



—PA — Environment Digest

Remember Our Veterans

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

May 26, 2008

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

New House Bill Opens Debate on How to Fund Nutrient Pollution Cleanup

The [PA Fair Share for Clean Water Coalition](#) this week praised the introduction of the Chesapeake Bay and Watershed Improvement Act-- [House Bill 2441](#) (Perry-R-Cumberland)-- by 38 bipartisan sponsors which they said marked the opening of the legislative debate on how state government is going to help sewer system ratepayers and farmers fund improvements needed to meet Chesapeake Bay and statewide nutrient reduction mandates, while also providing a mechanism that will allow for future economic growth in Pennsylvania.



The PA Fair Share for Clean Water Coalition includes the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Pennsylvania Builders Association, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and a growing list of 20 other environmental, business and local government groups.

"We want to thank the sponsors of House Bill 2441 for drawing attention to Pennsylvania's most urgent water infrastructure problem—the need to reduce pollution and meet requirements under the federal Clean Water Act," said Matthew Ehrhart, Pennsylvania Executive Director for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. "Other Bay states have assisted their citizens in funding improvements. Without financial help and policy reforms in Pennsylvania, sewer system ratepayers, farmers, and future homeowners and businesses would have to shoulder the entire burden of required farm conservation and wastewater treatment plant improvements on their own."

The sponsors of the bill include Representatives Scott Perry (R-Cumberland), Stephen Barrar (R-Chester), Kerry Benninghoff (R-Centre), Martin Causer (R-Cameron), Paul Clymer (R-Bucks), Thomas Creighton (R-Lancaster), Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster), Peter Daley (D-Washington), Gordon Denlinger (R-Lancaster), Eugene DePasquale (D-York), Garth Everett (R-Lycoming), Russell Fairchild (R-Snyder), Mike Fleck (R-Blair), Will Gabig (R-Cumberland), Richard Geist (R-Blair), Glen Grell (R-Cumberland), Adam Harris (R-Juniata), Arthur Hershey (R-Chester), Harold James (D-Philadelphia), Rob Kauffman (R-Cumberland), Mark Keller (R-Franklin), Beverly Mackereth (R-York), Sandra Major (R-Susquehanna), Ron Miller (R-York), Dan Moul (R-Adams), Mark Mustio (R-Allegheny), John Myers (D-Philadelphia), Jerry Nailor (R-Cumberland),

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Thomas Petrone (D-Allegheny), Tina Pickett (R-Bradford), Marguerite Quinn (R-Bucks), Stan Saylor (R-York), Curtis Sonney (R-Erie), Jerry Stern (R-Blair), Rosemary Swanger (R-Lebanon), Katie True (R-Lancaster), Katharine Watson (R-Bucks) and Rosita Youngblood (D-Philadelphia).

"Mandated nutrient reductions under the state Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy for sewage treatment plants impose a heavy financial burden on communities and ratepayers that could see a doubling or tripling of sewer rates if no help is provided by state government," said John Brosious, Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association Deputy Director. "Unlike Virginia and Maryland, Pennsylvania has provided no significant funding to meet these mandates. House Bill 2441 would provide that help by including many of the elements of the PA Fair Share for Clean Water Plan."

"Production agriculture today is facing significant and potentially devastating economic burdens," said Joel Rotz, State Governmental Relations Director for the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. "Farmers are more than willing to do their fair share in meeting federal and state regulations, but they cannot do it alone. House Bill 2441 significantly boosts one of the needed tools to help farmers face the potentially crippling costs of meeting these new state and federal mandates. However, additional tools are essential."

"House Bill 2441 identifies the need for more resources for county conservation district programs designed to help farmers install conservation practices," said Susan Marquart, Executive Director of the PA Association of Conservation Districts. "Without technical assistance provided by districts, Pennsylvania agriculture cannot meet their mandated nutrient reduction goals."

House Bill 2441 would provide up to \$500 million over seven years to help finance wastewater plant upgrades and \$250 million in tax credits over five years to help the installation of farm conservation practices.

In addition, the bill would establish a Nutrient Credit Trading Bank to help reduce the risk of credit buyers and sellers. Nutrient credits can help wastewater plants reduce their costs to comply with the nutrient reduction mandates by paying farmers to install conservation practices that result in the required reductions of nutrients. The bank would also help to ensure that sewage capacity is available for future economic growth.

"A functioning, viable nutrient credit trading program, combined with a funding plan that targets money where it can make the greatest environmental impact, can provide sewage treatment plants with a stable, economically feasible alternative to costly capital upgrades and protect future economic opportunity," said Robert J. Fisher, president of R. J. Fisher and Associates representing the Pennsylvania Builders Association. "But, without the kind of help provided in House Bill 2441, economic growth and development in large portions of Pennsylvania will be severely curtailed."

"House Bill 2441 opens this very important discussion on how to achieve the required pollution reductions," said Ehrhart of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. "Pennsylvania must have a holistic strategy to fairly and effectively meet this challenge, and our coalition continues to promote the Fair Share Plan and all of its provisions so that every sector has the resources necessary to meet its commitments."

For more information on the PA Fair Share for Clean Water Plan, visit www.PaFairSharePlan.org.

NewsClips: [Op-Ed: Clean Water Efforts Missing State Dollars](#)
[Op-Ed: Pennsylvania Must Share Bay Improvement Costs](#)

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[Op-Ed: State Must Help Improve Sewer Plants](#)
[Lawmaker Pushes for Revision to Bay Plan](#)
[State Funding for Sewer Upgrades May Become Reality](#)
[REAP Returns This Summer](#)
[Where's \\$\\$\\$ for Watershed Cleanup?](#)
[Water Infrastructure Draws Concern](#)
[Sewer Repair Surge Past \\$1 Billion](#)

Video Blog: [Remarks By Coalition Partners on the Fair Share Clean Water Plan](#)
Video Blog: [Sen. Brubaker's Remarks on Fair Share Plan](#)

Links: [Coalition Proposes Fair Share Clean Water Funding Plan, Original Announcement](#)
[16,000 Miles of Polluted Streams Add Urgency to Call for Clean Water Funding](#)
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[40,000 More Acres of Corn, Soybeans Increase Conservation Needs](#)
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[New Federal Farm Bill Promises Aid, But PA Farmers Need \\$600 M for Cleanup](#)
[Rep. Perry, 37 Co-Sponsors Introduce Chesapeake Bay Nutrient Reduction Plan](#)

Support for PA Fair Share For Clean Water Plan Grows, New Website Open

The [PA Fair Share for Clean Water Coalition](#) this week announced the number of supporting organizations for the Pa Fair Share for Clean Water Plan has grown to 25.

The original groups: Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Pennsylvania Builders Association and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation-- have grown to include the:

Pennsylvania Association of Realtors, PA Federation of Sportsmen Clubs, PA State Association of Township Supervisors, County Commissioners Assoc of PA, PA State Assoc. of Boroughs, PA Landscape and Nursery Association, Juniata Valley Audubon, American Farmland Trust, Environmental Defense Fund, Middletown Twp. Land Conservancy, Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper, Northumberland Co. Conservation District, Brubaker Farms, Lancaster Farmland Trust, Tioga County Conservation District, Chester County Economic Development Council, Tioga County Concerned Citizens Committee, Inc., PA Project Grass, and the GreenTreks Network, Inc.

The Coalition also announced the opening of the www.PaFairSharePlan.org website where visitors can find background information on the proposal, a list of supporting organizations and a guide to upcoming meetings on infrastructure issues.

The website also shows how interested individuals can contact their House and Senate member as well as Gov. Rendell to urge them to support the Fair Share Plan.

The Pennsylvania Fair Share for Clean Water Plan proposes to invest \$500 million to help finance the upgrades needed by wastewater



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plants to meet the new nutrient reduction standards and \$390 million to help farmers install conservation practices over seven years. In both cases, local wastewater system ratepayers and farmers would shoulder half the costs of the upgrades and practices.

The proposal also calls for improvements to the state's Nutrient Credit Trading Program that will help reduce the costs of complying with these new limits by promoting wastewater plant-farmer cooperation on projects to reduce nutrients and allow for future growth and development.

Specifically for the FY 2008-09 state budget year, the Fair Share Plan would invest \$170 million in 2008-09 in several ways to reduce the financial burden on ratepayers and farms:

- \$100 million to help wastewater plants finance required improvements;
- \$50 million in direct cost share aid to farmers to install conservation practices (\$35 for REAP farm tax credits and \$15 million in cost share grants);
- \$10 million to county conservation district to expand technical assistance to farmers;
- \$10 million to restore cuts to the Department of Agriculture budget in farm programs; and
- Proposes reforms to the state's nutrient credit trading program that will help to make it a viable alternative to provide for both environmental improvements to the Bay and sufficient future sewage capacity for new development.

For more information on the PA Fair Share for Clean Water Plan, visit www.PaFairSharePlan.org.

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Pennsylvania Receives \$42.4 Million for Water, Wastewater Projects From EPA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week awarded \$42.4 million to Pennsylvania to improve water quality.

Over the past 20 years, Pennsylvania has received over \$1 billion from EPA for water and wastewater projects.

"EPA is committed to helping communities get safe, clean water. These grants are important in maintaining public health, protecting and restoring water quality by combating water pollution and focusing our efforts to protect the water we drink, swim and play in", said Donald S. Welsh, regional administrator for EPA's mid-Atlantic region.

The funding has been awarded to Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority to further capitalize its Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which provides low interest loans for the construction of water treatment facilities, nonpoint source and estuary projects and other water quality management activities.

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Projects supported by this fund protect and improve water quality in the Commonwealth's rivers, lakes and streams for drinking, recreation and natural habitat. Eligible projects include upgrades to wastewater treatment facilities and collection systems.

Projects for wastewater treatment facilities include planning, design and construction of new facilities and improvements to existing treatment plants, sewers and collection lines. Nonpoint source and estuary projects include construction of structures to prevent and control erosion, ponds to control storm water runoff, equipment and structures used for animal waste and agricultural best management practices.

For more information, visit the [Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund webpage](#).

Three Water Infrastructure Meetings Remain to Express Your Priorities

The [Governor's Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force](#) has only three public meetings remaining in which the public has the opportunity to express its priorities for address water infrastructure needs.

Those farmers, communities and sewer ratepayers affected by federal and state mandates to reduce nutrient discharges that will require wastewater plants and farmers to install over \$1.6 billion in nutrient reduction practices are especially urged to participate.

The meetings will be held--

- 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.

Public testimony from past Task Force meetings and these hearings will be posted on the [Task Force webpage](#).

The Task Force is asking any person interested in testifying should register in advance by sending email to: RA-sitaskforce@state.pa.us . Testimony will be accepted in person or by e-mail.

The Task Force has outlined issues of primary concern for which it is seeking feedback, including needs assessment, innovative measures, financial resources, financial sustainability and legislative and regulatory issues.

A coalition of environmental, farm, businesses and municipal groups is recommending the Task Force adopt 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: PA Municipal Authorities Association, PA Farm Bureau, PA Builders Association, PA Association of Conservation Districts and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. In addition, the PA Association of Realtors, the Federation of Sportsmen Clubs, local government and other groups have 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.

The next full meeting of the Governor's Task Force is [June 3 in Harrisburg](#).

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

For more information on the PA Fair Share for Clean Water Plan, visit www.PaFairSharePlan.org.

NewsClip: [Water Infrastructure Addressed at Forum](#)

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Agriculture Says Federal Farm Bill Will Benefit Chesapeake Bay Cleanup

Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff this week hailed the passage of the 2008 federal Farm Bill as the most supportive modern farm bill for the northeast region and a real benefit to farm conservation efforts.

