

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

June 19, 2006

Bipartisan Vote Moves Mercury Emissions Reduction Bill in Senate

Legislation that would reduce mercury emissions from power plants by 86 percent from 1999 levels was approved in a 10 to 1 vote by the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee this week without changes.

“This vote demonstrates the importance committee members have placed on ensuring substantial reductions in mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants,” said [Sen. Mary Jo White \(R-Venango\)](#) chair of the Committee. “It also demonstrates our commitment to protecting the public’s health -- especially among our most vulnerable citizens and the unborn -- in a manner that protects jobs and minimizes the impact on energy prices, without jeopardizing our generating capacity.”

The measure – [Senate Bill 1201](#) – was introduced by Sen. White and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne), Democratic Chair of the Committee.

The action comes after three public hearings by the Committee which heard testimony from public health experts, environmental and sportsmen groups, the departments of Health and Environmental Protection, the U.S. EPA, labor, coal and business groups.

Similar legislation-- [House Bill 2610](#)-- is pending in the House.

“This bill will require power plant owners to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in advanced clean air controls to reduce mercury emissions, covering 90 percent of the power plants in Pennsylvania, according to DEP” said Edward D. Yankovich, International Vice President, United Mine Workers of America. “Installing these controls means these plants could continue to burn Pennsylvania coal and help protect mine worker jobs.”

“Studies show there is virtually no difference between adopting this legislation and zeroing out all mercury emissions from all power plants in the U.S.,” said Donald Siegel, International Vice President, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. “80 percent of the mercury consumed by Americans comes from ocean and saltwater fish that would not be affected by reducing U.S. utility mercury emissions.”

“We support this common sense legislation because it will not only significantly reduce mercury emissions, but also gives power plants incentives for early reductions of mercury in a cost-effective way that protects jobs and electric customers in Pennsylvania,” said Douglas L. Biden, President, Electric Power Generation Association.

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“The risk of power plants switching to coal mined in other states is very real, because Pennsylvania coal has twice the mercury content of coal from other states,” according to George L. Ellis, President of the Pennsylvania Coal Association. “If this legislation is not adopted, power generators will have no choice but to consider switching to out-of-state coal with a much lower mercury content and our jobs will go with it.”

“Without the incentives to install cost-effective air pollution control equipment contained in this legislation, power companies will have no choice but to raise electricity prices on homeowners and businesses,” said Gene Barr, Vice President for Political and Regulatory Affairs for the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry. “That’s bad news for families and businesses who are already coping with higher energy costs in other areas.”

Power plants in Pennsylvania already have reduced mercury emissions by 33 percent from 1999 to 2004, according to the federal Toxics Release Inventory and yet this significant reduction did not even register on the state’s Mercury Monitoring Network, according to DEP.

This demonstrates clearly that mercury is coming from a variety of sources, not just local power plants, and Senate Bill 1201 is the only proposal that facilitates Pennsylvania’s participation in a national program to reduce mercury emissions.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control also conducted a nationwide study of women of childbearing age, infants and young children and found not a single case where mercury levels approached the level that might cause adverse health effects.

A recent [12-year study of fish consumption](#) by members of the Ojibwe Tribe of the northern Great Lakes region by John Dillinger, a professor of clinical laboratory sciences at the University of Wisconsin, found that the benefits of consuming more fish appear to outweigh the risk of slightly higher mercury levels in the body.

“Mercury is harmful to people in large doses, particularly to a developing fetus,” said Professor Dellinger, but so what dose does mercury begin to cause illness? Dellinger says that is still unknown.

“I look forward to discussing this issue with Gov. Rendell, so that we can finalize the Commonwealth’s plan for a strong, aggressive approach to reducing mercury emissions and protecting the health of every Pennsylvanian,” said Sen. White.

NewsClips: [Labor, Business Coalition Applauds Senate Action to Reduce Mercury](#)
[PennFuture Dismayed by Senate Committee Mercury Vote](#)
[Sen. White Comments on Recent DEP Release on Mercury – MP3 File](#)

Link: [Mercury Emissions Update](#)

Session Schedule

The Senate and House return to session on June 19.

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See & Hear

- Environmental Learning Doesn’t Just Happen in the Classroom

Feature

- Celebrating Partnerships in the Bennett Branch Watershed, *By Kim Lanich, Watershed Specialist, Elk County Conservation District*

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On the Hill

On the Senate, House Agenda

Here’s what will be on the Senate and House agenda when they return to session on June 19.

Calendars

The House will start with these bills of interest on its June 19 Calendar—[Senate Bill 940](#) which would set aside up to \$200,000 per year from the Agricultural Conservation

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Easement Purchase Fund to reimburse Land Trusts for expenses incurred in acquiring agricultural conservation easements; [House Bill 2067](#) setting limits on state spending through a constitutional amendment, [Senate Bill 868](#) increasing the forest land in-lieu of tax payment, and [House Bill 1588](#) providing for the fluoridation of public water,

The Senate will start the week with these bills: [Senate Bill 1209](#) establishing the Healthy Farms & Healthy Schools Program.

Committees

In the House, the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee meets to consider [House Bill 2619](#) establishing the Mine Families First Program which deals with issues arising from the 2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue.

Senate/House Bills Moving/Introduced

Several environmental bills moved this week. Here's the rundown....

House

Environmental Education: [Senate Bill 410](#) (M.White-R-Venango) establishing the Pennsylvania Environmental Education Center in law was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

Land Trust Reimbursements: [Senate Bill 940](#) (Waugh-R-York) which would set aside up to \$200,000 per year from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Fund to reimburse Land Trusts for expenses incurred in acquiring agricultural conservation easements was reported from House Appropriations Committee and is on the House Calendar for action.

Multi-Municipal Planning: [House Bill 2040](#) (R.Stevenson-R-Mercer) providing for the adoption of multi-municipal and county comprehensive plans where mineral and other rights are owned by parties outside the area of the plan was reported from the Subcommittee on Townships to the full House Local Government Committee with recommendations for amendments.

State Energy Office: [House Bill 2253](#) (George-D-Clearfield) which would create a State Energy Office and Energy Advisory Council within the Department of Environmental Protection was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

Senate

Reducing Mercury Emissions By 86 Percent: [Senate Bill 1201](#) (M.J.White-R-Venango) establishing the Clean Air Mercury Compliance Act was reported by a vote of 10 to 1 from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

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Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools: [Senate Bill 1209](#) (Waugh-R-York) establishing the Healthy Farms & Healthy Schools Program was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

Emergency Response Team: [House Bill 1905](#) (DiGiroland-R-Bucks) defining members of a community emergency response team as an employee under the Workers' Compensation Act was amend and reported from House Labor Relations Committee and then re-referred to House Rules Committee.

