award will be conferred on the installation at a ceremony on May 12 for its success both in protecting precious natural resources and in sustaining Fort Indiantown Gap's capability to train Soldiers.

### **Schuylkill Action Network Recognizes Environmental Excellence**

The [Schuylkill Action Network](#) this week recognized three schools and the Philadelphia Water Department for developing environmental and educational projects that help to protect sources of drinking water in the Schuylkill River Watershed.

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The Schuylkill Action Network Source Water Protection Awards were presented at the [Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center](#) as part of EPA's celebration of National Drinking Water Week.

"The Schuylkill River provides nearly two million people with healthy drinking water every day. These schools are making valuable contributions by developing innovative environmental management and educational programs to protect this vital resource," said Jon Capacasa, director of water protection division for EPA's mid-Atlantic region.

The schools receiving the awards were:

- [Albright College](#), in Reading Pa., for developing a bank and fencing geographic information system (GIS) layer for the Schuylkill Action Network agriculture workgroup;
- [Kutztown High School](#), in Kutztown, Pa. for planting native shrubs and trees on stream banks to control runoff; and
- [Springside School in Philadelphia](#), Pa., for designing a rain garden to reduce runoff.

In addition to presenting awards to the schools, the Department of Environmental Protection recognized the [Philadelphia Water Department](#) for its voluntary efforts to protect the drinking water sources that serve 1.6 million customers.

Beginning in 2000, the Philadelphia Water Department conducted assessments of both the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers, and worked with upstream users to address threats to these resources presented by pathogens, storm water, agriculture and acid mine drainage. Key initiatives in the protection of these rivers are the Schuylkill Action Network and the Delaware Valley Early Warning System.

"The Philadelphia Water Department has developed innovative, effective partnerships and tools that work," said DEP Deputy Secretary for Field Operations, Mike Sherman. "Today we have upstream and downstream watershed partners protecting the Schuylkill, and a high tech monitoring system that guards public drinking water supplies from both rivers," he added.

The Schuylkill Action Network was formed in 2003 as partnership to clean up and protect the Schuylkill River and its tributaries. Members include EPA, Department of Environmental Protection, Philadelphia Water Department, Delaware River Basin Commission, the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary; conservation districts, local, state and federal agencies, watershed organizations and other non-governmental organizations.

Source water is untreated water from streams, rivers, lakes, or underground aquifers which is used to supply private wells and public drinking water. The Schuylkill River and its tributaries are an important source of drinking water and fish habitat.

For more information on the [Schuylkill Action Network website](#).

### **Dissolved Metal From Mine Drainage Used to Make Pottery by Cranberry Company**

[Clean Creek Products Company](#) of Cranbury Township, Pa is helping to recycle dissolved metals from acid mine drainage runoff by using this byproduct as pigments in pottery products.

The company manufactures and sells hand-thrown glazed pottery (the glaze using the manganese



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byproduct-based colorant) and also promotes the metal byproducts as raw materials to other industries.

The proceeds from these efforts are given to local watershed groups to keep streams and rivers clean from acid mine drainage in partnerships with the [Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition](#) in Butler County and the non-profit group [Stream Restoration, Inc.](#)

Other watershed cleanup projects in Pennsylvania also pioneered the recycling of dissolved metals in acid mine drainage like [Iron Oxide Recovery, Inc.](#) and the [Sewickley Creek Watershed Association](#) in Allegheny County.

*Pictured in the photo are Clean Creek Products partners Betty McDevitt, Ray Nelson, Lois Hamilton, Margaret Dunn, Bob Isenberg, and Cliff Denholm.*

To learn about these byproduct reuse efforts, go to the [Clean Creek Products Company website](#).

**Link:** [Iron Oxide Recovery, Inc. Wins Governor's Excellence Award Passive Treatment Systems in Slippery Rock Yield Black Glaze](#)

### DEP Invites Comments on Whiteley Creek TMDL Plan in Greene County

The Department of Environmental Protection is inviting comments on the proposed Total Maximum Daily Load Plan for Whiteley Creek in Greene County.

DEP is holding a public meeting on the plan June 3 at the Greene Township Municipal Building in Gararads Fort, Pa. Contact: Joe Boylan 724-627-8935 or by sending email to: [jboylan@state.pa.us](mailto:jboylan@state.pa.us).

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

### PUC Commemorates National Drinking Water Week By Improving Infrastructure

Promoting the importance of "sustainable water infrastructure," the [Public Utility Commission](#) kicked off National Drinking Water Week by breaking ground for one of many improvement projects statewide to enhance service and provide reliability for water customers.

PUC Chairman Wendell F. Holland, Commissioner Kim Pizzigrilli and House Consumer Affairs Committee Chairman Rep. Joseph Preston Jr. (D-Allegheny) joined United Water representatives, public officials and consumers to highlight the importance of "sustainable infrastructure," which provides ratepayers with improved water quality; greater rate stability; increased water pressure; fewer main breaks; fewer service interruptions; and lower levels of unaccounted for water.

"This year, we wanted to get out into the community to highlight a topic that everyone seems to be talking about these days – our aging critical infrastructure and the repairs needed to keep it sustainable and reliable for all members of the community," said PUC Chairman Wendell F. Holland. "It's a consumer issue. It's a reliability issue. It's an economic development issue. It's an environmental issue."

Commissioner Kim Pizzigrilli said, "Working to create a sustainable water infrastructure across our state is vital to promoting reliability for consumers. Many water systems have pipes that are over 100 years old, and large portions have reached the end of their useful lives at the same time."

Joined by Chairman Holland, crews broke ground on United Water's latest main replacement project, which is being funded by a Distribution System Improvement Charge (DSIC), used to repair critical water infrastructure. The DSIC allows water companies to use a surcharge on customers' bills to fund more upgrades of aging infrastructure.

The DSIC is a regulatory tool passed by the General Assembly a decade ago and is being used as model legislation for other states and other utility infrastructures. The House Consumer Affairs Committee has held public input hearings on expanding this useful tool to address other infrastructure needs.

"Much of our utility infrastructure is reaching a critical point," Rep. Preston said, "and we must find a way to balance the acceleration of the replacement of aging infrastructure while maintaining the safety and reliability of other utility services."

The Commission also sponsored exhibits from water companies, state agencies and water-related organizations on display in the Atrium of the Commonwealth Keystone Building in Harrisburg.

**NewsClip:** [National Drinking Water Awareness Week](#)

### **Susquehanna River Basin Commission Issues Water Use Mitigation Plan**

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission this week issued its [Consumptive Use Mitigation Plan](#) that documents current and projected quantities of consumptive water uses in the Susquehanna watershed and outlines a strategy for addressing impacts from increased uses.

Peak consumptive uses in 2000 were 500 million gallons per day (gpd). SRBC projects an increase to more than 1.2 billion gpd by 2025. Water for power production and domestic uses will remain the top consumptive uses, with the largest increases being from power production.