In a letter sent May 16, Secretary Wolff urged President Bush to sign the bill into law.

"I commend Pennsylvania's congressional delegation, especially Sens. Casey and Specter and Congressman Holden, for their leadership on behalf of agriculture in the commonwealth and the many citizens who depend on farm legislation for their well being," said Secretary Wolff. "They and their colleagues have furnished Pennsylvania with a package that successfully anticipates our nutrition, conservation, energy, commodities, and risk management needs.

Secretary Wolff said many of the enhancements in the bill were recommendations by Gov. Rendell. Gov. Rendell urged Congress in 2007 and this year to adopt provisions in the bill based on two years' worth of listening sessions and meetings with Pennsylvania's agricultural leaders.

Chief among the bill's newly established programs benefiting Pennsylvania agriculture are a \$380 million program to address conservation needs in the Chesapeake Bay region (divided between the three major Bay states) and a variety of energy research and investment programs totaling \$1 billion that will enable Pennsylvania to establish a home-grown fuels industry.

[The Department of Environmental Protection has estimated farmers need to invest \$600 million in Pennsylvania alone to meet Chesapeake Bay nutrient reduction mandates.]

Secretary Wolff said the Commonwealth will be able to grow its legacy of environmental stewardship with the new federal biomass crop assistance and biomass research and development programs, which will enable research and development of cellulosic feedstocks for biofuel production.

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"This farm bill is very much in line with our anticipated program needs and objectives," said Secretary Wolff. "I look forward to supporting these programs at the state level, allowing us to continue our legacy of national leadership in conservation, renewable energy and food production."

To help meet the Chesapeake Bay nutrient reduction mandates, the Pennsylvania Fair Share for Clean Water Plan proposes to invest \$500 million to help finance the upgrades needed by wastewater plants to meet the new nutrient reduction standards and \$390 million to help farmers install conservation practices over seven years. In both cases, local wastewater system ratepayers and farmers would shoulder half the costs of the upgrades and practices.

The proposal also calls for improvements to the state's Nutrient Credit Trading Program that will help reduce the costs of complying with these new limits by promoting wastewater plant-farmer cooperation on projects to reduce nutrients and allow for future growth and development.

Specifically for the FY 2008-09 state budget year, the Fair Share Plan would invest \$170 million in 2008-09 in several ways to reduce the financial burden on ratepayers and farms:

- \$100 million to help wastewater plants finance required improvements;
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- \$10 million to restore cuts to the Department of Agriculture budget in farm programs; and
- Proposes reforms to the state's nutrient credit trading program that will help to make it a viable alternative to provide for both environmental improvements to the Bay and sufficient future sewage capacity for new development.

The Fair Share Plan is supported by the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association, Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Pennsylvania Builders Association and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and 20 other environmental, business and sportsmen's groups.

For more information on the PA Fair Share for Clean Water Plan, visit www.PaFairSharePlan.org.

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Video Blog Feature

Sen. Vance Tapes TV Segment at Audubon’s Hawk Watch at Waggoner’s Gap

[Sen. Pat Vance](#) (R-Cumberland) this week visited [Audubon’s Hawk Watch at Waggoner’s Gap](#) to tape a segment for her monthly TV program to tell the public more about what she called, “the treasure in our own backyard.”

The *PA Environment Digest* went along to “piggy-back” on the TV taping that resulted in this Video Blog Feature.

Volunteer hawk watcher David Grove and Kim VanFleet, Important Bird Area Coordinator for [Audubon PA](#) talked with Sen. Vance about the establishment of the [Cliff Jones Station](#) at the Hawk Watch and how volunteers monitor the numbers and types of raptors in their annual migration.



Pictured in the photo are Holly Smith, Audubon PA, Walt Pomeroy, former and future Board member Audubon PA, Jean bochnowski, Interim Executive Director of Audubon PA, David Grove, Hawk Watch Volunteer, Sen. Pat Vance and Kim VanFleet, Important Bird Area Coordinator, Audubon PA.

The Cliff Jones Station is being developed in memory of Dr. Cliff Jones who passed away recently and was an avid birdwatcher and conservationist. He served as the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Resources and in many other public and private sector positions.

Fund raising is underway is underway for the Cliff Jones Station Project and donations to Audubon PA are welcome.

Waggoner’s Gap is located on Route 74 north of Carlisle, Pa at the border of Perry and Cumberland Counties.

Watch for the full story on the “Vance Report” soon on these cable systems: Blue Ridge Communications at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays on Channel 8, Comcast Cable that serves the Shippensburg area will air the program at 4 p.m. on Thursdays on Channel 21, Comcast Cable that serves the Carlisle area will air the show at the same time but on Channel 11, York Community Access shows the program at 9 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month on Channel 16, Comcast Cable in the Greater Harrisburg area will air the program on Channel 20 with no set time schedule.

Video Blog: [Sen. Vance Visits Audubon’s Hawk Watch at Waggoner’s Gap](#)

Online Video: [Waggoner’s Gap Dave Grove](#)

On the Hill

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

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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 June 2.

House 2008 Session Days—

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

Senate 2008 Session Days--

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 for next week and floor Calendars for June 2--

Calendars

House (June 2): [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](#) (Scavello-R-Monroe) authorizing counties to impose up to a \$4/ton solid waste management fee to support local recycling, anti-litter programs; [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.

[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; [Special Session House Resolution 6](#) (Thomas) designating November 15 as “Pennsylvania GIS Day” and the week of November 11-17 as “National Geography Awareness Week.”

Senate (June 2): [Senate Resolution 283](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) recognizing the accomplishments of Franklin & Marshall Professors Robert Walter and Dorothy Merritts on their research into legacy sediments.

Bills Introduced

These environmental bills of interest were introduced this week—

Beneficial Use of Sewage Sludge: [House Resolution 763](#) (Miller-R-York) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to review the Commonwealth's program for beneficial use of sewage sludge by land application.

House Republicans Press For Action on Energy Legislation

Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango), Minority Chair of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, joined other local legislators this week to support a package of bills that promote traditional, as well as, viable renewable resources as part of Pennsylvania's energy future.

"Pennsylvania families are struggling to afford the rising cost of energy as gasoline and electricity prices continue to increase," said Rep. Hutchinson. "To help make Pennsylvania more energy independent, we must continue to use our existing indigenous resources including oil, natural gas and coal, as well as viable renewable alternatives that make sense for Pennsylvanians.

"It is important that Pennsylvania become more self-reliant by encouraging further development of our local natural resources," he added. "This need could not be more evident than here today in Venango County as we gather at the world's first commercial oil well, Drake Well."

The House Republican Caucus has introduced legislation as part of the Special Session on Energy that would focus on investing in energy conservation, increasing our homegrown energy production and reducing our dependence on foreign energy sources in order to lower energy costs to consumers.

[Special Session House Bill 32](#) would require the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to conduct a competitive public auction for the exploration and development of natural gas reserves.

The legislation would also require DCNR to allow pipeline and gathering line right-of-way across state lands to ensure that the natural gas developed on adjacent lands can be delivered to the market in a cost-effective manner.

Under this legislation, half of the state's proceeds from this new drilling will be used to finance weatherization programs so that low-income families and senior citizens can better insulate their homes and reduce their electricity bills.

DCNR announced steps in April to lease up to 75,000 acres for natural gas drilling in State Forests. ([4/7/08 Pa Environment Digest](#))

"We believe that this new drilling can be done in an unobtrusive, environmentally sound manner without adversely affecting Pennsylvania's wildlife," said Rep. Brad Roae (R-Crawford). "By increasing our natural gas supply, we can work to lower electricity prices at peak-demand times."

[Special Session House Bill 37](#) would authorize a \$3 per ton tax credit for coal mined within the Commonwealth. To qualify for the tax credit, the coal must be delivered to coal-fired electric generation units in Pennsylvania that has installed proper pollution equipment to control emissions. This bill only offers tax credits to coal facilities that meet federal and state emissions requirements.

"Currently, 55 percent of Pennsylvania's energy is derived from coal," said Rep. Jeff Pyle (R-Armstrong). "Clean coal processes are being implemented currently and will be expanded in the future. Instead of rejecting coal as a 'dirty' resource, we must realize we can produce energy from coal in an environmentally friendly way."

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A third piece of legislation, [Special Session House Bill 55](#), would promote the planting of switchgrass and other bioenergy crops on reclaimed coal mine sites.

"We realize that any energy strategy must contain a mix of existing indigenous energy resources as well as new cost-effective renewable energy products," said Rep. Michele Brooks (R-Lawrence). "With the cost of energy on the increase, we need to take advantage of the opportunities right here in Pennsylvania that are available to us now. By using these crops in the production of cellulosic ethanol, Pennsylvania will be at the forefront of the biofuels industry."

Sponsored by Rep. Kathy Rapp (R-Warren), the final piece of legislation would provide grant funding for the Fuels for Schools and Beyond Program. This new program would allow schools to convert their traditional heating systems to utilize proven biomass heating technologies.

"By providing our public schools with the necessary financial resources to replace existing fuel oil heating systems with biomass heating technology, we can dramatically help them lower their energy costs," said Rep. Rapp. "In the even larger picture, promoting greater reliance on biomass products, such as low-grade timber that are not used for the production of other goods, will also further sustain and create jobs in the local forestry and agriculture industries which remain critical to generating continued economic growth throughout Northwestern Pennsylvania."

For more information, visit the [House Republican Energy for Pennsylvania webpage](#).

Links: [House Catches Up to Senate in Passing Renewable Energy Bill, Funding Senate Passes Alternative Energy Investment, Biodiesel Mandate Bills](#)

Other News

Delaware County Team Wins 2008 Pennsylvania State Envirothon

A team of students from Penncrest High School in Delaware County is the winner of this year's [State Envirothon competition](#) held May 19-20 at Penn State University, Centre County.

Led by team advisors Mark Samilenko and Chrissa Kuntz, and pictured in the photo, are winning team members Elizabeth Freeburg, Katie Ferguson, Katie Davis, Jennifer Walker, and Alex Senko.

Rounding out the top five teams were: Second place -- Northern York High School, York County; Third place -- North East High School, Erie County; Fourth place -- Warren Area High School, Warren County; and Fifth place -- Union County Homeschoolers, Union County.

High school students from 66 Pennsylvania counties participated in this year's event. The Envirothon is designed to give students an opportunity to acquire and demonstrate their knowledge of environmental resources and their connection to each other and human activities. The students are challenged in the areas of aquatic ecology, forestry, soil/land use, wildlife and a current environmental issue.



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An oral component event was held on the Monday before the testing event. The oral component consists of a team presentation to a panel of judges taking part in a question/answer session based on the current issue theme. A timed event, the competition tests a team's ability to consider an environmental issue, discuss its likely ramifications and effects, develop possible solutions, and then make a presentation before a group of judges and answer their questions.

This year's oral component scenario was based on recreational impacts on the natural environment. Participation was mandatory and was included in the overall competition score.

The top five teams in the oral competition are: First place -- Westmoreland Enrichment Classes, Westmoreland County; Second place -- Penncrest High School, Delaware County; Third place -- North East High School, Erie County; Fourth place -- Lackawanna Trail High School, Wyoming County; and Fifth place -- Union County Homeschoolers, Union County.

Teams participating represent the best and the brightest of the thousands of high school teens who have competed in county Envirothon competitions sponsored by conservation districts across the state. At the state level, the Envirothon is sponsored by Pennsylvania's 66 conservation districts, the State Conservation Commission, and the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts.

The 2008 Pennsylvania Envirothon champions will represent the Commonwealth at the [21st Canon Envirothon North American competition](#) July 28–August 3 at Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Ariz.