Funding Sewage Laterals: [House Bill 1108](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing a program within PennVEST to fund repair or replace private sewer laterals was amended and [Senate Bill 855](#) (Pippy-R-Allegheny) authorizing municipalities to expend public funds to repair or replace private sewer laterals were both reported from Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Bills Introduced

Climate Change: [House Bill 2744](#) (Vitali-D-Delaware) authorizing Municipal Climate Change Action Plans.

Stormwater Impacts: [House Bill 2752](#) (Reichley-R-Berks) amending the Municipalities Planning Code to include an assessment of the impact of stormwater runoff quality, velocity and quality.

Air Quality Improvement Tax Credit: [House Bill 2771](#) (Pyle-R-Armstrong) establishes the PA Coal and Air Quality Improvement Tax Credit giving power plants that install advanced air pollution control equipment and burn Pennsylvania coal a tax credit of \$3/ton up to a cap of \$30 million annually.

Senators, Environmental, Farm Groups Unveil 2nd Phase of Farmers First Agenda

Senators Waugh (R-York) and Wenger (R-Lancaster) this week unveiled the second phase of a comprehensive legislative agenda aimed at promoting agriculture in Pennsylvania and provided a status report on the laws already enacted from the first year of the program.

The Senators were joined by Sen. Madigan (R-Bradford), Sen. O'Pake (D-Berks), Democratic Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Sen. Kitchen (D-Philadelphia) and representatives of more than 20 farm and environmental groups, including the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Pennsylvania Environmental Council and the PA Association of Conservation Districts.



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“In the first year of our Farmers First Initiative, we made major strides in protecting valuable farmland, promoting the state’s number one industry and ensuring that farming remains strong in Pennsylvania,” Sen. Wenger said. “We held public hearings to seek input from those in the farming community and used that information to craft good legislation and move it through the process.”

Sen. Waugh said the second phase of the Farmers First Agenda will include a number of ongoing initiatives, such as the “Healthy Farms and Healthy Schools Program,” contained in [Senate Bill 1209](#). The program would promote both good health and farm profitability by encouraging nutritional and agricultural education in schools.

Sen. Kitchen (D-Philadelphia), the bill’s cosponsor, said “This program will bring together one of Pennsylvania’s most important economic sectors – the agricultural industry – with our public school system.”

“The Farmers First Agenda provides a terrific vehicle for Pennsylvania leaders to address the needs of our farmers at the local level,” said Matthew Ehrhart, Pennsylvania Director Chesapeake Bay Foundation. “Additionally, CBF commends the Pennsylvania legislature for recently convening hearings on the Federal Farm Bill. We urge the legislature to continue to convey Pennsylvania needs to our Federal delegation.”

The senators also unveiled a number of new bills and proposals that they plan to introduce, including:

- The creation of “The Centers for Agriculture Excellence and Education” to serve as a central clearing house of programs and information for current and new farmers;
- Combined funding for conservation districts through a fund administered by the State Conservation Commission;
- Legislation to ensure the continuation of vocational agriculture and FFA programs operated by school districts and area vocational-technical schools; and
- Funding to implement alternatives that would provide for water releases during low-flow periods without having to impose consumptive use fees on farmers.

Senators Waugh and Wenger serve as chairman and vice chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Bill Creates New Conservation District Fund, Districts Request More Funding

Legislation was introduced this week to create a new Conservation District Fund, a special non-lapsing fund that will make it easier for county conservation districts to receive state appropriations.

The fund is contained in [Senate Bill 1224](#), sponsored by Sen. Wenger (R-Lancaster), and [House Bill 2743](#), sponsored by Rep. Hershey (R-Chester).

The [PA Association of Conservation Districts](#) is urging the General Assembly to approve creating the Fund as part of the 2006-07 budget.

PACD is also asking legislators to consider allocating an additional \$4.5 million for district programs in the 2006-2007 that would allow districts to implement and expand programs such as watershed protection and other environmental programs to better serve county residents.

“Senate Bill 1224 and House Bill 2743 will streamline the district funding process and reduce administrative costs, allowing districts to spend more time and money helping their community and less time filling out forms and other paperwork,” said Victor

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Cappucci, PACD President. “Additional state funding will allow the conservation districts to better serve our Commonwealth’s residents. Districts would be able to implement and expand programs affecting PA citizens. “

“We believe that Pennsylvania’s elected leaders have a clear understanding of district operations and programs, and the need for additional state funding to meet district goals,” said Susan Marquart, PACD Executive Director. “PA citizens count on the services we provide to our community. Hopefully conservation districts will be granted the additional funding needed to continue their mission of working with communities to protect our county’s natural resources.”

Groups Representing Sports Men and Women Support Hunting Fee Increase

Rep. Bruce Smith (R-York), chair of the House Game and Fisheries Committee, said this week many groups that testified before his Committee on June 8 supported in the increase in fees.

“License fees were last increased in 1999, and the proposed increase would not take effect until July 1, 2007,” Rep. Smith said. “The cost of running the Game Commission has increased, as it has for businesses, government agencies and school districts.”

“The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs, as well as many other sportsmen’s organizations, support a fee increase for the PSG to maintain their many existing programs as well as implementing new ones,” said PSFC president Ted Onufrak.

Robert Erikson, representing members of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation said his group supports [House Bill 2601](#) as a means of generating much needed income for the Game Commission.

Noting that the last hunting license increase passed in 1999, Wes Waldron, president of the United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania said his organization supports House Bill 2601. “Within five years (of the increase) inflation had the agency beginning to consider the need for cutbacks,” he said.

Rep. Smith added that there appears to be little support for enacting legislation creating a \$20 conservation stamp from the committee and that he will drop that measure from the committee’s agenda.

NewsClip: [Dispute Over License Hike Continues](#)

House Transportation Committee Hosts Alternative Fuel Vehicle Showcase

Rep. Richard Geist (R-Blair), chair of the House Transportation Committee, this week hosted an Alternative Fuel Vehicle Showcase behind the Capitol Building in Harrisburg.