Consumptive use is defined by SRBC as water that is used in a way it is not returned to the basin, including through evaporation, irrigation, use in products and diversions out of the Susquehanna watershed.

SRBC regulates consumptive water uses of 20,000 or more gpd to help ensure adequate supplies for public water, industries, agriculture and recreation, and to protect the environment during times of designated, critical low flows (generally occurring during severe droughts).

SRBC requires consumptive users to mitigate or compensate for their use during those critical flow periods.

"Mitigation can be achieved in a number of ways, including on-site storage and release of water, discontinuance of use, or payment of a mitigation fee," said SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz. "SRBC prefers project sponsors to select the on-site or discontinuance options because they provide the most direct and verifiable mitigation. However, the vast majority opt to pay the mitigation fee either because it may be the most viable option, or in many cases, it is the easiest."

Of the total projected 1.2+ billion gpd of consumptive use in 2025, SRBC estimates 390.3 million gpd will require mitigation - as compared to today's 116.3 million gpd requiring mitigation. In developing the Consumptive Use Mitigation Plan, SRBC identified and assessed numerous alternatives it could consider implementing to address the increasing consumptive uses. The recommendations include:

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- Reevaluating operation of the Conowingo Pond - an interstate reservoir on the lower Susquehanna River - and other major water users in the lower Susquehanna region to consider the effects of increased mitigation flows from upstream sources;
- Reevaluating SRBC-owned water storage at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Cowanesque and Curwensville reservoirs in Tioga and Clearfield Counties, Pennsylvania, respectively, to determine if larger and more frequent releases can be made from the reservoirs to enhance downstream flows during low flow periods;
- Evaluating underground mines as a source for mitigation water;
- Evaluating potential modifications and/or operational changes at select impoundments;
- Assessing streamflow needs to prioritize areas needing consumptive use mitigation and determine where consumptive use should be limited; and
- Increasing SRBC's consumptive water use mitigation fee and revising the structure of that fee to maintain the viability of the restricted water management fund.

Swartz said, "It will, undoubtedly, take a combination of several, if not most, of the recommendations for SRBC to secure enough water storage to meet projected demands. Frankly, we are challenged to even meet today's needs. SRBC will move forward very deliberately to implement the most appropriate recommendations to safeguard the basin's water supplies that support economic development while protecting the environment."

A copy of the [Consumptive Use Mitigation Plan](#) is available online.

### **Darby-Cobbs Watershed Partnership Sponsors May 17 Walking/Bus Tour**

[Darby-Cobbs Watershed Partnership](#) is sponsoring a Rediscover Indian Creek & Leave as a Watershed Steward! walk and bus tour on May 17 starting at 9:00 at the Meet at Friends' Central School, 1101 City Ave., Wynnewood.

This event is a walking and bus tour of the East Branch of Indian Creek, part of the Darby Creek Watershed. It will be an excellent opportunity for elected officials and municipal officials to see the good work that the watershed partnership is doing.

Participants will have a lot of fun and wrap up by walking through beautiful Morris Park, where Fairmount Park Commission will be celebrating their Philadelphia Cares about Fairmount Park Day.

The program is sponsored by the Darby Cobbs Watershed Partnership, Philadelphia Water Department and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, with special thanks to the Friends' Central School, Lower Merion Conservancy, Montgomery County Conservation District, Narberth Borough and Lower Merion Township.

For more information and to RSVP call 215-592-7020 ext. 107 or send email to: [kluong@pecpa.org](mailto:kluong@pecpa.org).

### **Upper Delaware Council Sponsors May 21 Forum on Natural Gas Drilling**

The [Upper Delaware Council Inc.](#) and the National Park Service [Upper Delaware Scenic & Recreational River](#) will co-sponsor a free public information forum on natural gas drilling issues from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. May 21 in the Honesdale High School auditorium, located on Terrace Street in Honesdale, Wayne County.

The objective of this Pennsylvania-focused forum is to present factual information on natural gas and its exploration methodologies, extraction techniques, industry

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regulations and agency oversight, potential environmental impacts, and the execution of mineral rights leases by property owners.

Attorney Wendell R. Kay of Honesdale will serve as moderator. The four speakers to offer presentations will be: Patrick O’Dell, a petroleum engineer with the National Park Service Geologic Resources Division; Ron Gilius, director of the Department of Environmental Protection’s Bureau of Oil and Gas Management; Wes Gillingham, program director of the Catskill Mountainkeeper non-profit organization; and Lester Greevy, Esq., a specialist in mineral rights law from Williamsport in Lycoming County.

Following delivery of their remarks, the panel will participate in a question-and-answer session with the audience. All are welcome. No reservations are required.

For more information, contact the UDC at 845-252-3022 or the NPS at 570-729-7842.

### **Regional Health Firm Brings New Life to Former Meadville Factory**

A health firm that serves 13 hospitals and other health care facilities in northwestern Pennsylvania this week signed an agreement with the Department of Environmental Protection that will pave the way for the company to move into the former Talon Plant #7.

Vantage Holding Co. LLC plans to develop the site as its corporate headquarters and move about 120 of its 300 employees there. The facility has been empty since the early 1990s when pioneering zipper manufacturer Talon ceased local operations. The property covers approximately 14 acres on Meadville’s South Main Street, including a 66,000-square-foot building.

“The agreement ensures the building and surrounding land will be reused in an environmentally safe manner, which will help breathe new life into this high profile property,” said DEP Regional Director Kelly Burch. “For almost 80 years, this property was a major contributor to the local economy. Vantage is now prepared to begin a new chapter in its history, which will help Meadville continue its economic growth.”

The agreement establishes property-use limitations, such as prohibiting the use of groundwater and requiring that new buildings be constructed without basements. Property-use limitations, such as those being used on this site, are common to ensure brownfield properties are reused safely.

Under the agreement, the indoor air quality of all buildings must be tested or modeled before being occupied to show that the building meets DEP requirements. Talon began manufacturing boilers at the facility in 1910. In 1932, Talon started manufacturing zippers there. In addition, the company operated a waste treatment plant, waste disposal lagoon, and drum storage areas on the property.

After Talon ceased operations in the early 1990s, the waste water treatment area, treatment plant and lagoons were cleaned up by Coats American, the successor to Talon.

In 2001, the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Meadville began site investigations and worked with DEP to complete remediation efforts. The property is designated as Keystone Opportunity Zone.

Vantage is a for-profit company that serves a partnership of 13 non-profit hospitals, providing medical equipment and services to its member facilities. The company plans to locate its pharmacy, home infusion services, mobile services, and administration and corporate offices at the Talon site.

For more information, visit DEP's [Land Recycling webpage](#).

### **EPA Awards Small Business Innovation Grants, New Applications Due**

This week the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced \$1.6 million in funding for [seven small companies](#) to commercialize green technologies that promise to deliver BIG results, including Media and Process Technology, Inc., Pittsburgh.

EPA is accepting applications for the next round of grants until May 21.