Pennsylvania has won the North American event 10 times in the previous 20 years, more than any of the other 48 states and eight Canadian provinces that participate.

Pennsylvania's Envirothon program is managed by a board of directors representing those sponsors. Technical expertise is provided by the following agency partners: Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Game Commission, the Fish and Boat Commission, and the U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Financial sponsors of the 2008 Envirothon are: Air Products and Chemicals, PPL Corp., Nestle Water North America, Recreational Equipment Inc., The AES Corp., Bayer HealthCare Consumer Care, First Quality Enterprises, Canon Envirothon, Conestoga Wood Specialties, The Hershey Co., the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association, Haines and Kibblehouse and International Erosion Control Association/Mid-Atlantic Chapter. The Hershey Co., Dwight Lewis Lumber, Lewis Lumber Products, and Cargill are "Corporate Station Sponsors."

Scholarship prizes are sponsored by the Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the State Conservation Commission.

For more information, visit the [PA Envirothon website](#), contact your local conservation district or contact the Pennsylvania Envirothon by phone 814-623-7900 ext. 111 or send email to: paenvirothon@pennswoods.net.

Explore PA's Wild Side By Taking an Environmental Field Seminar or Retreat

Satisfy your senses by getting outdoors and exploring your wild backyard with the [Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education](#).

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PICE programs emphasize hands-on discovery and promote informed and intimate contact with the natural world. Whether for academic, professional, or personal growth, Institute programs are open to all audiences.

“The idea is to get people outdoors. Not only to the tourism hotspots in Pennsylvania, but exploring their backyards and communities. Most of us just don’t take the time to do that,” explained co-founder and Executive Director Michele Richards. “PICE provides an opportunity for people to take time out of their schedule and get out into the natural world.”

Since its inception as a non-profit organization in 2002, the Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education has excelled in its mission to stimulate knowledge of, interest in, and an appreciation of natural history by providing extraordinary field-based educational opportunities within Pennsylvania and beyond.

Through its facilitation of a diverse set of programs, which include custom-designed programs for groups and families, PICE demonstrates to its varied audiences the value of getting outdoors, learning in small groups, and celebrating a sense of place through science, exploration, literature and the arts.

“PICE programs are intended to develop a strong kinship with nature. One cannot become excited about an evening chorus of frogs or the morning symphony of bird song or the emerging flowers following a warm spring rain without feeling something of a love for our sister and brother life forms encircling us. We are all in this together and to separate one from another is to lose part of our being,” said Jim Brett, the Institute’s President and co-founder, who is also an instructor.

Programs include the [Wildlife Leadership Adventures](#), a year-round leadership program for teens; the [Young Naturalist Adventures](#), a series of hands-on half-day experiences with naturalists for youth ages 12-14; an international internship program, reaching conservation professionals from as far away as Zambia; and a series of seasonal natural history seminars, which are a great way for individuals from all walks of life to get out into the field and learn about the natural environment.

Through experiential field studies, participants in PICE natural history seminars learn basic natural science concepts in such subjects as ecology, geology, ornithology, wildlife biology, botany, astronomy, and natural resource management. Topics ranging from arts and literature to history and outdoor skills are also covered.

“Everything we do is inspired by nature,” explained Richards. “We try to consider all disciplines and interests, because that’s the great thing about nature: it knows no boundaries.”

Professional scientists, field naturalists, ecologists, geologists, botanists, poets, photographers, educators, artists and writers bring their expertise to the instruction of these programs.

According to Brett, PICE instructors are individuals “who are profoundly in tune with the natural world; who love it; who are able to enthusiastically present what may seem as the simplest of encounters into a whole new world of discovery. To rekindle in their charges what may have been lost over the years, or, in fact, never been really thought about. It is that excitement in what may seem a child’s play, but what is that almost cosmological introduction or reintroduction to something as simple as a butterfly or as complex as the night sky.”

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Susan Munch, a professional botanist, instructs the program “Ferns & Mosses” “What makes PICE programs so special for me,” said Munch, “is the level of interest and enthusiasm of the participants.”

Like the instructors, program participants come from varied backgrounds; they are students, teachers, environmental educators, conservation professionals, seniors, and others.

According to secondary science teacher Kevin McCloskey, who has participated in two PICE natural history programs, “PICE programs have given me the opportunity to network and meet professional peers in similar fields and other fields, broadening my professional contacts for ideas and other opportunities.”

He notes that PICE programs differ from other programs “because of the amount of hands-on time spent investigating, exploring, demonstrating, and practicing the science at hand.”

“The programs are top notch!” McCloskey adds. “The programs, presenters, facilities, and people really make these programs both educational and personal. I would give PICE programs my highest recommendation.”

A complete list of field seminars and retreats [is available online](#).

200 Schools, 6,500 Students Benefit From DCNR Watershed Education Efforts

During the 2007 season, 202 schools, 6,652 students and their teachers participated in [watershed education programs](#) sponsored by the DCNR Bureau of State Parks’ environmental education specialists.

Similar to last year, State Parks and environmental education centers facilitated more programs with students than teachers, as indicated by the attendance at field trainings, student summits, and program orientations.

The shift from teachers to students was expected as environmental education specialists expanded the program from the introductory stage of teacher workshops to involving students.

Student participation with park staff leveled off this year, once again reaching over 3,000 participants. Another 3,500 students are still actively involved in the program but are working directly through their teachers.

The number of teacher workshops offered successfully increased slightly this year. Additionally in the upcoming 2008 school year, all schools will be tested using the Department of Education’s academic [standards for Environment and Ecology](#).

More information, visit DCNR’s [Watershed Education webpage](#) or contact Amy Hill, Natural Resource Program Specialist, Bureau of State Parks, at 717-783-4361.

West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium IV July 18-19

The fourth annual [West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium](#) will be held July 18-19 at the Nittany Lion Inn, State College and will be hosted by Trout Unlimited and the [West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition](#).

The purpose of the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium is to promote the [West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Initiative](#), which is aimed at the cleanup of abandoned mine drainage



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throughout the West Branch Susquehanna watershed.

This event serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas regarding AMD abatement in the region and provides an excellent opportunity for networking among volunteers, policy-makers, technical experts, students, and others interested in restoring land and water impacted by AMD - the largest source of pollution to the Commonwealth's waterways.

This year's special guest speaker will be [Tim Palmer](#) with his program on Rivers of America.

Workshop programs will feature presentations on: Restoring the Bennett Branch, Fishes of the West Branch, CSI-Helpful Tool for Restoring Trout Streams, Water Quality Study on the West Branch, the Role of Land Conservancies and AMD, Linking the Burden of Abandoned Mine Lands to Community Health and Economic Benefits Analysis of Acid Mine Drainage Remediation.

The Saturday session will feature a tour of [Bennett Branch Acid Mine Drainage Projects](#).

A limited number of scholarships are available to help defray the cost of registration, travel and/or lodging.

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

For more information on scholarships or the Symposium, [download the registration brochure](#), or contact Amy Wolfe, Trout Unlimited, at 570-726-3118 or send email to awolfe@tu.org

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

Video Blog: [Amy Wolfe Talks About West Branch Restoration Projects](#)

PA Fly Fishing Museum Hosts Annual Fly Fishing Heritage Day June 14

The Pennsylvania Fly Fishing Museum Association will host the annual [Pennsylvania Fly Fishing Heritage Day](#) on June 14 at the Allenberry Playhouse and Resort in Boiling Springs, Pa.

There will be presentations and demonstrations by regional and nationally known experts on various fly fishing subjects. In addition, attendees will learn about fly fishing from exhibitors, vendors, fly tiers, bamboo rodmakers and other artisans.

Bring your fly fishing memorabilia and have it appraised by one of the antique tackle dealers. There will also be great raffles and don't be left out on the crowd's favorite... [The Rubber Fish Race!](#)

There will also be a special tribute to the late [George W. Harvey](#), teacher, author and fly fishing legend.

Pre-registration must be received by June 11th to reserve lunch. \$12 admission fee includes a tasty buffet picnic lunch. Registration (without lunch) the day of the event is \$7. There will be only a limited number of buffet lunch tickets available the day of the event at an additional cost of \$8 so it is highly recommend pre-register before June 11th.

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Admission is free for anyone 15 years old or younger! Plus, there will be a free Youth Drawing with some great prizes. Youth can pre-register for the buffet picnic lunch for \$6.

For more information, visit the [PA Fly Fishing Museum website](#).

SRBC Releases Draft Comprehensive Water Resources Plan for Public Comment

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission is accepting comments through August 18 on its draft “[Comprehensive Plan for the Water Resources of the Susquehanna River Basin](#).”

SRBC is required to have a comprehensive plan to manage and develop the Susquehanna basin’s water resources and guide SRBC’s programs and activities.

To enhance the public comment process, SRBC will conduct three public hearings to explain the key components of the draft plan and to receive comments or testimony. The public hearings are scheduled for:

- July 8, 2:00 p.m., Owego Treadway Inn and Suites, 1100 State Route 17C, Owego, NY;
- July 9, 2:00 p.m., Days Inn and Conference Center, 50 Sheraton Drive, Danville, Pa; and
- July 10, 10:00 a.m., Best Western Eden Resort, 222 Eden Road, Lancaster, Pa.

“This planning project is an extremely important undertaking not only for the commission, but also for its member jurisdictions, water resource managers and other governmental and nongovernmental interests that will benefit from the resource,” said SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz. “In addition to addressing the more traditional priority water management issues, the draft plan also features numerous current and emerging special-interest topics such as climate change, energy production and emerging contaminants.”

The 2008 draft comprehensive plan includes: an assessment of water resource needs; principles, guidance and standards; six priority management areas with goals and actions needed for water supply, water quality, flooding, ecosystems, Chesapeake Bay; and coordination, cooperation and public information; twelve areas of special interest featuring present-day management activities and future directions for abandoned mine drainage; climate change; consumptive use mitigation; drought coordination; economic development, recreation and other public values; emerging contaminants; energy production; flood forecast and warning; invasive species; migratory fish restoration; potentially stressed and water challenged areas; and water and wastewater infrastructure; and implementation procedures.

Written comments should be sent to Ava Stoops, administrative specialist, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, 1721 N. Front Street, Harrisburg, PA, 17102, or by sending email to astoops@srbc.net . Call Ms. Stoops at 717 238-0423, ext. 302 with any questions.

New Buoy to Help Beach Visitors, Scientists Monitor Lake Erie Water Quality

College interns installed a data-gathering buoy in Lake Erie, off Presque Isle State Park’s Beach 2, this week as part of an ongoing effort to safeguard visitors who come to the park to enjoy the beaches and water.



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The buoy, funded by the Great Lakes Protection Fund that is administered by the Department of Environmental Protection, is equipped with monitoring devices that will provide real time information about water quality conditions to families who might be planning a trip to [Presque Isle State Park](#) and scientists engaged in environmental research. The monitoring equipment will measure the turbidity, or cloudiness, of the water, pH levels, temperature and oxygen content.

The water quality data will be sent to the weather station at the top of the [Tom Ridge Environmental Center](#). Water quality and weather data will be available 24 hours a day as a snapshot of current conditions on the [Regional Science Consortium website](#).

“This is another project that has come out of the cooperative effort between state and local agencies to help us better understand Lake Erie, what influences conditions in the lake, and discover causes of natural phenomena,” said DEP’s Office of the Great Lakes Chief Lori Boughton said. “For the first time, we will have access to local water quality data in real time that’s accessible to everyone, everywhere through the Web. The new information source will serve as a practical, day-to-day application and research tool.”