As part of their "[Discover the Alternatives Campaign](#)" the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers joined with state legislators, the Pennsylvania Automotive Association and the Pennsylvania AAA Federation to tout their commitment to bringing more alternative fuel automobiles to market and provide an opportunity for legislators to drive these exciting vehicles.

In Pennsylvania now, there are approximately 270,000 alternative fuel vehicles on the road. Auto manufactures currently have more than 46 advanced technology vehicles on sale in dealer showrooms and more than 30 in development.

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"Alternative fuel autos of all kinds are a reality today. Whether it's achieving greater fuel economy or reducing America's reliance on oil as a primary fuel source, automakers remain committed to populating America's roadways with innovative vehicle technologies," said Fred Webber, President and CEO of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers.

"Vehicle dealers are thrilled to be able to offer such a broad variety of automobiles and trucks to the consumer public," offered Mark Stine, Vice President of Legislative and Public Affairs of the Pennsylvania Automotive Association which represents the franchised new vehicle dealers in the state. "There is no doubt that buyers are showing increasing interest in alternatively-fueled vehicles and the industry is responding to those emerging preferences. Such a development is a fine example of the consumer-driven free market allowing for the expression of 'buyer preference' and the sales industry being able to respond to the choices they make. We've always believed that the customer, as opposed to the government, should be the one to decide what type of vehicles they want."

Sales of alternative fuel autos have steadily increased. Automakers are building more than 1 million alternative fuel autos for sale this year, and hope to sell more than 2 million by 2008. Automakers are advertising these vehicles to encourage consumers to consider purchasing them.

"I am looking forward to showing my colleagues in the House and Senate that there are many clean car options available to Pennsylvanians right now," said Rep. Geist. "Many of these economical and low green house gas vehicles will be illegal to sell here if the Governor and the misguided self-appointed environmental watchdogs get their way by locking us into California regulations."

"Consumers want choices that will lessen the operating expense and environmental impact of the vehicles they drive," said Ted Leonard, Executive Director, Pennsylvania AAA Federation. "The AAA clubs of Pennsylvania suggest motorists use opportunities such as the 'Discover the Alternatives' tour to become more familiar with the various new energy-saving technologies now being offered by the automobile industry."

Of the 270,000 alternative fuel vehicles on the road in Pennsylvania today, there are currently 101,480 diesels, 159,552 flex fuels and 8,412 hybrids.

For more information, visit the "[Discover the Alternatives Campaign](#)" website.

Native Plants Offer Five “Es” of Opportunity for Pennsylvania



The increasing the use of native plants offers Pennsylvania five “Es”—economic, environmental, energy savings, and education opportunities and the chance to teach a ‘land ethic,’ said Jim MacKenzie, President and Operations Manager for [Octoraro Native Plant Nursery](#) at this week’s Environmental Issues Forum.

The Forum is sponsored by the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#), chaired by Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

Economic

“The movement to restore stream buffers, forests, wetlands and floodplains to their natural functions in the last 10 years in Pennsylvania has

increased demand for native plant materials to fulfill this need,” said MacKenzie. “In fact we now do 80 percent of our business in Pennsylvania, when we used to do 80 percent in Maryland and other states because of [Growing Greener](#), [TreeVitalize](#) and other programs here in the state.”

MacKenzie noted Pennsylvania’s “green industry” -- landscape contracting, nursery, floriculture growers and retail garden centers-- is the fastest growing segment of Pennsylvania agriculture which grew 11 percent annually between 1997 and 2002.

“Our green industry contributes \$5.6 billion to Pennsylvania’s economy and employs over 75,000 Pennsylvanians,” said MacKenzie.

“Yet, with all this growth and understanding, many watershed groups, local governments and even state agencies are not aware of the options they now have available to use native plants,” said MacKenzie. “Even homeowners can now use native plants for small projects like rain gardens that have environmental benefits.”

Environmental

Native plants can be used to help remove nutrients and stabilize streambanks, control stormwater runoff, treat acid mine drainage, restore floodplains and wetlands, provide attractive, low maintenance landscaping in business and corporate settings, provide habitat for a variety of birds and other wildlife and can be used to create rain gardens for homeowners on a smaller scale.

MacKenzie said Maryland requires developers to restore forest cover on projects over 40,000 square feet in size under its [Forest Conservation Act](#). By requiring reforestation and better planning for developments, Maryland has been able to retain 65 percent of existing forest cover on new development and restore at least 14 percent of the remaining 35 percent or so that was cleared.

Under Delaware’s “[Plants for Livable Delaware](#),” the Delaware Department of Transportation has undertaken a campaign to identify and promote native plants in its roadside plantings to help establish a regional identity.

“We now have a much better understanding of how [invasive and exotic species](#) like Purple Loosestrife and Japanese knotweed have destroyed productive habitats in Pennsylvania, and what the benefits of planting native species are,” said MacKenzie.

Other uses that offer environmental benefits include carbon sequestration to help fix climate change gasses in soil and plant material, restoration of dredge spoil sites and innovative programs like Audubon’s “[Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses](#).”

Energy Savings

[Green roof technology](#) that uses plantings to absorb water and cool the interior of buildings and the urban landscape has energy saving potential.

Studies have shown that green roofs can retain and use up to 63 percent of water that would normally run down rain gutters and contribute to stormwater problems.

Education

“At Octoraro Nursery we encourage visits by students and others to teach them about native plants and how they can be used,” said MacKenzie. “In managing our own growing operation, we use a restored, open water wetland to help control runoff that also serves as a teaching tool for others.”

Ethic

“We think helping people understand native plants and their benefits helps instill a ‘land ethic’ in our younger generation that helps them become better stewards of our environment,” said MacKenzie.

[Mr. MacKenzie’s entire PowerPoint presentation is available online \(7.7MB file\).](#)

Octoraro Nursery was founded in 1990 and specializes in raising container grown mid-Atlantic and Eastern regional native trees and shrubs for wholesale markets.

In addition to being President of Octoraro Nursery, MacKenzie serves on the board of the [Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association](#) and is a member of the [Pennsylvania Native Plant Society](#), the [Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals](#) and serves as Vice-Chair of the Department of Environmental Protection’s [State Water Planning Advisory Committee](#).

For more information on the Environmental Issues Forum contact the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) at 717-787-7570 or send email to: Craig D. Brooks, Executive Director, cbrooks@jcc.legis.state.pa.us .