"Small businesses are the engine for the U.S. economy, and these small businesses show that enterprise and financial success can also spell environmental success," said Dr. George Gray, assistant administrator for the EPA's Office of Research and Development. "I'm particularly impressed by this year's projects. Besides boiler water conservation and energy savings, Phase II winners include a more efficient biodiesel production process and nanomaterials as an alternative to mercury in lighting fixtures."

To participate in SBIR, a small business must have fewer than 500 employees, and at least 51 percent of the business must be owned by U.S. citizens.

For more information, visit EPA's [Small Business Innovation Research Grant program webpage](#).

### **Composting Infrastructure Development Grants Due July 18**

The Department of Environmental Protection announced it is now accepting applications for 2008 Composting Infrastructure Development Grants until July 18.

Under the program, for-profit business entities, whether established or start-up, or incorporated nonprofit organizations operating a composting facility are eligible to receive grants to increase the quantity of yard and/or food wastes collected and processed.

\$400,000 is available for this initiative and DEP will award grants of up to \$100,000 to any one project.

Additional consideration will be given to applications that are developed in consultation with the [Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center](#).

The municipal waste stream in Pennsylvania consists of more than 30 percent organic materials that could be recycled and diverted from the waste stream and managed by composting.

For applications and more information, visit the [DEP Composting webpage](#).

### **Allegheny County Offers Free Collection for Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs**

The Allegheny County Health Department, in partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection, is offering a free collection program for recycling compact fluorescent light bulbs.

CFLs, which contain small amounts of mercury, have become increasingly popular in recent years because they are longer lasting than traditional light bulbs and cut electricity costs by up to 75 percent.

"Our collection program gives consumers a disposal option that is safer for the environment and public health than discarding CFLs with household trash. An estimated 99.9 percent of the mercury will be recovered," said County Health Director Dr. Bruce W. Dixon.

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CFLs may be dropped off Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Clack Health Center, Building 5, Public Drinking Water and Waste Management Program, 3901 Penn Ave., Lawrenceville.

The CFLs will be accepted for a limited time and should be transported and delivered in a way that prevents breakage.

Health officials note CFLs are a win-win for the consumer and the environment. While CFLs cost more initially, the energy savings can pay back the higher upfront cost in as little as four months and save more than \$60 over a CFLs entire life. In addition, CFLs cut pollution from power plants since less energy is needed to light them.

### **Allegheny County, PRC Hold Hard to Recycle Event May 31**

The [Allegheny County Health Department](#), [Appliance Warehouse](#), eLoop LLC and the [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) are sponsoring a Hard to Recycle Collection event in Lawrenceville, Allegheny County on May 31.

The public is encouraged to bring appliances, electronic waste, televisions, tires without rims, ink and toner cartridges and cell phones. There are fees for recycling some items.

Volunteers are also needed for the event. All volunteers will receive a coupon for one free hour of kayaking from [Kayak Pittsburgh](#).

For more information, visit the [PRC Events webpage](#) or contact Sarah Alessio with questions or to volunteer at 412-431-4449 ext. 236 or send email to: [saraha@ccicenter.org](mailto:saraha@ccicenter.org).

### **Centre County Household Hazardous Waste Collection a Success**

People from 600 households took advantage of Centre County's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Program this past weekend sponsored by the [Centre County Solid Waste Authority](#).

More than 17 tons of material was collected during the two-day event. In all, 606 vehicles brought hazardous chemicals from 627 households. Residents from 32 of the county's 35 municipalities participated.

The event was co-hosted by Centre County Solid Waste Authority, Centre County Local Emergency Planning Committee, Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environmental Protection.

"Centre County residents showed up in force and really showed their environmental caring," said Joanne Shafer, Centre County's deputy executive director/recycling coordinator. "What a wonderful way to connect people and the environment on this weekend after Earth Day."

The Department of Agriculture's [Chemsweep Program](#) will pay for disposal of 5,804 pounds of agricultural chemicals. Collection and disposal costs of the remaining 28,580 pounds will be split between the Household Hazardous Waste Fund and DEP.

### **Alternative Energy Workshops for Educators Set for June**

The Departments of Environmental Protection, Education, Conservation and Natural Resources and Keystone College, Lake Erie-Allegheny Earth Force, Penn State University



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and Lancaster County Career & Technology Center will hold a series of four Introductory Alternative Energy workshops for educators in June.

The dates include:

- June 3 -- Willary Water Resource Center, Keystone College, Lackawanna Hall, La Plume (in partnership with DCNR, Lackawanna State Park and Keystone College);
- June 11 -- Tom Ridge Environmental Center at Presque Isle, Erie (in partnership with the Lake Erie-Allegheny Earth Force);
- June 20 -- Applied Research Laboratory (ARL), Eric Walker Conference Room, Penn State University, University Park (in partnership with Penn State's ARL and the Center for Sustainability); and
- June 24 -- Lancaster County Career & Technology Center, 432 Old Market St., Mt. Joy (in partnership with the Lancaster County Career & Technology Center)

The workshops, which are available to educators at no cost, will be held from 8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. (lunch and refreshments included). Teachers will be eligible for 7.0 Act 48 credit hours.

Workshop participants will learn about and explore alternative energy technologies through presentations, hands-on activities and a field trip to see alternative energy technology in action.

This workshop is geared for upper elementary, middle and high school teachers and non-formal educators and is based upon Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Environment and Ecology and Science and Technology.

Educators will receive background information and standards-based curricular materials, including PDE's "Energy Thinking and Conserving for the Future."

"This workshop is designed to help educators address state mandated academic standards for environment/ecology and science/technology, while focusing on an important and pressing environmental issue," said DEP Director of Environmental Education Jack Farster.

To register for the other workshops, educators should contact Ann Devine, in DEP's Environmental Education and Information Center, at 717-772-1644 or send e-mail to: [adevine@state.pa.us](mailto:adevine@state.pa.us) by May 20.

To register for the June 3 workshop at Keystone College, contact Angela Lambert, DCNR, by calling 570-945-7110 or send email to: [anlambert@state.pa.us](mailto:anlambert@state.pa.us) .

Space is limited, so registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

### Energy Education Added to Duquesne Light Energy Grant Program

Energy education, in addition to energy efficiency and renewable energy premium power projects will now be accepted by the [Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority's](#) Duquesne Light service territory grant program.

Applications are due June 20 for the \$1.8 million available for these grants. ([formal notice](#))

Eligible applicants include municipalities, local government authorities and first responders. Eligible projects include: energy education, energy efficiency projects with a payback period of 2-year or less, such as advanced lighting projects, and premium power projects for public infrastructure and first responders.

Premium power projects may be solar energy; wind; low-impact hydropower; geothermal; biologically derived methane gas, including landfill gas; biomass energy; fuel

cells; or coalmine methane. Premium power refers to projects that will provide reliable power even if conventional energy, such as the electricity grid, becomes unavailable.

More information will be posted on the [Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority webpage](#).