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Regional Science Consortium at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center are partners in the \$16,242 project and participated in today’s buoy deployment at Presque Isle State Park Beach 2.

Presque Isle State Park staff will use water quality and weather-related data to help determine if a pre-emptive swimming advisory should be issued. Previous studies have indicated that certain water and weather conditions can impact bacterial levels in the waters along the park’s beaches, especially *Escherichia coli* bacteria, or *E.coli*.

“Information generated by monitoring systems on the buoy will help us better predict when a swimming advisory would be appropriate,” said Presque Isle State Park Manager Harry Leslie. “For example, documenting the water temperature and the direction of the wind on an ongoing basis will give the state park staff some hard data before making a swimming advisory decision. In addition, prospective park visitors who are thinking about going to the beach will be able to see the lake conditions online before venturing out.”

E. coli is a naturally occurring bacterium that comes from the digestive tract of warm-blooded animals, including humans, domestic animals and wildlife. It is found throughout the ecosystem.

The most common health risks associated with the bacteria in recreational water are respiratory and intestinal illness, headache and infections of the ear, nose and throat. Regional Science Consortium Executive Director Jerry Covert says the Presque Isle studies are contributing significantly to the national body of research regarding beaches and bacteria, especially with regards to how weather impacts the dispersal of bacteria.

“The buoy’s data gathering equipment will help create a model that could be utilized at other locations where *E. coli* levels are having an effect on beach water quality,” said Covert.

“The research information that will be available from this new monitoring system will greatly facilitate the current and future research undertaken by local and visiting Regional Science Consortium scientists.”

When an advisory is posted, signs and lifeguards at individual beaches alert park visitors to the elevated bacteria levels. There are times when swimmers are not permitted in the water, but that occurs only when bacteria counts reach levels where the health of the general population could be at risk.

In 2006, state and local government agencies and research programs began an intense examination of the Lake Erie watershed in response to a spike in swimming restrictions at Presque Isle State Park due to elevated E.coli levels. In 2007, the investigation resulted in Presque Isle State Park bringing its beach advisory protocol into line with what is being practiced in other Great Lakes locations while continuing to be protective of human health.

During the past summer, swimmers at Presque Isle State Park were kept out of the water at impacted beaches on two days—down from 17 days the year before—without any reports of beach-related illness.

NewsClip: [New Buoy to Monitor Presque Isle Water Quality, Weather](#)

Ridley Creek State Park Hosts Fish For Free Day Family Fishing Event



On June 1 [Ridley Creek State Park](#) will host a Fish for Free Family Fishing Event in Delaware County.

You can fish all day without a license (seasons, sizes, creel limits, tackle restrictions and any other posted restrictions must be obeyed).

Instructors will be teaching the basics of fishing and all equipment will be available for loan at no charge (with ID). Two sessions will be taught at 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. in the field at Area 17.

Participants should bring a lightweight chair they can carry, drinks and snacks. Wear comfortable, sturdy shoes and pants! Families welcome!

Children will get a "Get Started Fishing Packet" and have the opportunity to sign up for the [PA League of Angling Youth magazine](#).

Free, \$1 donation per person graciously accepted. Pre-registration is required. This event will cancel in the event of heavy rain, lightening or high winds. Please call 610-892-3908 and listen to message regarding cancellation if bad weather is predicted.

For more information or cancellation information call 610-892-3908 or send email to: ra-nrspridlenved@state.pa.us

Register Now for the 14th Annual Delaware River Sojourn June 22-28

Don't miss the [2008 Delaware River Sojourn](#) to be held June 22 to 28. The Sojourn combines canoeing, kayaking, camping, educational programs, and more. It's one of the oldest river sojourns in the nation.

The theme for this year's journey, "Conserving Our Wild and Scenic River," commemorates the 40th anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, which protects certain rivers and their immediate environments for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

This law made possible the Upper and Middle Delaware's Wild and Scenic designation, celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, as well as the action taken in 2000



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to add key segments of the Lower Delaware to the national system. In all, three-quarters of the non-tidal Delaware River, along with portions of several tributaries to the main stem river and bay, are currently designated wild and scenic.

The purpose of the sojourn is to heighten awareness of, and appreciation for, the ecological, historical, and recreational significance of the Delaware River, which is the longest, un-dammed river east of the Mississippi. The Delaware stretches 330 miles from the confluence of its East and West branches in Hancock, N.Y. to the mouth of the Delaware Bay where it meets the Atlantic Ocean.

In 2008, the sojourn is pleased to announce that it has formed a media partnership with WDIY 88.1 FM Lehigh Valley Community Public Radio. It is hoped that this partnership to promote the sojourn will encourage more people to get out on the river and discover its natural beauty first-hand, as well as foster environmental stewardship for this great resource.

The non-profit, annual event is organized by a steering committee representing various organizations and government agencies in the Delaware River Basin. This year's committee is chaired by a representative from Pennsylvania's Delaware Canal State Park.

The sojourn is suitable for people of all ages and with varying paddling skills. Participants may sign up for the entire seven-day trip or for the day(s) of their choice.

This year, over 60 miles of the main stem Delaware River will be paddled, split into daily trips ranging from six to fourteen miles, and will include the following stretches: June 22: Narrowsburg, NY to Ten Mile River, NY; June 23: Callicoon, NY to Narrowsburg; June 24: Milford Beach, Pa. to Dingmans Ferry, Pa.; June 25: Smithfield Beach, Pa. to Driftstone, Pa.; June 26: Theodore Roosevelt Recreation Area Access, Pa. to Giving Pond, Pa.; June 27: Giving Pond to Point Pleasant, Pa.; and June 28: Quaker Penn ark, Pa. to Matinicunk (a.k.a. Burlington) Island, NJ.

An early bird fee of \$60 per person per day is being offered to participants 16 and older (\$40 for children 15 and under) if they are registered prior to June 1; after June 1, the daily price for participants 16 and older is \$70 per person (\$50 for children 15 and under).

As a way to encourage more families to participate, the pricing schedule has been changed this year allowing paddling children 15 and under to be eligible for the reduced fee. Previously, only non-paddling children 12 and under riding in their parents' canoe were entitled to receive the discount.

Registration fees cover the guided river trip, canoe or kayak rental, shuttle transportation, educational programs, certain meals, a souvenir T-shirt, and optional overnight camping sites. In addition to the daily fee, a one-time \$5 per person insurance fee will be charged to non members of the American Canoe Association, which sanctions the event.

A limited number of scholarships are available for first-time paddlers. Participants may bring their own river-worthy boat, but please note that aluminum canoes are not recommended.

Space is limited, so please register early! Detailed information, including registration materials, itineraries, and more, is available on the [sojourn website](#) hosted by the Delaware River Basin Commission.

Registration-related questions may be directed to the [Pocono Environmental Education Center](#) at 570-828-2319; scholarship inquiries may be directed to Bonnie Tobin by sending email to: btobin@state.pa.us.

Bion Announces OK of Ammonia Emission Reductions for Nutrient Credits

[Bion Environmental Technologies, Inc.](#) announced this week the Department of Environmental Protection has approved a process for certifying the credit value of projects designed to reduce ammonia emissions on farms for use as tradable [nutrient \(nitrogen\) reduction credits](#).

The protocol determines how many nitrogen and phosphorus credits will be received for nutrient reductions achieved through installation of Bion's agricultural waste management technology.

Bion recently signed a memorandum of understanding with a large dairy in Lancaster County, Pa to retrofit its existing dairy operation with a Bion Comprehensive Environmental Management System designed to reduce ammonia emissions and soluble nutrients in the effluent.

Bion's Pennsylvania installation will generate one pound of nutrient credits for about every two pounds of nutrients mitigated, for a total of 175,109 pounds of nitrogen credits and 21,899 pounds of phosphorus credits annually from the initial 1,400 cows.

More than 40 percent of the nitrogen credits from Bion's Pennsylvania installation will result from the system's reduction of ammonia emissions from the livestock waste that, when untreated, volatilize to the atmosphere and are re-deposited downwind - a continued unregulated source of nutrients in the Bay and other water bodies.

Although not currently regulated, the substantial ammonia emissions from existing livestock facilities are under close scrutiny by state and federal agencies and other organizations for their impacts on the environment as well as potential health impacts.

NewsClip: [DEP Approves Bion Nutrient Credit Calculation Protocols](#)

Peregrine Falcon Banding Thrills Live, Internet Audience

With the whole world able to watch thanks to a webcast hosted by the Department of Environmental Protection, wildlife officials from the Game Commission this week banded four [peregrine falcons](#) from a nesting box on a ledge near the top of the Rachel Carson State Office Building in Harrisburg.

Game Commission officials retrieved the young falcons from their nest on a ledge overlooking Market Street and took them to the auditorium where a numeric metal leg band was attached before a live audience of 35 teachers and 150 central Pennsylvania elementary, middle and high school students, and a worldwide audience of falcon followers.

The teachers had attended a Project WILD falcon educator workshop conducted by the Game Commission and DEP and as part of their classroom activities, had their students follow the falcons' progress online on [DEP's Falcon website](#).

"The bands help to identify and track the birds when they leave the nest," explained Dr. Arthur McMorris, Game Commission peregrine falcon coordinator. "In addition, we weigh and examine the falcons to determine their sex, and check for any health issues before we return them to their nest."



Although peregrines were never really common in Pennsylvania, they historically nested at as many as 44 sites, mostly on cliffs. Some of their former nesting areas included cliffs near Dauphin, Huntingdon, Lewistown, Hyner, Palmerton and other riverside communities.

Falcons and other birds of prey were suffering from the 1940s through the 1960s from the poisonous effects of bio-accumulating DDT in their bodies. The insecticide - banned nationally in 1972 - gradually poisoned the birds and made the shells of the eggs these birds laid so brittle, they broke when sat upon.

Ironically it was [Rachel Carson](#), the name-sake of the DEP and DCNR headquarters building on which the falcon nest resides, that first called attention to the impacts of DDT.

In 1970, peregrines were listed as a federally endangered species, and records indicate peregrine falcons did not nest in Pennsylvania from about 1959 to 1987.

"Thanks to banning of DDT, reintroduction efforts launched in the 1990s by the Game Commission and The Peregrine Fund have enabled the peregrine falcons to recover," said Dan Brauning, Game Commission Wildlife Diversity Section supervisor. "Today, there are 25 pairs of nesting falcons in Pennsylvania, and they have adapted well to life in the urban environs like Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Allentown, Philadelphia and Wilkes-Barre.

"Peregrine falcons have made a remarkable recovery, and we're thrilled with their progress. But, before we consider them secure, we'd like to see them occupy a larger number of historic natural cliff sites. Right now, only three of the 25 nesting pairs are on cliffs.

"More peregrines anywhere in Pennsylvania is a step in the right direction for this raptor's recovery. But seeing more nesting pairs on cliffs, instead of on buildings and bridges, would qualify the ongoing recovery as more organically significant."

In 2003, peregrines made their big step back to natural nesting sites in Pennsylvania when a pair used a cliff in the state's northern tier overlooking the west branch of the Susquehanna River. It was the first time peregrines used cliffs since 1957, when five pairs were nesting at cliff sites instate.

In the late 1980s, peregrines started nesting in Pennsylvania for the first time since their extirpation, when they began nesting on bridges in the greater Philadelphia area. The Game Commission plans to visit 22 nests this spring to band and perform health checks on peregrine chicks.

Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe noted that partnerships, such as the one with DEP, have enabled more people to learn about the recovery of the peregrine falcon.