Jim MacKenzie may be contacted at 717-529-3160 ext. 11, by sending email to: jim@octoraro.com or by visiting the [Octoraro Native Plant Nursery website](#).

Senate Environmental Committee Sets Hearing on Tritium at Landfills

On June 28 the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will hold a public hearing on levels of tritium in municipal waste landfills.

Tritium, a radioactive variation of the chemical element of hydrogen, is most commonly found in illuminated exit signs.

Representatives from the Department of Environmental Protection, the Nuclear Information and Resource Service (a private organization from Takoma Park, MD) and a landfill operator will provide testimony to the committee.

For more information, visit the [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee webpage](#).

In Other News

83% of Assessed Streams Meet Water Quality Standards in PA

Over 66,342 miles of stream-- 83 percent of the 79,746 miles of streams assessed so far-- meet designated water quality standards, and 53 percent of the 62,342 acres of lakes assessed meet standards, according to a new report issued by the Department of Environmental Protection this week.

DEP also [published a proposed list of streams](#) that are impaired under Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act.

This new information is contained in the [2006 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report](#) (formerly known as the 305(b) report) published for public comment.

Pennsylvania has 83,161 miles of streams, 3,956 lakes covering 161,445 acres and 403,924 acres of freshwater wetlands.

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The largest sources of water quality impairment for aquatic life continue to be abandoned mine drainage— 4,645 miles impaired, agriculture- 4,161 miles, urban runoff/storm sewers- 1,470 miles, road runoff- 687 miles, small residential runoff- 554 miles and atmospheric deposition- 305 miles. More specifically, the problems are: siltation (6,617 miles), metals (4,160 miles), pH (2,113 miles) and nutrients (1,757 miles).

Looking more closely at the stream miles impaired for human health use, like the consumption of sportfish, DEP said 890 miles of stream were impaired out of the 1,523 miles assessed.

The cause of impairment of these streams were mercury (541 miles), PCBs (392 miles), chlordane (101 miles) and dioxins (35 miles).

DEP could not identify the specific cause for the impairment for 907 miles of the impaired streams and only listed the source of the impairment for 10 other miles as industrial point source (page 34).

With respect to lakes, DEP said the primary cause of impairment was agriculture or “unknown.”

In addition to information presented in tabular form, DEP has updated its GIS viewer known as [eMAP PA](#) to show the new assessment and 303(d) impaired streams information allowing you to zoom in on your own watershed. ([Instructions](#)).

Comments on the monitoring report and the impaired streams list are due August 16 to DEP, according to the [PA Bulletin notice](#).

Delaware Estuary Program Releases New Natural Communities Guide

The [Delaware Estuary Program](#) has released a new “[Guide to the Natural Communities of the Delaware Estuary](#)” to make habitat restoration easier by standardizing references to native plant communities.

For more than 50 years, the nation’s scientists have been working on a standardized language to describe native plant communities, or groups of plant life found in similar environments.

The Delaware Estuary now has such a guide thanks to the work of the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, NatureServe and the Natural Heritage Programs in the States of Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The Guide and its companion, “[Key to the Delaware Estuary Ecological Systems and Natural Communities](#),” will be used by conservation planners and practitioners to protect and restore vulnerable habitats in a manner that takes the guesswork out of restoration. An important way it will do this is by ensuring that a unified language is used by experts in all jurisdictions when referring to plant communities.

“By using a common language among professionals, it will be much easier for groups to assess landscapes, predict vegetation patterns and compare restoration methods,” said Danielle Kreeger, science director at the Partnership. “In short, it will improve the quality of restoration being performed and ultimately lead to more successful efforts.”

The new guide uses the National Vegetation Classification System, which became the official U.S. vegetation standard in 1997. It describes 35 ecological systems and 185 natural-community types known to occur within the tri-state watershed, as well as other ecological characteristics such as animal life, topography, and more. All in all, its completion represents more than two years of work by eight different authors.

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“A great feature of the guide is that it ranks the estuary’s natural communities by conservation status, or rarity,” said Kathy Klein, executive director of the Partnership. “This allows the professionals doing restoration to prioritize their efforts like never before; it’s groundbreaking.”

The Delaware Estuary stretches from Trenton, N.J., to the mouth of the Delaware Bay and includes the tidal reaches of the Delaware River. In all, its watershed encompasses nearly 7,000 square miles within 22 counties and three states. Approximately 88 percent of this area is land, and this is the focus of these new restoration tools.

While subterranean or deepwater systems are not included, submerged-aquatic vegetation is, as well as upland and wetland natural communities. Of the plant life within these environments, 23 percent are estimated to be at-risk globally and 32 percent are considered at-risk on the state level.

These new publications are now available for download on the [Delaware Estuary Partnership’s website](#) or contact Danielle Kreeger at 800-445-4935, extension 104.

Tributary Strategy Subject of Meeting Set for June 23

A combined meeting of the Point Source Workgroup and the [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy](#) Steering Committee will be held from 10 a.m.-1 p.m., June 23 in Room 105 of the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg.

Over the last several months, DEP has held numerous meetings to discuss initiatives needed to meet Pennsylvania’s nutrient and sediment reduction obligations to help protect and restore Pennsylvania's streams and the Chesapeake Bay.

For more information on the meeting, contact DEP’s Andrew Zemba or Ann Smith at 717-772-4785, e-mail azemba@state.pa.us or annsmith@state.pa.us or visit the [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy webpage](#).

Basic, Advanced No-Till Training Courses Scheduled in August

The [No-Till Partnership](#) has scheduled two hands-on training courses in basic and advanced no-till planting techniques in August.

The basic two-day course will be held August 7-8 at the PSU Agronomy Research Farm at Rock Springs PA. This course is similar to previous offerings and presents an overview of the watershed and economic benefits of no-till agriculture, as well as an overview of whole farm or systems approach for new and transitioning no-till producers.

An advanced two-day course for experienced agency staff and crop management professionals will be held August 23-24 at the PSU Landisville Research Farm in Landisville PA. This course will offer a higher-level technical focus and more in-field diagnosis and problem solving.

Nutrient Management and Certified Crop Advisor continuing education credits will be available.

The deadline for registration is July 30.

In January of 2006, the Chesapeake Bay Program acknowledged the effective watershed protection benefits of Continuous No-Till and approved it as a new best management practice in the watershed model.

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For program questions, call 717-705-4784. For registration questions, please call the [Capitol RC&D office](#) at 717-948-6633. Also visit the NRCS [PA No-Till Partnership webpage](#).