### **PJM Regional Power Grid Ready for Hot Weather Power Demand**

Power supplies should be adequate this summer in the [PJM Interconnection](#), which manages the power supply for all or parts of 13 states and the District of Columbia.

Peak electricity use in PJM is likely to be higher than last summer's level but lower than the all-time record demand.

"We have the required amount of capacity committed to serve consumers for this summer. System operators both at PJM and our members are prepared to handle the challenges the summer may bring," said Michael J. Kormos, PJM senior vice president - Operations. "However, to ensure reliable power supplies for future summers we'll need additional supply resources and additions to the transmission system."

The projected weather-adjusted highest demand for electricity in summer 2008 is 137,950 megawatts (MW). A megawatt is enough electricity to power 800-1,000 homes. PJM has 159,780 MW of committed capacity for the summer.

PJM's Reliability Pricing Model requires generation owners to commit their generation to PJM consumers for a full year. Previously, generators could stop providing electricity in PJM and export power outside the region if a higher-priced opportunity arose. The Reliability Pricing Model also has secured 4,460 MW of emergency load management for summer 2008.

The amount of available load management has doubled compared to last summer. Consumers in load management programs typically receive either a special rate or payments for stopping or reducing their use of electricity under emergency conditions.

Peak demand for electricity is forecast to grow 1.4 percent or 1,850 MW compared to 2007. That's enough power to run a medium-sized city. The weather-adjusted peak in 2007 was 136,100 MW. The actual recorded peak use was 139,428 MW.

Peak electricity use in the PJM region is driven by high temperatures.

PJM's annual summer pre-seasonal assessment looks at a range of possible conditions to allow for variation in weather conditions. The forecast is based on typical peak weather conditions experienced over the past 35 years. Actual electricity demand will vary as temperatures vary from normal. PJM and its members use the forecasted demand to prepare for the summer.

PJM's reserve margin will be 19.7 percent based on committed capacity. The required margin is 15 percent for this summer. Reserve margin provides a "cushion" of generating capacity to meet unexpected high use levels or equipment problems.

PJM's all-time record use of electricity of 144,644 MW occurred in 2006.

### **Game Commission Seeks Public Comment on Fisher Plan**

The Game Commission is seeking public input on a [draft fisher management plan](#) which outlines the historic and current status of fishers, population



## PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

recovery, species-specific goals and management recommendations.

Public comments are due June 1.

"We are seeking public comment on the draft fisher management plan to ensure the resulting final management plan considers the thoughts and concerns of Pennsylvanians about this species," said Calvin W. DuBrock, Game Commission Bureau of Wildlife Management director. "As written, the plan is science-based, progressive and promotes responsible management.

We're interested in hearing from Pennsylvanians who would like to offer comments, and to see if we've missed something or if they share our management vision for the future."

Developed by Dr. Matthew Lovallo, agency Game Mammals Section supervisor, the fisher management plan provides a comprehensive and current summary of fisher biology; historic and current status in Pennsylvania; population recovery; economic significance; public interest; and regional population and harvest management approaches.

The plan also provides supporting objectives and strategies to achieve species-specific goals related to: population monitoring; habitat assessment; population enhancement; and development and implementation of a harvest management program.

Pennsylvania's fisher reintroduction got started back in 1994, when 22 fishers were released on the Sproul State Forest in Centre and Clinton counties. Overall, 190 fishers were released in Pennsylvania as part of a reintroduction partnered by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Frostburg State University and Pennsylvania State University.

The recovery effort followed about eight decades of fisher-less forests in Penn's Woods. The furbearers, one of the largest members of the weasel family, disappeared in the state in the late 1800s and early 1900s as a result of deforestation and unregulated trapping.

Since the fisher reintroduction program, which ran from 1994 to 1998, fishers have made great progress expanding their range from release sites in the Quehanna Wild Area, Allegheny National Forest, Pine Creek Valley and the Pocono Mountains. Fishers also have been expanding their range northward from the Mason-Dixon line deeper and deeper into the Alleghenies and the state's Ridge and Valley province since the 1980s.

In 2006, the Game Commission teamed with Indiana University of Pennsylvania in a research project that aims to provide wildlife managers with a better understanding of fishers, a rapidly expanding furbearer resource in the Commonwealth (See Release #102-06).

"The occurrence of fishers in Pennsylvania is the result of fishers expanding their range from states bordering ours and fishers being reintroduced here and in West Virginia," Lovallo said. "Early results of this study show that the fishers inhabiting Pennsylvania's southwestern and southcentral counties were not released by the Game Commission. It appears from our study that this portion of the state was colonized by the progeny of 23 New Hampshire fishers released in West Virginia in 1969. Most other areas of Pennsylvania, however, are inhabited by fishers that were released by the Game Commission instate during the '90s."

Public comments on the agency's fisher management plan should be sent to: Fisher Management Plan, Pennsylvania Game Commission, 2001 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

## Game Commission Takes First Step in Effort to Eradicate Feral Swine



The Game Commission this week issued an order removing protection on [feral swine](#) in 64 of the state's 67 counties. Counties where protection remains in effect are Butler, Bedford and Cambria counties.

"We are maintaining protection on feral swine in Butler, Bedford and Cambria counties to facilitate trapping by the U.S. and Pennsylvania departments of Agriculture," said Carl Roe, Executive Director of the Commission. "Trapping is the most effective way to remove feral swine from the wild, because it limits their dispersal into new areas. If funding is not available for trapping, we may consider lifting protection in these three counties, as well.

"The Game Commission has determined that the eradication of feral swine from Pennsylvania is necessary to prevent further harm to public and private property, threats to native wildlife and disease risks for wildlife and the state's pork industry. We are not seeking to establish a hunting season, but we are committed to rid Pennsylvania of this invasive species."

Licensed hunters, including those who qualify for license and fee exemptions, are eligible to participate in the unlimited incidental taking of feral swine. They may use manually-operated rifles, revolvers or shotguns, as well as and muzzleloaders, bows and crossbows. All other methods and devices legal for taking feral swine must be conducted in compliance with the provisions of Section 2308 of Title 34 (Game and Wildlife Code).

Additionally, the agency may issue permits to authorize individuals to engage in feral swine trapping operations, including the U.S. and Pennsylvania departments of Agriculture. Feral swine trapping, by permitted individuals, will only be allowed from the close of the flintlock muzzleloading season in mid-January to the beginning of spring gobbler season, and from the end of spring gobbler season until the beginning of archery deer season.

Roe noted that incidental taking of feral swine is permitted outside of trapping seasons in Bedford, Butler and Cambria counties.

Any person who kills a feral swine must report it to the [Game Commission Region Office](#) that serves the county in which the harvest took place within 24 hours.

Roe encouraged residents who witness feral swine to contact the Region Office that serves their county.

Nearly 25 states across the nation have persistent and possibly permanent populations of feral swine established in the wild, and Pennsylvania is one of 16 new states where introduction is more recent and may still be countered through decisive eradication efforts.