"While the Game Commission's mission is to manage all wild birds and mammals and their habitats for current and future generations, we certainly rely on partners to help us carry out our mission and help broadcast the many success stories we have accomplished on behalf of all Pennsylvanians," Roe said. "The support we receive from DEP, in hosting these birds, as well as annual banding programs and sponsoring the webcasting and falcon website, is invaluable. Indeed, we can't thank DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty and her staff enough for their agency's long-term commitment to showcasing the falcon story that unfolds on the Rachel Carson State Office Building.

"There also are other partners around the state that enable Pennsylvanians and others around the world to watch falcon nests in their community. We offer our thanks and

appreciation to each and everyone of them, including PPL, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the University of Pittsburgh and the National Aviary."

Roe noted that, on May 13, Allentown played host to conservation history story of its own as the first of four peregrine falcon eggs hatched in a nest atop PPL Corporation's downtown headquarters. [PPL's website](#), complete with its own webcam, offers the public an opportunity to watch the falcons atop its Allentown headquarters, as well as those at its Montour power plant in northcentral Pennsylvania, and at its Martins Creek facility in Northampton County.

The website provides updates and photographs on the peregrine falcons that live at three PPL facilities, as well as the bald eagles at its Holtwood Dam site in York County and the ospreys at its Wallenpaupack facility on the boundary of Pike and Wayne counties.

Earlier this month, three peregrine falcons hatched on the 40th floor of the University of Pittsburgh's Cathedral of Learning in Oakland. The National Aviary has cameras trained on the university nest, as well as the nest on the Gulf Tower in downtown Pittsburgh, and footage can be viewed on the [Aviary's website](#).

Online Video: [Return of the Raptor and The Falcon Story By GreenTreks](#)

Applications Due for New Round of State Wildlife Grants

Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe this week announced an invitation for project applications to the [State Wildlife Grants Program](#).

Grant applications are due June 13.

Projects funded under this program will help address conservation needs for high-priority projects for endangered, threatened and at-risk species across Pennsylvania. The federal dollars for this program are awarded through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grants Program.

This year, the Game Commission is requesting applicants submit "Letters of Intent" rather than complete project proposals. Selected applicants then will be invited to submit full proposals. The Game Commission hopes to finalize project selections in September, and award contracts later this year.

Also, for the first time, the Wild Resource Conservation Program has explicitly stated that it will be taking a close look at projects that meet Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan priorities.

"The hundreds of nongame species that inhabit Pennsylvania historically have received only limited funding at best, because of their sheer numbers and elusiveness," Roe said. "The importance of nongame species has been recognized by the agency for a long, long time. It simply hasn't had the funds required for comprehensive conservation. Now, with assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and through partnering with the Fish and Boat Commission, Wild Resource Conservation Program and State Wildlife Grants recipients, we are poised to manage these species like never before.

"State Wildlife Grants and partnering opportunities provide a much-needed infusion of funding that greatly expands wildlife conservation in Pennsylvania. They come at time when nongame research and fieldwork are more important than ever and surely will pay dividends to wildlife managers for many years to come."

Because distribution of SWG funds is based upon land area and population size, Pennsylvania has received a large proportion of these funds, ranking among the top six

states in funding received to date. However, conservation needs annually outpace the funds available, so competition for funding remains fierce among prospective projects.

"We look forward to working with our conservation partners across the state to develop the best projects for the sustainability of ecological benefits to the Commonwealth's wildlife and residents," Roe said. "This program provides us with a means to make a great difference, and we aim to do just that."

For more information on Game Commission priorities for the 2008 SWG's call for projects, and guidelines for letters of intent, visit the Game Commission's [State Wildlife Grants webpage](#).

PA Farm Bureau Applauds Game Commission Action on Feral Swine



The [Pennsylvania Farm Bureau](#) commended the Game Commission for its decision to take action to eradicate feral swine (free ranging wild pigs) in the Commonwealth.

The Commission issued an order removing protection on feral swine in 64 of the state's 67 counties, while trapping efforts will continue in Butler, Bedford and Cambria Counties.

The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has been monitoring the problems caused by feral swine for years and urged the PGC to take action against the invasive species. According to the PGC, feral swine can cause tremendous damage to habitat and property, and pose a real threat to wildlife and the biosecurity of the state's multi-million-dollar pork industry.

"Pennsylvania farmers are deeply concerned about the damage these wild animals cause to crops and the potential for feral swine to spread disease to healthy farm animals. In addition, feral swine are a threat to other wildlife and their natural habitat and a potential danger to humans who encounter them," said PFB President Carl T. Shaffer.

The Game Commission's decision allows licensed hunters to take feral swine at any time in an effort to rid the state of these animals. Farm Bureau was pleased with the Commission's decision to deal with the problem now, rather than creating a hunting season for feral swine.

"We believe the decision will help stop the growth of feral swine populations before we have an irreversible population that can't be eradicated," added Shaffer.

Earlier this year, Dauphin County farmer Ken Bechtel testified before the Commission on behalf of Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's State Wildlife Damage Committee.

"We are concerned that Pennsylvania could become negatively affected by these invasive species as is the case in other states. Animal health on farms could be severely impacted by feral hogs if their populations are allowed to grow. Some farms in Pennsylvania have already experienced crop damage due to these animals," said Bechtel.

Links: [Game Commission Takes First Step in Effort to Eradicate Feral Swine](#)

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

DCNR's Yellow Creek State Park Goes Green to Cut Green

[Yellow Creek State Park](#) in Indiana County is the first State Park in Pennsylvania to purchase an environmentally friendly, propane-powered lawn mower; one of many initiatives at the park to conserve natural resources.

"In the Bureau of State Parks, we are really trying to practice what we preach by setting a good example of green practices in the operation of our parks, and then helping people understand them through our educational and recreational programs and signage," said Bureau of State Parks Director John Norbeck.

Compared to gasoline mowers, a propane version reduces emissions up to 90 percent, while boosting fuel economy by 10 percent.

The mower is being supplied by Pittsburgh-based Krigger & Company under a state contract. It is manufactured in the United States and converted to run on propane by EnviroGard, a division of Onyx Environmental Solutions, located in Cornelius, NC.

"We do have some large grassy areas at the park that need to be mowed on a regular basis. We are really excited that, with our new propane-powered mower, we can demonstrate one way to cut the emissions that contribute to global warming," Park Manager Ken Bisbee said. "This fits with our [iConserve Pennsylvania](#) outreach effort that encourages people to take steps to make conservation of our natural resources a priority in their daily activities."

Other green initiatives in place at Yellow Creek State Park include:

- a wind turbine that powers the environmental classroom building at the park;
- a program of planting with native species at the environmental learning classroom building to show others how they can reduce mowing, watering and fertilizing;
- conversion of park buildings to incorporate better natural lighting, window placement, insulation, more efficient water heating systems and conversion to low energy compact fluorescent bulbs;
- currently undergoing a "climate friendly survey," developed by the National Park Service, to collect data on energy consumption and emissions generated by park staff and visitors within park boundaries. This information can be used to change management practices, develop educational programs to increase public awareness and encourage stakeholders to participate in generating ideas to conserve;
- Purchase of a new low-emission, fuel-efficient boat motor for use on the park's patrol boat;
- Switching to ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel, with 5 percent bio-diesel fuel added, for the parks vehicles;
- Development of many new educational programs to teach others about alternative energies, such as wind, solar and hydro power; and
- The park's environmental education specialist gave up using his state vehicle when he is working within the park, instead riding a bicycle to get to his programs and meetings.

Yellow Creek State Park is along one of the first "highways" in the state, the Kittanning Path. This trail was used by the Delaware and Shawnee nations and by early settlers. An earth and rock dam, creating a 720-acre lake at the park, was completed in 1969. Yellow Creek State Park is named for Yellow and Little Yellow creeks, which create the lake. The creeks have lots of yellow clay in the banks and bottoms.

For more information, visit the [Yellow Creek State Park webpage](#) and the [iConserve Pennsylvania website](#).

Energy Efficiency Workshop for Businesses Offered May 28 in Union County

The Department of Environmental Protection will provide a [free workshop](#) in Union County to help business owners find ways to reduce energy costs and become more energy efficient.

The workshop will be held from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., May 28, at Bucknell University's Elaine Langone Center, 701 Moore Ave., Lewisburg, Pa.

Although open to the public and businesses of all sizes, the workshops will focus on small- and medium-sized businesses—or those with fewer than 100 employees. Typically, these companies do not have the resources to employ or retain an energy management expert.

Business owners will receive information on energy-supply options, and learn how to identify energy-saving opportunities and develop an energy action plan.

The workshop will also offer attendees information on financial and technical resources that are available for energy-efficiency upgrades, including easily implemented, cost-effective changes for manufacturing facilities.

Registration for the workshops is free, and the session is open to the public. Similar workshops are being held statewide this spring.

The workshop is sponsored by DEP's Office of the Small Business Ombudsman in partnership with the [Electrotechnology Application Center](#), the [Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program](#) and the SEDA-Council of Governments.

Funding for the Energy Management Workshop is provided through a U.S. Department of Energy grant.

For more information or to request a registration form, contact DEP at 717-783-8411 or visit the [Energy Management Workshop Events webpage](#).

PASA Energy On the Farm Field Day Workshop Set for May 29

The [Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture](#) will offer a field day entitled, "[Energy on the Farm: A Toolkit for Taking Control of Energy Bills](#)" at The Lands at Hillside Farms in Shavertown, Pa.

The event runs from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and costs \$15 for PASA members and \$25 for all others and includes lunch.

The objective of this daylong workshop is to provide information on alternative options to improve farm energy efficiency including a biodiesel demonstration and tour of the dairy farm.

The day will begin with an introduction to biodiesel production presented by Piedmont Biofuels, a biodiesel cooperative in Pittsboro, NC. Participants will learn how to convert plant matter and restaurant waste into a high quality fuel for diesel engines.

A demonstration on the innovative mobile biodiesel processing trailer will cover production as well as proper handling and use, giving participants the opportunity to see all the components of a small commercial biodiesel production system in operation, including oilseed crushing.

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This field day will also focus on emphasizing farm energy audits as a means for farmers to explore potential energy savings.

A tour of [The Lands at Hillside Farms](#) and its milk processing facility will demonstrate how farmers can benefit from an energy audit. Information on how to have an energy audit performed on your farm will be provided along with a description of what resources are available to improve energy efficiency in your operation. People of all levels of experience are encouraged to attend.

Funding for this workshop is provided by the USDA-Risk Management Agency, through a cooperative partnership agreement with the National Center for Appropriate Technology, as part of a project called "Managing Farm Energy Risks."

The workshop is a collaborative effort between the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, the Lands at Hillside Farms, Piedmont Biofuels, and the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association.

To register, visit the [Field Day webpage](#) or contact PASA at 814-349-9856.

Air Quality Action Day Forecast Monday for Pittsburgh, Susquehanna Valley

The Department of Environmental Protection and its regional [Air Quality Partnerships](#) announced an air quality action day is forecast for May 26 in the Pittsburgh area and southcentral Pennsylvania's Susquehanna Valley region.

The forecast says Memorial Day will be code ORANGE for ozone in both the Pittsburgh and Susquehanna Valley areas.

The Pittsburgh region includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington and Westmoreland counties.

The Susquehanna Valley region includes Cumberland, Lebanon, Dauphin, Lancaster and York counties.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's standardized air quality index uses colors to report daily air quality. Green signifies good, yellow means moderate, orange represents unhealthy pollution levels for sensitive people, and red warns of unhealthy pollution levels for all. Air quality action days are declared at orange and red when fine particulate matter reaches unhealthy levels.

Ground-level ozone, a key component of smog, forms during warm weather when pollution from vehicles, industry, households and power plants "bakes" in the hot sun, making it hard for some people to breathe.