Link: [No-Till Economics Can Brighten Bottom Line](#)
[Growing No-Till Farming in PA Through the No-Till Alliance](#)

October “Project Grass” Conference to Feature Alternative Energy

The 5th Annual [Statewide Project Grass Conference](#) will be held October 20-21 at Penn College in Williamsport. The conference is geared toward grassland agriculture businesses with grazing herds, though this year’s conference will have a new twist.

Project Grass 2006 will include traditional topics, such as pasture management, dairy heifer grazing, value-added marketing, and converting to organic dairying producer. This year’s conference will also expand into alternative energy topics, including solar and wind power on the farm, bio-fuels on the farm and more.

The keynote speakers are Jim Gerrish and Dr. Allen Williams.

Gerrish brings 20 years of experience in beef-forage systems research while at the University of Missouri, and 20 years of experience in commercial cattle and sheep production at his family farm in Missouri. His research and outreach efforts have been recognized by the American Forage and Grasslands Council, USDA-NRCS, the Soil and Water Conservation Society, Progressive Farmer and many more.

Dr. Williams is an internationally recognized branded beef program consultant. His consulting firms specialize in building branded beef programs, value-chain management, and ranch/farm business planning. Prior to forming his consulting companies, Dr. Williams spent nine years with Louisiana Tech University and six years at Mississippi State University.

Registration deadline is September 29.

For more information and a registration form and brochure, contact Kris Ribble at 570-784-4401 Ext. 111 or send email to: kris.ribbon@pa.usda.gov or visit the [Project Grass website](#).

McCoy-Linn Dam Removal Project Overview Meeting June 27

[ClearWater Conservancy](#) and Fish and Boat Commission are hosting an overview meeting for the McCoy-Linn Dam Removal Project at the Milesburg Community Center at 7:00 p.m., June 27.

In partnership with Fish and Boat Commission, Department of Environmental Protection, American Rivers, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Penn State Center for Watershed Stewardship, ClearWater Conservancy plans to remove McCoy-Linn Dam in 2007.

Removing the dam will restore approximately 4,000 linear feet of stream habitat and riparian corridor and 1.5 acres of associated wetlands within the current impoundment, and develop public access to 1.3 miles of a contiguous and publicly-owned section of Spring Creek.

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Katie Ombalski of ClearWater Conservancy and Scott Carney of the Fish and Boat Commission will provide an overview of the project. Representatives of DEP will also be available to answer questions.

Milesburg Community Center is located at 101 Mill Street in Milesburg.

For more information contact Katie Ombalski, Conservation Biologist, [ClearWater Conservancy](http://ClearWaterConservancy.org), 814-237-0400 or send email to: katie@clearwaterconservancy.org.

Hearings Set on Susquehanna River Withdrawal, Use Regulations

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission has proposed comprehensive revisions to its regulations governing [water withdrawal and consumptive use projects](#) that are now open for public comment at three upcoming hearings.

The proposed revisions, which are open for public comment through September 1, incorporate existing SRBC policies and practices, improve the organizational structure of the regulations, add new standards for regulated projects and expand provisions for compliance and hearings.

The proposed changes would:

- Require sponsors of consumptive use projects involving ground or surface water withdrawals to request approvals for both the consumptive use and the withdrawal. (Consumptive use is when water is not returned to the Susquehanna basin, including through evaporation, out-of-basin diversions, use in products, etc.);
- Require sponsors of projects withdrawing 100,000 gallons per day or more from any combination of ground and surface water to request approval of the withdrawals;
- End the recognition of “pre-compact” or “grandfathered” consumptive uses or withdrawals upon a change of ownership, and no longer allow the transfer of project approvals when a change of ownership occurs. Exceptions are contained in the definition of the term “change of ownership” for projects involving transfers between family members, transfers of agricultural land for so long as it continues to be used for agricultural purposes, and corporate reorganizations;
- Reduce the duration of consumptive use and withdrawal approvals from 25 years to 15;
- Incorporate standards for interbasin diversions, which are currently effective as policy;
- Provide for an expedited approval process for consumptive use projects that obtain water from public water supplies; and
- Establish an administrative appeal procedure for parties aggrieved by an SRBC decision.

In conjunction with the public comment period, SRBC has scheduled three public hearings to explain the proposed regulatory changes and to receive public testimony, two are in Pennsylvania --

- August 10, 8:30 a.m., Pennsylvania Geological Survey, Middletown Office, 3240 Schoolhouse Road, Middletown, Pa. (near Harrisburg); and
- August 10, 6:30 p.m., Kings College, Snyder Room, 133 North River Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

SRBC Executive Director Paul Swartz said, “As the demand for water continues to increase for domestic supplies and economic development, the Commission’s goal is to manage and support that growth, while we protect the environment and existing water

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users at the same time. We believe these proposed regulatory changes will enhance the Commission’s ability to do just that.”

SRBC, which worked closely with its Water Resources Management Advisory Committee to develop the revisions, is seeking public comments.

Swartz said, “While the Commission and its advisory committee gave careful consideration to the impacts of the regulatory revisions, we fully expect to receive and would welcome comments from the regulated community, environmental and conservation interests, planning and economic development agencies and others who deal with the impact-side of our regulations day-in and day-out.”

[A copy of the proposed regulation is available online.](#)

Written comments can be submitted on or before September 1 to Richard Cairo, Secretary, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, 1721 North Front Street, Harrisburg, PA, 17102, Phone: 717-238-0423, ext 306, Fax: 717-238-2436, or send e-mail to: rcairo@srbc.net .

Persons planning to present oral testimony at a public hearing should provide prior notice, if possible, to Richard Cairo at 717-238-0423 ext 306 or by e-mail to: rcairo@srbc.net .

Cook Forest to Host Wetlands Delineation Workshop for Teachers

Cook Forest State Park will hold a wetland delineation teacher workshop for ACT 48 credits in conjunction with North Central Region Math/Science Education Collaborative on August 9.

The workshop will take place in the Log Cabin Inn Environmental Learning Classroom in Cook Forest State Park. Activities will also include a hands-on application in delineating wetlands through the use of plants, soil, and hydrology.

All participants will receive a copy of “In Search of Swampland: A Wetland Sourcebook and Field Guide” by Ralph W. Tiner. The cost of the workshop is \$60.