Feral swine have been declared to be an injurious, non-native, invasive species of concern in Pennsylvania that are suspected to have been introduced into the wilds of this Commonwealth through a variety of means, including both intentional and unintentional releases. Feral swine also have been determined to pose a significant, imminent and unacceptable threat to this Commonwealth's natural resources, including wildlife and its habitats; the agricultural industry, including crop and livestock production; the forest products industry; and human health and safety.

"A local farmer contacted me after he planted and re-planted a cornfield three times because feral swine were rooting up his corn," said Jonathan Zuck, Game Commission Land Management Group Supervisor for Bedford and Fulton counties. "The farmer told me he would rather have deer damaging his crops, because at least he would still get a stalk to harvest. The swine, on the other hand, root up the corn while it is still germinating leaving behind only dirt. I also had reports of the swine rooting fields of winter wheat." Zuck noted that he also has witnessed feral swine damages to State Game Lands (SGLs), including food plots, vernal pools and the soils around trees.

"Recently, on SGL 49, I found a hole that was more than one foot deep that was caused by feral swine rooting," Zuck said. "Last week, I was checking a food plot and noticed where feral swine had rooted about a quarter of a winter wheat food plot. During the same week, I survey rooting damage to a grass field on SGL 97 near Chaneyville. Most of the damage I have observed on and off game lands has been limited to grass fields or food plots with wheat. Rooting activity in grass fields looks similar to damage caused by a shallow-running plow as the grasses and associated soils are turned over. The damage is spotty, but where it does occur it is quite severe as often the vegetation is wiped out, exposing bare soils."

Zuck noted that, in addition to disturbing vegetation, feral swine are out competing native wildlife for natural foods, such as acorns, especially during the fall and winter months.

"I can easily envision a feral swine preying upon a turkey or grouse nest or wallowing in a seep, but some people may not recognize that feral swine are robbing wildlife of its limited food resources," Zuck said. "A group of up to 10 feral swine can consume a large quantity of acorns in a short amount of time, leaving very little mast behind for deer, turkeys, squirrels, and other wildlife."

For more information, visit the Game Commission's [feral swine webpage](#).

**Video Blog:** [Audubon Urges Taking More Deer, Eradication of Feral Swine](#)

### **DCNR Honors Volunteer as Champion of the Bluebird**

Nancy Rourke of Hilltown Township, Bucks County, was chosen from more than 150 volunteers statewide and honored for her "long-term dedication and enthusiasm" displayed over 15 years while volunteering to monitor and help protect and propagate Eastern bluebirds as part of the Bureau of State Parks' monitoring program.

A flash of russet breast, ever-flitting from perch to ground on a body of cobalt blue. A cheery, non-stop tune piped from atop a flowering dogwood. Together they treat our senses every spring, compliments of that popular harbinger of the season -- the Eastern bluebird.

*Pictured in the photo are Nancy Rourke (RO and Jessica Doxsey, Assistant Manager, Nockamixon State Park.*



Appreciate the bluebird and you have to appreciate the work of thousands of volunteers across the state who have guided the beloved songbird onto the rebound trail. If you enjoy seeing them around Nockamixon State Park, you can thank one very special

volunteer whose dedication to the bird and its habitat have earned her DCNR's 2007 Bluebird Monitor of the Year Award.

At least 40 nesting boxes on the state park grounds near Quakertown, Bucks County, are supervised by Rourke, who says the number of bluebirds fledged along her bluebird trail had been "increasing every year" since she took over chores of erecting and repairing bluebird nesting boxes, cleaning them, and keeping track of the occupants. It is a task that comes with surprises:

"I was once checking the boxes and thought I'd remove what I thought was a field mouse nest and all of a sudden a flying squirrel jumped out of what was its nest," said Mrs. Rourke. "So I just put everything back in and left it undisturbed."

The retired physical therapist who admits "I probably never saw a bluebird before 1985," said she was asked to take on the park monitoring post after she began offering suggested improvements to the trail. Nesting box occupancy climbed steadily for years, she said, but has leveled off of late because of limited habitat.

"We really don't have too many more places to put nesting boxes because of the lack of open spaces," she said. "And, of course, with Lake Nockamixon right there there's always a lot of swallows. It's more their type of territory."

Would-be helpers of the bluebird should be prepared to invest some time in their endeavor after they erect nesting boxes, said the park volunteer. Regular monitoring is a must, she said, to guard against predators and other unwanted visitors.

"You always find time for bluebirds," said Mrs. Rourke. "I firmly believe they are the most gorgeous bird there is."

The bluebird supporter also draws her share of compliments: "Over the years, thanks to Nancy's effort we have seen a drastic improvement in the number of bluebirds nesting and reproducing in the park," said Jessica Doxsey, assistant park manager at Nockamixon. "Not only has she been an active monitor, Nancy has also helped build and install almost all of our boxes around the park. She has also helped to train and coordinate other bluebird monitors and volunteers."

As bluebird trails coordinator, Mrs. Rourke is dedicated to the nesting success of the park's cheery, winged visitors. Her duties include construction, placement and observation of nesting boxes; spring cleaning before new nesting seasons; and compilation of annual nesting records.

"She has shown us how one woman's efforts can make a huge difference towards preservation," Doxsey said. "Nancy has selflessly dedicated her time, money and knowledge to consistently improve our Bluebird Trail at Nockamixon."

The Bureau of State Parks bluebird-monitoring program, which celebrated its 26th anniversary in 2007, now involves 56 of the 117 state parks across the state, according to Amy L. R. Hill, Natural Resource Program Specialist with the Bureau of State Parks.

The Bluebird Trails Program has involved over 150 volunteers, ranging in age from high school students to some in their upper 80s. They check some 1,600 nesting boxes across the state in individual park efforts that monitor from five to more than 175 nesting boxes.

Commitment in the bluebird-monitoring program is not rare, Hill notes. More than 15 of the volunteers have been checking nesting boxes; cleaning and repairing them; jotting notes; and hiking trails for over 20 or more years.

In 2007, a total of 2,225 bluebirds were fledged, bringing the grand total to 45, 440 since 1981. Data gleaned from observations of Rourke and others is shared with the Game

Commission; North American Bluebird Society; the [Bluebird Society of Pa.](#); and the Bureau of State Parks' Resources Management and Planning Division. For more details on Bluebird Trails Program, contact Hill at 717-783-4361.

**Video Blog:** [Nancy Putt, President of the Bluebird Society of PA](#)

### **Help Wanted: President & CEO Pennsylvania Environmental Council**

The [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) is seeking a new President & CEO to be responsible for overall administration, program development, outreach, fundraising and financial oversight of the organization.

The deadline for applications is May 26.

The ideal candidate possesses a blend of enterprising and entrepreneurial spirit and track record, is an accomplished and results-drive leader, demonstrates expertise in seeking funds for nonprofits, manages by example, possesses a strong capacity to collaborate, demonstrates a passion for protecting and restoring the environment and demonstrates a keen ability to build partnerships that increase resources to the field.