On air quality action days, young children, the elderly and people with respiratory problems, such as asthma, emphysema and bronchitis, are especially vulnerable to the effects of air pollution and should limit outdoor activities.

To help keep the air healthy, residents and businesses are encouraged to voluntarily limit certain pollution-producing activities by taking the following steps: ride the bus or carpool to work; avoid burning leaves, trash and other materials; wash dishes and clothes with full loads; and save energy -- do not overcool your home.

These forecasts are provided in conjunction with the Air Quality Partnership of the Delaware Valley, the Southwest Pennsylvania Air Quality Partnership, the Lehigh Valley/Berks Air Quality Partnership, and the Susquehanna Valley Air Quality Partnership.

For more information on ozone, visit the [Air Quality Partnerships webpage](#). Sign up for free daily forecasts by e-mail.

Grants Available to Help Local Governments Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Department of Environmental Protection is now accepting applications for the [Local Government Greenhouse Gas Pilot Grant Program](#) to help local governments play a role in combating climate change.

The deadline for applications is August 29. \$300,000 is available to promote greenhouse gas emission reductions, conserve energy and lower operating expenses. The funds were included in the state budget on the initiative of Rep. Greg Vitali (D-Delaware).

“Reducing the impacts of climate change is important to the vibrancy of our communities because the foundations of our regional economies—buildings, infrastructure, transportation and land use policies—and the sustainability of local industries are all dependent on a stable climate,” said Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty. “These grants will help local governments take the first steps toward finding opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

"I have been advocating for climate change both at the state and local level for many years," Rep. Vitali said. "In the absence of federal action, and the absence of significant action at the state level, a local response to climate change is essential.

"Pennsylvania alone is responsible for about 1 percent of the world's greenhouse gas production, so our local governments have an important role to play in the response to climate change, and the state has a responsibility to take the lead in helping to fund that response."

As an example, Rep. Vitali said Haverford Township, Delaware County, recently presented its first gas emissions inventory report detailing the 2005 energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the township and in community operations. The report represents the completion of the first step in the township's plan to address climate change, with future initiatives planned.

Under the Program, municipalities or regional partnerships can apply for grants to hire technical service providers who can help establish greenhouse gas emissions inventories and then develop plans to reduce emissions.

A greenhouse gas inventory totals emission levels from direct and indirect activities, while an action, or mitigation, plan offers specific recommendations on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Recommendations can be tailored to the specific needs of a municipality. If implemented, the recommendations are to help a municipality improve its energy efficiency and reduce energy costs, which will yield additional long-term savings. Local governments are not required to implement the measures identified through the grant program.

Individual municipalities can qualify for up to \$20,000. A regional application, with multiple municipalities, can request greater amounts, but not more than \$20,000 per participating municipality.

Applications will be judged based on the following criteria: energy use and efficiency, use of renewable energy, commitment to greenhouse gas reduction, efficient land-use planning and management, financial and in-kind contributions, contractor experience and qualifications, contractor resources and location



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Grant funding will be awarded on an upfront basis. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to provide either a financial match or in-kind contributions.

DEP said more information and an application will be posted on the [DEP Grants webpage](#).

Links: [PEC, Nature Conservancy Call for Passage of State Energy, Climate Change Bills](#)
[House Passes PA Climate Change Action Plan Bill](#)
[Senate Passes Climate Change Action Plan Legislation](#)
[PA Environmental Council Unveils Stakeholder-Driven Climate Change Roadmap](#)

PA Treasurer Joins In Call for Congressional Action on Global Climate Change

[Pennsylvania Treasurer](#) Robin L. Wiessmann this week joined more than 50 leading investors, including the nation's largest public pension fund and the world's largest listed hedge fund, in calling on the U.S. Senate to enact strong federal legislation to curb the pollution causing global warming.

The investor group issued a letter to Senate leaders calling for a national climate policy to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 60 to 90 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

"Enacting climate policy legislation and enforcing climate-related information disclosure by businesses protects both our environment and our bottom line. Investments that include or take advantage of environmental and technological trends and developments will have significant influence on economic performance and energy self-sufficiency," Treasurer Wiessmann said. "The actions we call for today will create new investment opportunities in the clean technology sector and allow investors to thoroughly assess the opportunities and risks associated with the companies with whom they do business."

The group of 52 investors, organized by [Ceres](#) and the [Investor Network on Climate Risk](#), includes institutional investors, asset managers, treasurers and controllers such as the California Public Employees Retirement System, F&C Asset Management, the Man Group (a hedge fund), and state treasurers and controllers for California, Connecticut, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island and Vermont.

In sending the letter, investors sent a strong message that climate policy uncertainty and the lack of federal regulations may be undermining companies' long-term competitiveness because it is preventing them from making large-scale capital investments in clean energy and other low-carbon technologies and practices.

Treasurer Wiessmann's signature on this letter comes after she made a strategic investment of \$15 million in publicly traded funds that hold stocks of companies that provide solutions for environmental problems or operate in a responsible manner with respect to the environment.

These strategic investments initiated Treasurer Wiessmann's [Keystone Green Investment Strategy](#), which seeks superior returns for Commonwealth assets from clean technologies, such as innovative alternative or renewable energy sources, and clean and green technologies that enable companies to reduce their emissions to the environment.

Treasurer Wiessmann's action was the result of the recently developed Pennsylvania Investment Principles, which address the "next frontier of investing" by



weighing the impact of geopolitical, environmental, governance, and other strategic factors on an investment's financial appropriateness. These factors allow Treasury's investment decisions to be accompanied by economic analysis of long-term considerations, including sustainability.

The investor letter also calls on Senate leaders to press U.S. regulatory bodies -- specifically, the Securities and Exchange Commission -- to issue specific guidance on what companies should disclose to investors on risks they face from climate change. Investors made the same such request in a petition they filed with the SEC last fall.

Treasurer Wiessmann and her fellow signatories recognize that environmental factors are already demonstrating a potentially pervasive impact on business and investors. Examples include global climate change, which will have profound impacts on many economic sectors including agriculture, shipping, insurance, and real estate; volatility in price of carbon-based fuels, creating opportunities and risks to sectors reliant on such fuels; and the likelihood of carbon regulation has substantial transformational impacts.

Cognizant of these impacts as well as recent scientific reports concluding that climate change is taking place and that human activities are the primary contributor, investors are calling for the Senate to take the following three actions:

- enact legislation that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25-40 percent below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80-95 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 in line with the targets and timetables laid out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's leading body of climate experts.
- realign national energy and transportation policies to stimulate research, development and deployment of new and existing clean technologies at the scale necessary to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals.
- Press the Securities and Exchange Commission to define the material issues related to climate change that businesses should disclose to help investors understand the risks and opportunities related to climate.

"The recently developed [Pennsylvania Investment Principles](#) call upon Treasury as an institutional investor to encourage appropriate changes in corporate disclosure and governance practices with regard to environmental issues," Treasurer Wiessmann said. "In the spirit of today's investor vigilance, Treasury will pursue the release of information about management decisions that can expose the company to, or help it avoid, material threats from environmental factors."

PUC Certifies Penn Power Competitive Bidding for Electricity Purchases

The [Public Utility Commission](#) this week certified that the process used to determine the provider of last resort rates for Pennsylvania Power Co. residential customers was transparent and non-discriminatory, and reflected market-based prices.

The competitive bidding process was conducted by an independent group on behalf of Penn Power. The bidding process for the residential customer group consisted of two phases, one in mid-April and the other in mid-May.

The three successful bidders for Penn Power's procurement of the residential group load for June 1, 2008, through May 31, 2010, were Constellation Energy Commodities Group Inc., FirstEnergy Solutions Corp. and Sempra Energy Trading LLC. The average price of the winning bids was \$80.48 MWh.

The Commission verified that the new prices accurately reflect the results of the competitive bidding process and checked Penn Power's calculations to ensure the new retail electricity prices accurately reflected the electricity costs resulting from the competitive bidding process. The prices are not set by the PUC, but rather are set by the wholesale market, over which the PUC exercises no jurisdiction.

The 1996 electric competition law requires electric companies, or a Commission approved alternative supplier, to provide default electric generation service to customers who have not selected an alternative generation supplier. This is commonly called provider of last resort, or POLR. The POLR prices for electric generation service are required to reflect "prevailing market prices," according to the law.

The prices below compare the current average total bill to an average total bill using the new tariff prices effective June 1, 2008.

The monthly bill for an average residential customer using 750 kWh a month will increase from \$111.62 to \$114.21 (2 percent).

The monthly bill for an average residential heating customer using 2,000 kWh a month will decrease from \$186.26 to \$167.97 (10 percent).

After considering comments from all stakeholders in the process, the Commission approved a competitive bidding process in March 2008 that was designed to provide consumers with the best possible price by encouraging participation in a competitive bidding process by potential suppliers.

For more information, visit the PUC's [Electric Price Mitigation webpage](#)
NewsClip: [Penn Power Rates to Rise 2 Percent](#)

PJM Auction Shows Successful Workings of Competitive Electricity Markets

Electric industry representatives said results of a competitive capacity auction designed to secure resources needed to meet electricity needs in June of 2011 at the lowest prices, indicate that competitive electric markets work.

Late last week, [PJM Interconnection](#) announced that its latest Reliability Pricing Model auction resulted in enough capacity to provide the region with reliable electric service at a price 37 percent lower than previous auctions.

Douglas Biden, President of the [Electric Power Generation Association](#), said policy makers in Harrisburg should take note of these results as they consider options to address and mitigate the impacts associated with the approaching expiration of generation rate caps and expected higher electricity prices.

"The PJM auction results reinforce the fact that competitive markets offer the best means to temper higher electric prices. While rates will have to go up because of dramatic increases in fuel and the cost of constructing generation during the time rate caps have been in place, competitive markets will help to provide reliable service at the lowest possible prices," said Biden.

Biden noted that the competitive auction process is also bolstering reliability. The auction resulted in an 18 percent "reserve margin," or the amount of "extra" electric capacity available to meet the region's electricity needs during times of peak demand.

He cautioned, "However, PJM must continue its efforts to work with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to ensure that the capacity auctions accurately reflect the cost of new generation entry to maintain future electric reliability."

Together with previous auctions, RPM has resulted in commitments to provide more than 16,000 additional megawatts of electricity, or enough to power 16 million homes. Biden said this is important given the fact that more capacity from new power plants will be needed to meet the steadily increasing demand for electricity in the region.

Biden said, "As America grows and older power plants retire, we know that we will have to build cleaner and more efficient plants to meet the ever-growing demand for electricity. By using competitive auctions that pit suppliers against each other on a best price basis, RPM auctions help to guarantee that only the most efficient plants will be built."

Biden pointed out that several types of new power plants were proposed. The auction, which covered the 2011-12 period, resulted in a proposed net increase of 4,238 megawatts of new generation coming from multiple sources - coal, natural gas, wind, and solar as well as proposals to limit demand, thereby further reducing the need for even more capacity. In fact, over 660 MW of new demand response, or offers to voluntarily reduce electricity usage, cleared the auction - the equivalent of a mid-sized power plant.

Likewise, nearly 300 MWs of uprates to nuclear capacity cleared the auction, further demonstrating that all types of electricity related resources are competing to provide cost effective and reliable service.

For more information, visit the [Electric Power Generation Association website](#).

EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Honored with Award for Helping “Green” Hospitals

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s [Mid-Atlantic Region](#) was one of 140 organizations recognized by [Practice Greenhealth](#) at a ceremony in Pittsburgh, Pa. this week for outstanding contributions to environmentally-responsible health care.