For more information, contact Dr. Charylne Philp, Clarion University, 814-393-1612 or by sending email to: mathsci@mail.clarion.edu or visit the [North Central Region Math/Science Education Collaborative webpage](#).

Cooperative Effort Leads to New BMP for Separating Sediment from Stormwater

[Terre Hill Concrete Products](#), working with the departments of Environmental Protection and Transportation, local governments and private industry developed a new solution for separating sediment from stormwater or runoff with fine particulates.

Terre Kleen is a separation and sedimentation device designed to receive storm water from the upstream collection system that efficiently separates litter and pollutants and settles sediment before the stormwater discharges into the stream or detention/retention ponds.

Terre Kleen meets the current U.S. EPA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Phase II, Storm Water Regulations for a Best Management Practice.



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The Terre Kleen design uses aluminum inclined plates that function as inclined sedimentation basins within a precast structure. Inclined plate technology is a proven method of settling sediment from water, used for decades in the potable water industry. Terre Hill adapted the inclined plate concept for the storm water environment.

Because of the innovative use of technology the Department of Environmental Protection has encouraged the development of Terre Kleen. DEP has allowed field installations to occur within Pennsylvania for purposes of monitoring unit performance.

Terre Kleen units are located on the Route 322 project at the “Narrows” in Mifflin County. The City of Harrisburg has installed a unit at the Vehicle Maintenance Facility.

Recently, a Terre Kleen unit was installed at the Watsonstown manufacturing facility of [F.B. Leopold Company](#) which processes 30,000 tons of anthracite coal to make filter media for the drinking and wastewater industry.

[MANTEC](#) and [PENNTAP](#), programs charged with assisting Pennsylvania manufacturing companies to successfully participate in an increasingly competitive environment, were both instrumental in bringing many parties together to assist Terre Hill Concrete Products develop the product.

THCP designs, manufactures and assembles the Terre Kleen units at their precast facilities located in Lebanon and Terre Hill, PA.

For further information, contact [Terre Hill Concrete Products](#) at info@terrehill.com or call 800-242-1509.

Winners of 2006 Commonwealth Design Awards Announced

An Erie County project that gave a former drive-in movie theater a second act as the Tom Ridge Environmental Center has captured the top honor in the [2006 Commonwealth Design Awards](#).

[10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania](#) this week bestowed honors on 15 projects in 10 counties that represent the best examples of smart growth design from across Pennsylvania. PNC Bank, a part of The PNC Financial Services Group Inc., was title sponsor for the awards program.



**Tom Ridge
Environmental Center**

The Tom Ridge Environmental Center garnered the Commonwealth Design Award – complete with red-brick plaque – while the other projects received silver or bronze awards.

The environmental center, which opened in May, serves as a gateway to Presque Isle State Park. The 12-acre site in Millcreek Township was chosen to reinforce the park’s connection to Erie, lengthen visitor stays by offering interpretive programs, and develop collaborative relationships with regional research and educational organizations.

The center, comprising 63,000 square feet on two floors, boasts exhibition areas, a 75-foot observation tower affording views of Lake Erie, an orientation theater, gift shop, café and regional offices for the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

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The other winners included:

SILVER AWARDS

- **Allegheny County, Bausman Street Independent Living:** Completed in January, the Bausman Street Independent Living project comprises four apartments in each of three buildings that provide affordable housing for low-income, disabled adults. It represents the first new construction in decades in Pittsburgh's Knoxville neighborhood.
- **Lancaster County, Buckwalter Building:** The 45,000-square-foot Buckwalter Building in the city of Lancaster was built in 1905 as the A.K. Mann tobacco warehouse. It turned over a new leaf as a mixed-use redevelopment project, which was completed in 2005. The first floor is home to the Brickyard Restaurant and Sports Pub; technology companies occupy the second and third floors; and eight luxury apartments complete the fourth floor.
- **Philadelphia, Martin Luther King Plaza:** The winner of a 2006 award for regional and urban design from the American Institute of Architects, Martin Luther King Plaza has brought affordable housing and families into what had been a blighted, crime-ridden 15-block area near Broad Street, Philadelphia.
- **York County, Martin Memorial Library:** October 2005 marked a new chapter in the history of Martin Memorial Library in York and the culmination of a 2½-year expansion and renovation project. Since the project's completion, library visits have increased by 6,000 per month, circulation has increased 25 percent, and the issuing of new-member cards has increased 33 percent.

BRONZE AWARDS

- **Beaver County, Mental Health Consumer Center:** Construction of the 7,500-square-foot, three-floor Mental Health Consumer Center was completed in 2005, on what had been a vacant lot. It was the first new construction in Rochester, the hub of Beaver County, in more than 50 years.
- **Dauphin County, International Place:** International Place, which opened in 2005, comprised the renovation of five buildings and reuse of two vacant lots at Third and Chestnut streets in downtown Harrisburg. International Place comprises an expansion of International House, bringing capacity to 54 residents; Bricco, a 160-seat culinary arts school and restaurant; Ciao!, a bakery; and Olewine's Meat and Cheese House.
- **Delaware County, Syngy World Headquarters:** In Chester, an Industrial Age power station gave way to a new world headquarters for a 21st century technology company. Software company Syngy Inc. is the anchor tenant for the former Chester Waterside Station, a coal-fired electric power plant along the Delaware River.
- **Fayette County, Barn at Fallingwater:** The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy converted a 12,000-square-foot bank barn into conference and event space on the 5,000-acre Bear Run Nature Reserve. Completed in 2005, The Barn at Fallingwater is on Route 381 in Steward Township, adjacent to Frank Lloyd Wright's renowned Fallingwater.
- **Montgomery County, Pottstown Town Center:** In 2000, the borough demonstrated its faith in the community by locating its new three-story, 28,000-square-foot municipal building in downtown Pottstown. Borough Hall is credited with sparking economic development, including renovation of a neighboring former bank building. The Town Center was completed in 2002 with the opening of Smith Family Plaza, which created a place for socializing, festivals and performances.