To discretely discuss this position please feel free to call Todd Owens, 412-434-1335 x314. Qualified individuals may apply confidentially by submitting resume, cover letter and compensation requirements as MS Word attachments to: [resumes@deweykaye.com](mailto:resumes@deweykaye.com). Please reference the following in the subject line of your email: PEC, President & CEO (#111-MH687).

## **Opinion**

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### **Why Controls on Electricity Prices Should Not Be Extended**

**By**

**Douglas L. Biden**

**President**

**Electric Power Generation Association**

Caps on the prices that utilities can charge customers for electricity - agreed to when the state first allowed customers to shop for electricity over a decade ago - are set to expire in the next few years. Now some lawmakers want to extend the caps. But putting off the move to market prices will only make the inevitable transition more difficult.

It is not surprising that electricity prices will rise when the caps expire. Adjusting the capped prices for inflation since 1997, when the caps took effect, would result in a 40 percent increase. But the costs that drive electricity prices - fuels used to generate electricity and materials used to build electricity infrastructure - have increased much faster than the rate of inflation due to surging worldwide demand led by developing countries such as China and India.

Coal and natural gas costs have increased by 56 percent and 200 percent, respectively, since 2000. The cost of steel has gone up 60 percent in the past six months alone, contributing to a 130 percent increase in the cost of building new power plants since 2000. These higher costs will continue to increase the retail price of electricity in both states that allow electricity competition and those that do not.

For the past decade, customers have saved money due to the caps. But as the California energy debacle of several years ago demonstrated, price controls always lead to other problems.

The caps on utility prices have stymied development of retail competition, depriving customers of a choice of suppliers. In fact, meaningful competition has only developed in the few areas of the state where the caps have already expired. Also, extending the life of the caps will discourage investment in capital-intensive new plants that can provide electricity around the clock.

While most plants built years ago are now operating very efficiently because of competition, these plants will not last forever.

Last but not least, artificially low, capped prices are encouraging over-consumption of electricity. This is bad for the economy and the electric grid, because it requires additional, expensive infrastructure to serve this demand. It is also bad for the environment, because more usage means more emissions from power plants. Anyone who believes that climate change is a problem should support ending the price caps.

Despite these drawbacks, some lawmakers in Pennsylvania have proposed legislation to extend the caps. This legislation would be illegal, because states may not bar utilities from recovering federally-regulated wholesale electricity prices. But more importantly, this move is poor public policy for the reasons stated above.

The transition to market prices after a prolonged period of capped prices will be challenging, but it can be managed by educating customers and giving them options to conserve electricity and phase-in higher prices over a number of years.

Delaying the transition will just make it harder, because the forces pushing prices higher show no sign of abating. For the long-term good of the economy and the environment, the caps should be allowed to expire.

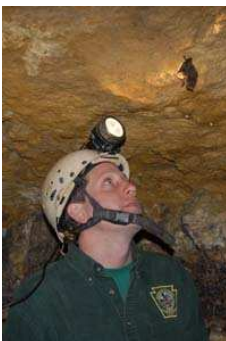
**Douglas L. Biden** is President of the [Electric Power Generation Association](#), a regional trade association of major electric generating companies that supply wholesale power in Pennsylvania and surrounding. For regular updates on electric power issues in Pennsylvania, visit [PA Energy News](#).

## Feature

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### White Nose Syndrome: Is Pennsylvania next?

By Joe Kosack  
Game Commission



The Game Commission has found itself on a new frontier: it is working with several states and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to sort out what is killing bats in New York and New England.

Although [White-Nose Syndrome](#) has not been found in Pennsylvania - and agency officials hope it stays that way - the state is fast becoming an integral player in regional and national efforts aimed at learning more about this unprecedented threat to bats.

Just mentioning the words White Nose Syndrome to Game Commission biologist Greg Turner brings concern to his face. He



knows WNS is just over the border in New York, as well as Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont, and recognizes it's not something that Pennsylvania's bat population can endure without negative consequences. In many northeastern hibernacula where it has struck, WNS has decimated wintering bat colonies with mortality that ranges from 80 to 100 percent. Now there are symptoms in Pennsylvania bat hibernacula that have heightened concern among agency bat biologists, as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"We found fungus on bats' ears and wings - similar to that on bats afflicted with WNS in Vermont and New York - at sites in Fayette, Luzerne and Blair counties," said Turner. "One of the sites, Hartman Mine, at Canoe Creek State Park in Blair County, is the state's largest hibernaculum for Indiana bats, a federally endangered species.

"The good news is no dead bats have been found to date in Pennsylvania, and the bats we captured in mist nets leaving hibernacula were not grossly underweight, a noticeable condition observed in many bats affected with WNS. But with WNS surfacing only 11 miles away from our New York border, it now seems that it might just be a matter of time. That's why the Game Commission is gearing up to try to identify the progression of WNS and shed further light on how this mysterious disorder kills bats."

"This spring, New York and New England sustained terrible losses," Turner said. "The Fish and Wildlife Service has projected tens of thousands of bats may be lost to WNS in New York and New England in 2008. Should Pennsylvania - with more than 4,000 mines and 1,000 caves - become the next hotbed, we could sustain even larger losses."

WNS was first documented in New York in late 2006. Its discovery occurred during routine surveys counting endangered Indiana bats, a large portion of which had inexplicably disappeared from one hibernaculum. Wildlife officials then noticed a strange white fungus on the muzzle of the bats still remaining - hence the syndrome's name. The problem worsened in 2007 as officials investigated reports of bats flying from hibernacula in mid-winter and in broad daylight, when they were supposed to be hibernating. Some bats bore no sign of disease or sickness, but were underweight and leaving their wintering quarters, which is abnormal. Others had white fungus around their noses and/or on their ears and wings.

All affected states and the USFWS have sent afflicted bats to laboratories throughout the United States. This effort includes several bats from Barton Cave - on Forbes State Forest in Fayette County - and Hartman Mine, because some white fungus was found on otherwise apparently healthy bats in recent Game Commission fieldwork. But lab-work has yet to shed further light on anything. As Susi von Oettingen, a USFWS endangered species biologist, said recently about WNS, "We have no clue what it is right now and it doesn't look like we're going to find out anytime soon. Nothing like this has been documented in bat populations anywhere else in the world to this extent."

It remains unclear whether the fungus is killing bats, an up-until-now unrecognized byproduct of cave hibernation, or a secondary opportunist attacking already weakened bats. Currently, the best WNS indicators are mass mortality, early emergence from hibernacula and erratic daytime flying.

An associated problem WNS causes in hibernacula occurs when movement by afflicted bats awakens healthy bats hibernating nearby. These repeated disturbances may cause healthy bats to draw from critical fat reserves they need to make it through winter. When a bat awakens from hibernation, its body temperature rises from around 45 degrees, to about 100, burning up considerable fat reserves unnecessarily. Awakened too often, a

bat cannot sustain hibernation, and it will starve to death foraging for food on a winter landscape.