“This award is a reflection of EPA’s ethics and represents a strong commitment to protect patient health and preserve the environment,” said Bob Jarboe, Practice Greenhealth executive director. “The stakes are high and EPA has shown us their solutions are exciting.”

“Since 2005 EPA has taken a leadership role within the mid-Atlantic states in encouraging hospitals and other healthcare facilities to move their operations toward sustainability,” said Donald S. Welsh, EPA regional administrator. “The regional office has forged alliances and brokered relationships that are creating environmental improvements. We are pleased that our efforts have been recognized.”

The issue of pharmaceuticals in the environment is one of particular concern, one that has become a high priority at EPA. Welsh said that over the past two years, EPA’s mid-Atlantic region has engaged local and national organizations to develop solutions for issues surrounding medication disposal.

Discussions with pharmaceutical manufacturers and with a hospice medication management company have identified long-term care facilities as a major source of flushed medications. EPA is preparing to co-convene a regional leadership summit this year on the issue of reducing pharmaceutical waste.

EPA is also working with individual hospitals, especially in southeast and central Pennsylvania, to gain specific commitments for more sustainable practices and to reduce their use of persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic materials including mercury. EPA’s efforts have been enthusiastically received by hospitals.

A pilot program was originally designed for eight hospitals, however, the response was so great that the project was expanded to 20 hospitals to meet the demand.

Practice Greenhealth presented the Environmental Excellence awards on the first day of CleanMed 2008, a global conference for environmental leaders in healthcare. Practice Greenhealth is the result of the merger of two leading organizations – Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (H2E) and the Green Guide for Health Care. The merger produced a new clean energy and energy efficiency program: Healthcare Clean Energy Exchange.

EPA Issues 2008 Report on the State of the Environment

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week released its [2008 Report on the Environment](#), an important resource that citizens can use to better understand trends in the condition of the air, water, and land and related changes in human health and the environment in the United States.

The Report includes a regional breakdown of environmental indicators, including those for [Pennsylvania and EPA's Mid-Atlantic Region](#).

The EPA 2008 ROE will also be a valuable resource that can inform and focus EPA activities to improve and protect America's environment.

The EPA 2008 ROE uses scientifically sound indicators to measure and report on overall progress toward protecting the environment and human health. An environmental indicator must be quantifiable and provide valuable information on the condition of air, land, water, human health, or ecological condition.

For example, one water ROE environmental indicator is the percentage each year of public or community water systems that have reported no violations of EPA health-based standards.

This report and the indicators it contains were created in an open and transparent manner. The agency took the extraordinary step of having the proposed indicators reviewed in a public forum to determine if citizens- -not just scientists- -believed the proposed indicators provided the kind of information that was useful, and were supported by technically sound data. From the ROE, EPA and the public will know better where the United States needs to focus future work and resources.

It is important to note that the EPA 2008 ROE is not intended as a "report card." There are both positive and negative trends contained in the report. The purpose of the EPA 2008 ROE is to create a reliable set of information that can be used for year-to-year comparisons as well as planning.

It is hoped that in the future, EPA will be able to look at the trends of ROE environmental indicators over a span of years, similar to the analysis done on the 20 years of data in the Toxics Release Inventory.

The EPA 2008 ROE could also lead to the development of new indicators, new monitoring strategies, and new programs and policies in areas EPA determines to be highly important based on measured environmental trends.

Later this year, EPA will also publish the 2008 Report on the Environment: Highlights of National Trends (2008 ROE Highlights), which summarizes highlights of the EPA 2008 ROE without all of the technical detail. EPA is committed to releasing periodic updates of the ROE and its indicators so that up-to-date information on environmental conditions and trends is available to the American public.

EPA's 2008 Report on the Environment [is available online](#).

Agriculture: Emerald Ash Borer Survey to Begin May 27

Pennsylvanians will begin to see bright purple boxes hanging from ash trees across the Commonwealth after Memorial Day, said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. They are part of the agency's effort to learn more about [Emerald Ash Borers](#).



The three-sided, 15-by-24-inch, purple panel sticky traps attract adult Emerald Ash Borers as part of a statewide survey to assess the spread of the invasive beetle that arrived in Western Pennsylvania last summer. Pictures of the trap [are available online](#).

"Emerald Ash Borer has the potential to devastate our ash tree population," said Secretary Wolff. "By using these traps, we will be able to determine if the threat has moved further east in the state. If so, we can then identify the next steps to protect the trees."

The Department of Agriculture's crew of 70 surveyors will place traps in 35 counties. Counties are divided into 1.5 square mile grids and one trap will be hung in each accessible grid, for a total of 10,000 traps. The remaining counties will be surveyed by other cooperating state and federal agriculture agencies.

Each trap is labeled with the department's website address and toll-free pest hotline-- 1-866-253-7189.

Last summer, the beetle was detected in Butler and Allegheny counties. Quarantine was imposed for those counties and neighboring Beaver and Lawrence counties to restrict the movement from the quarantine area of ash nursery stock, green lumber and any other ash material, including firewood.

Campers and homeowners in the quarantine area are reminded to use only locally-harvested firewood, burn all firewood on-site, and not carry it to new locations, as the borer can be spread through transport of infected firewood.

Emerald Ash Borer is a wood-boring beetle native to China and eastern Asia. Adults are dark green, one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from early May until September. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees, and when they emerge as adults, leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

People who suspect they have seen Emerald Ash Borer should contact the department's toll-free pest hotline, 1-866-253-7189. For more information on the beetle and the quarantine, visit Agriculture's [Emerald Ash Borer webpage](#).

May 27 Presentation By President of Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area

August Carlino, President and CEO of the [Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area](#), will be the luncheon program speaker on May 27 in Pittsburgh hosted by the [Engineer's Society of Western Pennsylvania](#).

The Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area acts as a powerful catalyst for the creation of investment and economic development strategies throughout its seven counties.

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It works to conserve, interpret, promote and develop the industrial, cultural, natural, and recreational resources of the region, making them critical elements of community revitalization and heritage tourism.

Its success has translated into more than \$43.4 million raised in the past nine years for projects in the Rivers of Steel region. Since the authorization of the Heritage Area in 1996 it has received \$3.9 million in National Heritage Area funds and leveraged that in to more than \$23.5 million in other public or private funding.

With the creation of the Homestead Works National Park the Heritage Area is expected to attract 840,000 visitors annually and generate revenues of nearly \$60 million each year.

The Heritage Area is a strong part of Southwestern Pennsylvania's economic development strategy to make this region a leading tourist destination.

Mr. Carlino will be providing an overview of the history and operation of the Rivers of Steel Heritage Association.

For more information, [download a registration form on the event](#).

DCNR Salutes Stellar Contributions of Its Employees Across the State

DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis this week looked out into the audience of award recipients, their families and coworkers and saw the best defense against the claim that quality is slipping from the American product and its production.

“Some say we’ve lost the pride in the work, that there is a disconnect of spirit in what we do,” Secretary DiBerardinis said, “but you are the best argument against that. What you do across the state, you do with pride, and you connect it to a strong spirit of service.”

The keynote speaker at DCNR’s April 29 employee recognition program, the secretary presented 15 awards to employees from across the state. Their accomplishments best support key department initiatives that include Conservation Landscape Initiatives, [TreeVitalize](#), [iConserve PA](#), [carbon sequestration](#), and grant processing.

“What we do has deep meaning to the public, and a deeper meaning to the future of this planet,” Secretary DiBerardinis said. “We are honoring not just your accomplishments today, but also your vision, spirit and tenacity that make them possible.

“Your fabulous commitment to the mission, your ability to connect others to the mission, and your drive to connect others to the resource—are exactly what we are honoring today. You, your loved ones and your coworkers should be very proud.”

Forty-eight employees received commendations and carved wooden bald eagle awards in recognition of what the secretary said was “uncompromising and unfaltering dedication” to DCNR’s mission, and the resources and people it serves and protects.

Employees saluted in the ceremony at Harrisburg’s Rachel Carson State Office Building were nominated by their superiors and selected by a screening committee of their coworkers.

Honorees represented DCNR’s bureaus of state parks, forestry, facility design and construction, topographic and geologic survey, administrative services, and recreation and conservation.

The employees recognized included:

- John Harper, Bureau of Topographic and Geologic Survey, and Paul Roth, Bureau of Forestry, for their work in geological carbon sequestration;

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- Michael Eschenmann, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation;
- William Penn State Forest Staff TreeVitalize Team of Joseph Frassetta, Jeff Stuffle, Tim Duggan and Gerald Hoy;
- Teresa Witmer and Debra Miller, Office of Conservation Science;
- Roy Siefert, Tioga State Forest District;
- Brandi Gamble and Steve Goldstein, Office of Administration;
- Jessie Kohan, Blue Knob State Park;
- Procurement and Supply Division, Bureau of Administrative Services: Michelle Flynn, Naomi Rudisill, Nancy Weibley, Steve Smith, Lawanza Poteat, and Gloria Strawser;
- Dian Varner, Greenwood Furnace State Park;
- Grants Management Team of Darrel Siesholtz and Greg Gove;
- Ohiopyle State Park DCNR Ranger Chief Richard Brubaker and Rangers Floyd Hawk, Mathew Greene and Kip Hursh;
- Central Office Administrative Services Section, Bureau of Facility Design and Construction: Barry Malone, Sharon Enders, Julie Rau, Patti Boots, Darlene Grimes and Sandy Lewis;
- Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape (CLI) Initiative, Ohiopyle Implementation Team: Stacie Faust, John Hallas, Jeff Johns, Frances Stein, Lauren Imgrund, Tracy Stack, and Jim Kalp; and
- Making Connections: The iConservePA Team: Brook Lenker, Kristen Hand, Heather Bennett, Sandy Sykes, Tim Morey, Jim Hyland, Tom Haines, Eric Rensel and Dione Duncan.

Details on the accomplishments of each honoree [are available online](#).

Consultant Wanted: Trout Unlimited Requests AMD Technical Assistance Proposals

[Trout Unlimited](#) was recently awarded a Growing Greener grant to provide technical and organizational assistance to watershed groups, TU chapters, and other groups working to address abandoned mine drainage (AMD).

TU is requesting proposals from consulting firms that specialize in AMD remediation to assist with technical services for its AMD Technical Assistance Program.

Through this program, TU has been providing AMD technical assistance to groups since 2004 with funding provided by a previous Growing Greener grant and a private foundation.

TU's AMD Technical Assistance Program will be available statewide, however projects located in the West Branch Susquehanna River basin may given priority because of TU's current role in leading the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Initiative.

The types of projects TU is seeking consultants to assist with technical services include the following:

- 1) Rapid watershed snapshots – Typically requires a one-time site visit of AMD problems on a particular stream or small watershed (may include water sampling) and review of mining history, water quality data, and other available information to provide further recommendations and guidance for developing a monitoring plan or a more comprehensive assessment.
- 2) Rapid watershed assessments – An assessment of AMD problems on a particular stream or small watershed that typically includes water sampling (and possibly fish and/or

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macroinvertebrate surveys) for a determined length of time, which can be implemented by TU, consultant, or requesting group, and review of mining history, water quality data, and other available information to develop a report that summarizes the AMD problems and recommends potential remediation solutions.

3) Conceptual remediation design plan – Requesting group should have all the information it needs to apply for funding for the full-scale design and permitting phase.

4) Treatment system evaluation and recommendations – Evaluation and recommendations for improvement of existing treatment systems that may not be performing up to expectations or shows signs of declining performance. May also include assistance with developing long-term operation and maintenance plans if necessary.

5) Construction oversight – Assistance with providing oversight of treatment system construction, including possible coordination of construction activities for requesting group.