- **Philadelphia, Blau-Thompson Residence:** Completed in 2003, this project involved the renovation of a 19th-century row home in the Italian Market area of Philadelphia. The owners converted a former luncheonette with two apartments above it into a single-family home. They operate a small architectural firm from the property.
- **Philadelphia, School District of Philadelphia Headquarters:** Built in 1928 as the Philadelphia Inquirer’s printing plant, the five-story building tells a different story today. The 865,000-square-foot concrete structure at 440 N. Broad St. required massive interior and exterior renovations for its rebirth as the school district’s headquarters. By consolidating four administrative and storage sites into this building, the school district saves \$1.2 million in yearly operating expenses.
- **Philadelphia, Spring Arts Point:** The three acres at North 10th and Green streets, in the West Poplar neighborhood, had been vacant since a failed urban renewal effort in the 1960s. This spring, construction began for Spring Arts Point, which will result in 53 townhouses and 20 condominiums that are expected to attract a range of income groups and family sizes.
- **York County, Historic Fairmount Neighborhood:** The Fairmount neighborhood had been neglected for years when, in 1997, the city of York sponsored a reinvestment effort. Nearly a decade later, Historic Fairmount can point to the rehabilitation of 15 formerly single-family Victorian-era homes into 38 apartment homes serving low- and moderate-income residents. The homes encompass 37,724 square feet on two blocks of North Beaver Street.
- **York County, The Greenway Tech Centre:** The 60,000-square-foot building at 540 S. George St., York, which used to be a cigar factory, has risen from its ashes to become a southern gateway to the city. It is part of the nonprofit Crispus Attucks Association’s 10-year Boundary Avenue project to revitalize the neighborhood. The center will accommodate as many as eight loft-style offices equipped with fiber-optic cable and wireless Internet.

10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania is an alliance of organizations and individuals from across the state committed to land-use policies and actions that will enable Pennsylvania to strengthen its diverse urban, suburban and rural communities and reduce sprawl. 10,000 Friends has offices in Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh.

For more information, visit the [2006 Commonwealth Design Awards](#) webpage.

NewsClip: [Tom Ridge Environmental Center Wins Award](#)

DCNR Salutes Individual and Group Volunteers in Parks, Forests

A York County woman who has dedicated the past 20 years of her life improving a nearby State Park and sharing its natural wonders with others has been named “[2005 Conservation Volunteer of the Year](#)” by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Karen Lippy of Hanover, president of the Codorus Bird Club, secretary of [Friends of Codorus](#), and an ever-helpful fixture at Codorus State Park since 1986, was selected by DCNR’s Bureau of State Parks for individual bureau award honors.

Lippy shares annual volunteer honors with two group-award recipients: Friends of Goddard, selected for parks distinction for assuring the success of many special activities at M.K. Goddard State Park in Mercer County, and the Rattling Creek Single Trackers,

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mountain biking enthusiasts saluted by the Bureau of Forestry for trail improvement and commitment to Weiser State Forest District land in northern Dauphin County.

“Once again all of our Conservation Volunteer Award recipients are marked by a passion to protect, improve, and enhance the natural world around us,” said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. “Whether it’s introducing newcomers to the joys of birding, helping others relive the pioneer life on parklands, or tackling state forest trail improvements in drenching rain, the efforts of these recipients embody the purpose of the program and their awards.”

An ardent birding enthusiast, Libby monitored a bald eagle nest almost daily during the summer of 2005 at Codorus State Park. She regularly provides group lectures and individual information and aid to visitors, and serves as the eye and ears of the park staff, helping monitor the natural world around her.

“Karen’s life absolutely is dedicated to promoting an interest in birds and the love of nature,” said Secretary DiBerardinis. “She definitely is a treasured gem of the southern York County area and is known far and wide for her wealth of knowledge and fascination with the natural world.”

Lippy was selected from volunteers working across Pennsylvania in its 117 state parks and 20 state forest districts. Together they amassed more than 500,000 hours -- a volunteer contribution benchmark attained each year by DCNR’s Conservation Volunteer Program since its inception in 1997.

Friends of Goddard, the Bureau of Parks’ 2005 group award-winner, was formed less than four years ago with the intent of aiding environmental education efforts and helping stage the park’s annual Pioneer Frolic Festival. Set-up and teardown, vending concessions, re-enactment and entertainer recruitment are among the groups’ duties that help assure the event’s success.

The Bureau of Forestry’s Group Conservation Volunteer award-winner -- Rattling Creek Single Trackers -- was saluted for “tireless efforts to establish and maintain multiple-use trails on public land in northern Dauphin County.”

Since 2001, the group has constructed nearly 16 mile of trail in the Weiser State Forest District and adjoining municipal land, and annually devotes four days to trail work and other forest activities.

Anyone interested in becoming conservation volunteers can contact any state park or forest district office; call 1-888-PA-PARKS from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday; or visit [DCNR's Volunteers webpage](#).

Regional Planning Comes of Age Conference – September 28-29

A special “[Regional Planning Comes of Age](#)” Conference will be held in New Brunswick, New Jersey on September 28-29 to explore the promise and practice of regional land use planning in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast States.

The conference is being held in conjunction with the 25th anniversary of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.

Seminars will address topics such as transfer of development rights, growth management tools, protecting water resources, using regional planning to preserve historic and cultural resources and cooperative planning across political boundaries.

For more information, visit the [Regional Planning Comes of Age website](#).

Penn State Team in Top 5 of National Advanced Vehicle Competition

A team of Penn State students placed fifth overall at the 2006 component of “[Challenge X: Crossover to Sustainable Mobility](#)” advanced vehicle technology competition earlier this month.

The groundbreaking, three-year competition gives engineering schools an opportunity to participate in hands-on research and development with leading-edge automotive propulsion, fuels, materials, and emissions-control technologies.

Penn State's 2006-2007 Challenge X entry was a low-emissions, diesel-hydrogen Chevrolet Equinox. Designed to draw on Penn State's experience working with diesel engines and merge them with the future of alternative fuels, the vehicle burns a combination of biodiesel and hydrogen in its high-efficiency GM diesel engine.

Like Penn State's 2002 "Wattmuncher" vehicle, its Challenge X Equinox is a versatile parallel hybrid; its diesel engine can both turn the wheels directly or turn the electric generator that charges the vehicle's lithium-ion batteries.

The Penn State team was partially sponsored by an \$83,065 grant from the state Alternative Fuels Incentive Grants program administered by the Department of Environmental Protection.

The 2006 competition was held earlier this month at General Motors' Mesa, Az., Desert Proving Grounds. Record-high temperatures – above 100 degrees every day, with tarmac temperatures exceeding 150 degrees -- placed a severe strain on all of the vehicles, reports PSU faculty sponsor Daniel C. Haworth, a professor of mechanical engineering.