Wildlife managers investigating these unusual and desperate eruptions from hibernacula in New York and elsewhere haven't been able to pinpoint what is causing bats to behave so erratically. And now Game Commission bat biologists, regarded as one of the best management teams in the country, will get their chance to investigate this enigma.

WNS has drawn the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's attention. The agency is working closely with the four states where WNS has appeared, as well as Pennsylvania and other New England and Mid-Atlantic states. Although the federal response isn't a red alert, there is great concern, because bats are so gregarious and often state-hop - wintering in one state, summering in another. This lifestyle increases the likelihood of contact with affected bats or sites, as well as the potential for huge losses among our bat populations.

"Our three possible sites will be monitored intensively this fall and next winter to develop baseline data in the event WNS shows up in Pennsylvania." Turner said. "Mostly, we'll band and weigh bats taken in traps at entrances, and then see if they return. Recording weights will help us ascertain whether bats are entering hibernacula ill-prepared to hibernate, or leaving with a health problem they contracted while wintering. We also will focus on examining their hibernating patterns and conditions with Dr. DeeAnn Reeder, a bat physiologist at Bucknell University."

Theories abound about what's happening to the Northeast's cave bats. Although wildlife managers attribute the chronicled behavior and mass mortality to WNS, they can't positively identify what causes it. It could be the fungus, or the fungus could be a symptom. It may be a pathogen. If it is, where did it come from, why is it spreading so rapidly, and why haven't American cave bats been through this before? Or have they? So much remains unclear, including how to rank the threat this deadly enigma poses to bats in the Northeast, or the tens of thousands of federally-endangered Virginia big-eared bats and gray bats in the huge limestone caves south of the Mason Dixon Line.

What is clear is Pennsylvania's newfound role in this unfolding conservation drama.

"Pennsylvania appears to be directly in the path of where WNS is heading next, so the Fish and Wildlife Service will be looking to the Game Commission to try to uncover the early warning signs that we didn't have a chance to look for in New York, Vermont and Massachusetts," explained von Oettingen. "We're optimistic the Game Commission can assist us in learning how other states can prepare to deal with WNS."

Of course, von Oettingen, also is hoping for the best. "My hope is that white-nose syndrome stops in New York and New England," she said. "If it doesn't stop, I don't even want to think about it, because we could lose more Indiana bats and it could be an unmitigated disaster for small-footed bats."

The Game Commission will have a chance to shed light on WNS as soon as this summer when bats head to Pennsylvania maternity roosts, such as Canoe Creek Church and "bat condos" on State Game Lands. "There's no doubt some New York bats summer in Pennsylvania, and there's a possibility they could influence the health of some maternity colonies," von Oettingen said. "So it will be important for Game Commission biologists to monitor the population and health of their colonies."

The USFWS plans to continue facilitating and coordinating the regional response to WNS, and is looking for sources of additional funding to help states sort out what's

happening within their borders. It also will continue to analyze suspect bats at its laboratories and coordinate to have other leading laboratories assist in this effort.

In Pennsylvania, Turner said the Game Commission will focus on summer maternity roosts and prepare for monitoring bats heading into hibernacula in the fall. He also noted Northeastern bat biologists will meet in June to establish priorities for collecting data at hibernacula this fall and winter, and brainstorm for funding to help defray the cost of additional fieldwork. Without supplemental funding or manpower assistance from other states, however, there will be a limit to how much fieldwork the Game Commission can accomplish on this important front.

Bats are a tremendous asset to wildlife communities, and humans. Collectively, they eat insects by the tons and spare Pennsylvanians from myriad backyard flying pest and crop-damage issues. Unfortunately, people know more about elephants than they do bats. So misinformation about bats often overshadows the good they do and their importance in Pennsylvania's biodiversity.

Visit the Game Commission website for [more information on bats](#).

*Joe Kosack* is a Wildlife Conservation Education Specialist with the Game Commission.

## Grants & Awards

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

- **May 16**—[DEP Growing Greener Watershed, Flood Protection Grants](#)
- **May 20** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **May 21**—**NEW**. [EPA Small Business Innovation Research Grants](#)
- **May 28**—[ConocoPhillips Energy Prize](#)
- **June 13**—[EPA Clean Diesel Program Grants](#)
- **June 15**—[Merck Wissahickon Creek Water Quality Improvement Grants](#)
- **June 15**—[EPA Region 3 Environmental Achievement Awards](#)
- **June 15**—[Northeast Environmental Partners Environmental Awards](#)
- **June 16**—[Rachel Carson Sense of Wonder Contest](#)
- **June 20**— DEP [Section 902 Recycling Development Grants](#)
- **June 20**—[DEP PA Energy Harvest Grants](#)
- **June 20**—[DEP Biofuels Subsidy Grants](#)
- **June 20**—[PEDA Innovative, Advanced Renewable Energy Grants](#)
- **June 20**—[PEDA Duquesne Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy Grants](#)
- **June 30**—[DCNR Wild Resources Conservation Grants](#)
- **June 30**—[Appalachian Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency Grants](#)
- [RC&D Grants for Improving Livestock Operations](#)
- **July 18**—**NEW**. [DEP Composting Infrastructure Development Grants](#)
- **September 20**—[Fish & Boat Commission Boating Facilities Grants](#)
- **September 24**—[Coca-Cola, NRC Recycling Bin Grants](#)
- **October 15**—[PPL Project Earth Environmental Education Grants](#)

- **October 31**—[PA Resources Council Lens On Litter Photo Contest](#)

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

## Quick Clips

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

[Plan Calls for Storing CO2 Beneath State Forests](#)  
[Carbon Producers Urged to Take Lead in Controls](#)  
[Global Warming Conference Heats Up](#)  
[How Humans React to Changing Climate More Important Than Cause](#)  
[Wooded Dump Site No Match for Land Trust](#)  
[Save the Earth While Having Fun](#)  
[Springside School Cited for Environmental Projects](#)  
[300 Students Compete in Union County Envirothon](#)  
[Susquehanna Valley Envirothon](#)  
[Hundredfold Farm Honors Earth Day](#)  
[Hatfield Twp. Earth Day Activities Generate Large Turnout](#)  
[Conservation Partnership Looks to Expand Its Efforts in Wayne](#)  
[Wal-Mart Selects 20 Capitols for Energy Audits](#)  
[Editorial: Wal-Mart to Help States With Energy](#)  
[Editorial: Ethanol's Lesson](#)  
[Gas Leasing and Drilling Like a Gold Rush in PA](#)  
[Weighing the Environmental Cost of Natural Gas Drilling](#)  
[Farm Turns Manure into Methane Gas](#)  
[Township Will Install Solar Panels](#)  
[Forum: Era of Cheap Energy is Over](#)  
[Electric Companies Prepare Consumers for Rate Hikes](#)  
[Smart Power Meters Herald Future of Electricity Use](#)  
[PJM Power Supplies OK for Summer Demand](#)  
[Editorial: Pittsburgh Still Has Work to Do On Clean Air](#)  
[Curbside Diva Turns Trash Into Treasure](#)  
[Philadelphia Expanding Single-Stream Recycling Program](#)  
[Recycling Markets Center Appoints Four New Board Members](#)  
[New Berlin Aims to Go Green](#)  
[Proposed Eco-Friendly School](#)  
[Op-Ed: Sustainable Development for Southwest PA](#)  
[New HQ's Bottom Line Is Green](#)  
[Percheron Works to Turn Brownfield Green](#)  
[New Source of Revenue for Game, Fish & Boat Commissions](#)  
[Revenue Source for Game, Fish Commissions Drying Up](#)  
[Waning Number of Hunters Won't Doom Sport](#)  
[Audubon PA Helps Put Eagle on Road to Recovery](#)  
[History, Wildlife Abound in Rugged Back Country](#)  
[Guard May Still Seek Game Land](#)  
[Editorial: Guard should End Efforts to Expand Into Wilderness Area](#)