The process for providing technical assistance to groups begins with a simple two-page form that the requesting group fills out and sends to TU. TU staff will contact the group to determine its eligibility and to further refine the type of assistance the group is requesting. An initial site visit with the requesting group might be necessary and TU will coordinate this between the group and the selected consultant. The consultant will then be required to develop a scope of work and budget, which must be approved by TU and the DEP grant advisor prior to beginning the project.

TU staff will work with the selected consultant to provide services for projects that require biological assessments such as stream habitat, fish, and/or macroinvertebrate surveys. TU staff may also be available to assist the consultant with field work. TU staff will coordinate each project from its inception through to completion of the final report, thus the consultant will be working directly for TU as its contractor and must coordinate all meetings and activities with the requesting groups with TU first.

The maximum contract award available is \$92,000. If interested in contracting for TU as a technical service consultant for its AMD Technical Assistance Program, please submit a proposal that contains the following:

- 1) Company's experience working with volunteer-based watershed groups, TU chapters, etc.; reference contact information is encouraged.
- 2) Company's detailed experience developing watershed assessments and remediation plans specifically relating to AMD; specific examples are encouraged and may be included on a CD, hard copy, or website links.
- 3) Company's detailed experience designing AMD treatment systems; specific examples are encouraged that contain location, construction date, influent and effluent water quality, and current reference contact information.
- 4) Resumes for company personnel that will be providing services.
- 5) Cost estimates (ranges are adequate) for each type of project listed above.
- 6) Company's Federal Tax ID # so we can obtain contractor clearance from DEP.

Proposals are due by Friday, June 20, 2008. Questions may be directed to the Director of Abandoned Mine Programs, Amy Wolfe, at 570-726-3118 or awolfe@tu.org. Please mail proposals to Trout Unlimited, AMD Technical Assistance Program, P.O. Box 27, Mill Hall, PA 17751 (no proposals via email please).

Feature

Specialized Training Camps Hone Skills of Volunteer Forest Fire Fighters

by Wayne Wynick

Assistant District Forester

Moshannon State Forest District

2008 marks a milestone in a unique training program preparing [Pennsylvania Wildland Firefighters](#) for assignment to out-of-state wildfires. Twenty five years ago, 60 adventurous trainees arrived at Denton Hill State Park, Potter County, to learn what it takes to go to other locations and deal with the types of wildfires that exist there.



Prior to 1983, our focus was to deal with our own fires in Pennsylvania and not be too concerned with what happened “out West.” The increasing demand for trained firefighters to respond to wildfires in other parts of the country changed that view. A decision was made by state Bureau of Forestry to provide the type quality firefighter that was being requested.

These 60 volunteers were our beginning.

One has only to watch the evening news to realize other parts of our country have wildfires on an entirely different scale than found in Pennsylvania. Different fuel types, weather conditions and terrain “out there” allow fires to grow into community-threatening monsters that require great effort to control. Most recently, there have been destructive ones seen in Florida.

The recognition of the need for advanced training for our firefighters to participate in these “fire wars” led to the establishment of a program revolving around a camp experience similar to what they would deal with on one of these out-of-state assignments.

Over the years a detailed regimen of training evolved: firefighters arrive at the training site; sign in; receive instructions for the upcoming weekend; attend classes in pump or chain saw operation, wildfire behavior, or, perhaps, duties of specific positions such as Squad Boss or Crew Boss.

First-time trainees are required to take a basic course orienting them to conditions they will find on their assignments, as well as how to function as a crew member under the Incident Command System—determining just how each wildfire is fought.

Each firefighter functions as a part of a “crew” for the duration of the weekend, just as if they were on a large fire out West. They sleep in tents, march as a group to classes and meals, and carry bag-lunches to their field training. This intensive training produces firefighters that have been well-received on assignments throughout the country.

Over the years Pennsylvania has provided both crews and “single resources” to wildfires in every state west of the Mississippi and a number of states in the East. The bulk of these assignments have involved firefighters traveling as part of a 20-person crew. While there is a waiting list of volunteers to go to Hawaii on an assignment, so far no one has lucked out on that one. We did have a few folks travel to Alaska to assist on wildfires in that remote state.

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The “single resources” that are provided come from a growing list of firefighters who have qualified for specialty positions within the Incident Command System. These all require additional training as well as a certain number of out-of-state assignments before becoming qualified.

Almost everyone must have come up through crew assignments in order to reach supervisory positions that include: Strike Team Leader, Division Supervisor, Crew Representative, Receiving & Distribution Unit Leader, Planning Section Chief, Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, Helibase Manager and a number of others.

These people receive an individual assignment and report to an incident to provide expertise in their specific area.

Pennsylvania firefighters are respected for their abilities wherever they are assigned. Over the years, we have seen our people regularly receive high reviews for their training, attitude and knowledge.

We have seen our crews specifically requested for line assignments once the Operations staff realizes they have arrived in a camp. This is a high compliment for a firefighter to receive. Our continuing training is designed to maintain these high standards and everyone who goes out on an assignment is evaluated and, if necessary, given suggestions for improvement.

This pool of highly qualified people was the foundation for establishment of three Type 3 Incident Management Teams in 2006. Self-sufficient incident management teams with key Incident Command System positions already filled, when they arrive on an incident they are prepared to manage it in a very short period of time.

Deployments have been primarily for wildfires, but one team operated on a search during November of 2007. The Specialized Crew training and many out-of-state assignments provided the experience that these teams rely upon when the need arises.

For 2008, over 300 staff and trainees will gather at Camp Karoondinha, Boy Scouts of America, near Glen Iron, Union County. Early arrivals report Thursday, May 29, for some of the longer classes. The remainder will be in place by Friday evening.

As in the past, training is designed to introduce new firefighters to the program and provide advanced training for those needing to polish their abilities. Training includes classroom work as well as hands-on instruction permitting students to apply their new skills.

All will be provided as if the students were assigned to an actual wildfire. Staffing will include an Incident Commander, as well as a full compliment of necessary positions dictated by the Incident Command System.

By late Sunday morning, June 1, the tired, but well trained, firefighters will be released to return home in anticipation of call-outs for crews to travel West for “the big one” later this summer.

Anyone interested in the Specialized Crew Training Program is encouraged to contact the nearest Forest District Office for additional information. For telephone numbers, visit the [Forest Fire Protection webpage](#).

Grants & Awards

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

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- **May 28**— [ConocoPhillips Energy Prize](#)
- **June 13**— [EPA Clean Diesel Program Grants](#)
- **June 13**—**NEW.** [Game Commission State Wildlife 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**—[DEP Energy Use Reduction Grants](#)
- **June 30**—[Dept. of Agriculture Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools 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**— [DEP Composting Infrastructure Development Grants](#)
- **August 29**—**NEW.** [DEP Local Government Greenhouse Gas Reduction 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

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

[First Clean Air Alert of the Season Issued for Pittsburgh](#)

[Editorial: Climate Remains at Risk](#)

[Is a Resurgence of Coal Upon Us?](#)

[Energy Questions Have No Easy Answers](#)

[Editorial: Gearing up for the Electricity Cost War](#)

[Op-Ed: Electric Rate Caps Hurt Environment, Economy](#)

[For Alternative Energy, Future Is Now](#)

[GE Transportation in Erie to Build Hybrid Tugboat](#)

[Half-Gallon Pricing to Be Allowed in PA](#)

[PSU Team Scores Top Marks With Efficient SUV](#)

[Philly Weighing Bicycle-Sharing Plan](#)

[Editorial: Nothing to Stop Truckers From Slowing, Saving Fuel](#)

[Green Adds Up for Eaton](#)

[Going Green and Saving Some Too](#)

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[Recycling Efforts Lag Push for Compact Fluorescent Bulbs](#)
[Scrap Tire Recycling Business is Booming, Providing Fuel](#)
[Editorial: Cleanup One Mess Before We Make Another](#)
[Public Warned About Abandoned Mines](#)
[Editorial: Can State’s Environmental Protection Agency Do Its Job Properly](#)
[Go Forth and Compost](#)
[Ambler May Add Cameras to Deter Littering](#)
[PA Landfills Lose Attempt to Recover Millions in Landfill Fees](#)
[Worries Linger Over Absence of State Beach Lifeguards](#)
[Nature Path Plan Would Link Easton Area](#)
[Northeast Greenway Plan Focus: Connecting Walk Trails](#)
[Four Falcon Chicks Born in Nest on Beaver County Bridge](#)
[Eaglets: Maybe Next Year in Erie](#)
[PA Opens Year-Round Wild Boar Hunting](#)
[Extension Service Helps PA Residents Navigate Gas-Leasing Maze](#)
[Study Shows Private Land in Gettysburg Park Unprotected](#)
[Mixed-Use Communities Appeal to Young Adults](#)
[Op-Ed: It Is Time for a New Regional Vision](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Op-Ed: Clean Water Efforts Missing State Dollars](#)
[Op-Ed: Pennsylvania Must Share Bay Improvement Costs](#)
[Op-Ed: State Must Help Improve Sewer Plants](#)
[Lawmaker Pushes for Revision to Bay Plan](#)
[State Funding for Sewer Upgrades May Become Reality](#)
[REAP Returns This Summer](#)
[Where’s \\$\\$\\$ for Watershed Cleanup?](#)
[Water Infrastructure Draws Concern](#)
[Sewer Repair Surge Past \\$1 Billion](#)
[Green Roof Sprouts in Lancaster](#)
[Farm Bill Would Help Franklin County Farmers](#)
[Woman Honored for Work Along Neshaminy Creek](#)
[Nature’s Classroom on Toby Creek](#)
[Registration Open For Summer Youth Conservation School in Pike](#)
[Groups Get Grants for Fall Brook Headwater Project](#)
[New Buoy to Monitor Presque Isle Water Quality, Weather](#)
[Editorial: Restoring Paxton Creek, as EPA Wants, Is Beyond City’s Means](#)
[FEMA to Purchase Flood-Prone Property](#)
[Two Mine Water Proposals Under Review](#)
[Anti-Nuclear Activist Drops TMI License Opposition](#)

Regulations

The Department of Environmental Protection published notice of additional [Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Credit proposals](#) under review. The Environmental Quality Board published final-form regulations on [Air Quality Permit Streamlining](#).

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – May 24, 2008](#)

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

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection published notice of a final General Air Quality Plan Approval for [Pharmaceutical and Specialty Chemical Production](#).

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

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- **NEW.** [Revised Schedule of meetings for DEP Solid Waste Advisory Committee, Recycling Fund Advisory Committee.](#)
- **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**—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 .
- **May 28**— [Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards Program](#). Pittsburgh.
- **May 28**—DCNR [Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **May 29**—DCED [Weatherization Assistance Program State Plan Hearing](#). Conference Room 4 West, Fourth Floor, Keystone Building, Harrisburg. 10:00.
- **May 29**—DEP [Radiation Protection Advisory Committee](#) meeting. 14th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.

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- **June 3**—**NEW**. [Governor’s Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **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 .
- **June 6**—**NEW**. DEP [State Water Plan Statewide Water Resources Committee](#) Subcommittee on Policy and Integration meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **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**—House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee hearing on the Clean and Green Program. G-50 Irvis Building. 1:00.
- **July 22**—DEP [Water Resource Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 1:00.
- **September 18**—**NEW**. Joint Conservation Committee Sewage Management and Treatment Task Force. Penn Stater Conference Center, State College. 10:00.

[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

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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

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

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

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

Stories Invited

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

PA Environment Digest is edited by David E. Hess, former Secretary Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and is published as a service to the clients of Crisci Associates and the public. Crisci Associates is a Harrisburg-based government and public affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Crisci Associates call 717-234-1716. All rights reserved.

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