[40% of Flight 93 Memorial Ready by 2011](#)

[Op-Ed: Mine Safety Bill Amendment Would Upend Consensus](#)

[Op-Ed: Mine Safety Bill Stops Short of Safety, Health Needs](#)

## **Watershed NewsClips**

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

[Editorial: Chesapeake Testimony Predictable and Accurate](#)

[Some Hope on Horizon for Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Help](#)

[Coalition Calls on PA to Help Fund Sewage Upgrades, Ag Programs](#)

[Pickett’s Support of State Funding for Bay Cleanup Admirable, But More Needed](#)

[Ambler Borough Required to Upgrade Wastewater Plant to Remove Nutrients](#)

[Paxton Creek Cleanup Could Cost Millions](#)

[Venango County Stream Gets Major Cleanup](#)

[Leadership Clinton County Holds Session on Environment, Agriculture](#)

[Local Anglers Invited to Catch Fish for River Research](#)

[Op-Ed: Capturing Rain Decreases Erosion, Runoff](#)

[PA American Water Offers Wise Water Tips for Gardeners](#)

[City’s First Green Roof Won’t Be Last](#)

[Swattie Enthusiasts Celebrate 20th Sojourn](#)

[Susquehanna Sojourn to Paddle Through Athens](#)

[International Conference Focuses on Saving Water](#)

[Richard A. Rogers Receives National Assn. of Water Companies Award](#)

## **Regulations**

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The Fish and Boat Commission published additions to the [Class Air Wild Trout Waters list](#) and to the 2008 [Classification of Wild Trout Streams](#).

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – May 10, 2008](#)

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

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

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

## **Technical Guidance & Permits**

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No new guidance documents were published this week.

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

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

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- **NEW.** [Revised Schedule of meetings for DEP Solid Waste Advisory Committee, Recycling Fund Advisory Committee.](#)
- **May 12**—Environmental Issues Forum, hosted by the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#), presents a program on the [Environmental Management Assistance Program](#) provided by the PA Small Business Development Centers. Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **May 13**—**NEW.** House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1242](#) (Goodman-D-Schuylkill) establishing additional siting criteria for municipal and residual waste landfills, [House Resolution 712](#) (Hutchinson-R-Venango) re-establishing the Forestry Task Force, [House Resolution 719](#) (George-D-Clearfield) endorsing request for federal funding for PA river basin commissions. Room 205 Ryan Building. 9:00.
- **May 13**—**NEW.** Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 2](#) (Earll-R-Erie) provides \$750 million for drinking water, wastewater, flood control and high hazard dam projects, [Senate Resolution 244](#) (Rhoades-R-Schuylkill) urging Congress to investigate the high cost of energy, [Senate Resolution 283](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) recognizing the accomplishments of Franklin & Marshall professors Robert Walter and Dorothy Merritts on their research into legacy sediments. Room 8E-B East Wing. 9:30.
- **May 13**—Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee holds a hearing on energy efficiency and demand side response programs. Room 461. 10:00.
- **May 13-15**—[PA Water/Wastewater Association](#) annual conference. Valley Forge.
- **May 14**—House Agriculture and Rural Affairs meets to consider [Senate Bill 1020](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) updating the county conservation district law. Room 205 Ryan Building. 10:00.
- **May 14**—**Rescheduled.** DEP [Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee](#), Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Monitoring Technical Work meeting- moved to May 20. 12th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **May 15**—**CANCELLED.** DEP Radiation Protection Agency Committee meeting. Rescheduled to May 29.
- **May 15**—House Labor Relations Committee hearing on the Hazardous Material Emergency Planning and Response Act. Bridesburg Rec. Center, 4625 Richmond St., Philadelphia. 11:00.
- **May 17**—[Global Warming Conference 2008](#). University of Scranton.
- **May 20**—**CANCELLED.** Environmental Quality Board meeting. Next scheduled meeting is June 17.
- **May 20**—**NEW.** DEP [Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee](#), Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Monitoring Technical Work meeting. 12th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.

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- **May 21**—[Capital Region Water Board](#) meeting and plant tour. Lebanon Authority Office, 2311 Ridgeview Road, Lebanon. 11:00. Contact: Cindy Rock, [Cindy.L.Rock@comcast.net](mailto:Cindy.L.Rock@comcast.net).
- **May 28**—DEP [Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee](#), Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Monitoring Technical Work meeting. 12th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **May 28**—**NEW**. DEP Mine Families First Response and Communications Advisory Council meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00. Contact: Allison Gaida 724-439-7289 or send email to: [agaida@state.pa.us](mailto:agaida@state.pa.us).
- **May 28**—[Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards Program](#). Pittsburgh.
- **May 29**—DEP [Radiation Protection Advisory Committee](#) meeting. 14th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **June 5**—DEP Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater System Operators. Rescheduled to a conference call. Contact: Cheri Sansoni 717-772-5158 or send email to: [csansoni@state.pa.us](mailto:csansoni@state.pa.us).
- **June 9**—Joint State Government Commission Task Force meeting on the Kilbuck Township Landslide pursuant to [House Resolution 897](#). Room 108 Finance Building. 12:00.
- **June 10**—DEP [Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee](#), Ad-Hoc Subcommittee on Monitoring Technical Work meeting. 10th Floor Training Room, Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **June 16**—Environmental Issues Forum, hosted by the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#), presents a program on the services provided by the [Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program](#) (PennTAP). Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **June 17**—[Environmental Quality Board](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **June 24**—DEP [Small Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **July 9**—**CANCELLED**. DEP Water Resource Advisory Committee meeting. Rescheduled for July 22.
- **July 15**—**NEW**. House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee hearing on the Clean and Green Program. G-50 Irvis Building. 1:00.
- **July 22**—**NEW**. DEP [Water Resource Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 1:00.

### [DEP Calendar of Events](#)

### [Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

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

## **Helpful Web Links**

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

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

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## **Stories Invited**

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

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