Despite the heat, the Penn State team competed in and successfully completed every event. In addition to the fifth-place overall finish, Penn State took third place in the Freescale Semiconductor Award (best design and use of microprocessor hardware and software) and was one of six teams selected to participate in the Media Day Ride-and-Drive Event, based on the team's innovative powertrain design and robust vehicle operation.

The three years of Challenge X are designed to follow a realistic vehicle development process. The first year (2005) emphasized modeling, simulation, and technical reports: There was no vehicle. The second year (this year) emphasized a "mule" vehicle with functioning hybrid powertrain, and agreement between predicted and actual vehicle performance. The final year (2007) will emphasize powertrain refinements and consumer acceptability.

While many students contributed through the year, those who attended this year's competition were Gary Neal (faculty advisor), Eric Reischer (technical advisor), Matt Shirk (team leader), Brian Herrold, Justin Ellis, Tim Cleary, Joe Becker, Jeremy Jones, Ari Giovagnoli, Joe Rochinski, and Nick Trotta.

For more information, visit the [Penn State Challenge X team website](#).



Cumberland County Business First to Manufacture and Ship Soy Diesel

[Keystone BioFuels](#) this week became the state's first company to manufacture and ship biodiesel made from Pennsylvania-grown soybeans.

“Alternative energy is important to the agriculture industry and to all Pennsylvanians,” said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff during a tour of Keystone BioFuels in Shiremanstown, Cumberland County. “Our farmers are going to play a key role in driving the commonwealth through alternative fuels for cars, equipment and home heating. This will boost the economy, providing jobs and adding more than \$1 billion of revenue in the next decade.”

The company, in operation since March 2006, is currently producing 3,000 gallons of soy diesel per day, with the potential to produce one million gallons per year. A \$6 million expansion is planned for year's end, enabling the production and storage of 5 million to 7 million gallons of soy diesel.

In Pennsylvania, there is a growing interest in producing and using biodiesel. As much as 40 million gallons of biofuel production is expected to come on line during the next year, making the state the leader in soy-based fuel production nationwide.

Last year, Pennsylvania farmers harvested 420,000 acres of soybeans and an estimated 450,000 acres of soybeans were planted this spring.

Within the next decade, the state's alternative fuels industry is expected to use 546 million bushels of corn and 5.1 billion pounds of fats and oils to make ethanol and biodiesel. Half of the corn and nearly two-thirds of the fats and oils are predicted to be produced by Pennsylvania farmers.

Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future this week [issued a report](#) saying biodiesel and other renewable fuels could create 25,775 new jobs in Pennsylvania by 2017.

For more information, visit the [Keystone Biofuels website](#).

Ag Progress Days Will Feature Switchgrass for Renewable Energy Research Tour

The USDA-ARS Pasture Systems and Watershed Management Research Unit at University Park, PA will feature a research tour on growing switchgrass for renewable energy each afternoon during [Ag Progress Days -August 15, 16, 17](#).

Featured topics include crop rotations for bioenergy, soil carbon sequestration under switchgrass, and environmental benefits of switchgrass for bioenergy. Participants in this one-hour tour will see long-term research sites, herbicide control plots, and variety trials.

For more information please contact Paul Adler at 814-865-8894 or send email to: Paul.Adler@ars.usda.gov .

BP Pledges \$500 Million for Energy Biosciences Institute



As part of its continuing drive to find longer term commercial alternatives to oil and gas, BP is to fund radical research aimed at probing the emerging secrets of bioscience and applying them to the production of new and cleaner energy, principally fuels for road transport.

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The company plans to spend \$500 million over the next ten years to establish a dedicated biosciences energy research laboratory attached to a major academic centre in the US or UK, the first facility of its kind in the world.

Chief executive Lord Browne said BP had begun discussions with several leading universities to identify which could host the [BP Energy Biosciences Institute](#) (EBI), with the aim of launching early research programmes by the end of 2007.

Speaking in London, Browne said the new institute would focus initially on three key areas of energy bioscience:

Developing new biofuel components and improving the efficiency and flexibility of those currently blended with transport fuels

Devising new technologies to enhance and accelerate the conversion of organic matter to biofuel molecules, with the aim of increasing the proportion of a crop which can be used to produce feedstock

Using modern plant science to develop species that produce a higher yield of energy molecules and can be grown on land not suitable for food production.

Browne said the EBI would be staffed by scientists drawn both from the host university and other academic institutions, along with a small number of specialists from BP.

"The world needs new technologies to maintain adequate supplies of energy for the future, Browne said. "Bioscience is already transforming modern medicine and we believe it can bring immense benefits to the energy sector.

"By creating this integrated and dedicated research centre, we plan to harness a technical discipline with enormous potential to provide new energy solutions."

The EBI will undertake basic research freely accessible to the world's technical communities as well as proprietary applied projects for commercial bioscience applications.

In the proprietary area, it will support the new biofuels business within BP's refining and marketing division which has been created to address the increasing requirement that biocomponents be blended into traditional fossil-based transport fuels.

Browne said: "We expect demand for biofuels to rise significantly through the next decade to meet consumer desire for more environmentally responsible products and to satisfy the requirements of governments for more energy to be home-grown.

"It is clear that this demand will outstrip availability without major investment to stimulate the development of new associated technologies that improve cost-effectiveness and broaden the range of biocomponents available globally.

"BP's biofuels business will bring together all our existing activities in this area and also identify a selection of new demonstration projects to increase our knowledge and expertise which is essential to bring these products to market on a wide scale."

In addition to its research remit, the EBI will facilitate the cross-training of a new generation of researchers focusing on coupling biotechnology and energy production. It will be a focal point for interactions with leading biotech companies which have a major role in developing and applying energy bioscience.

"While some very good energy bioscience work is already under way, we don't believe it is adequately integrated into a comprehensive strategic vision for commercial energy production," Browne said.

"We intend that the EBI will combine a broad science base with BP's energy knowledge and expertise in the fields of energy processing, distribution, marketing, and regulation, creating the potential for material new offers to meet world demand for lower carbon energy."

In addition to its focus on advanced biofuels, the Institute will also look at broader applications of bioscience to energy, including improved recovery of oil, coal bed methane and carbon sequestration.

NewsClip: [Lord Browne, BP, Anxiety Overblown](#)

Link: [Microbial Fuel Cell Research at Penn State](#)

Lichvar Sworn in as Newest Fish and Boat Commissioner



[Lenny Lichvar](#) of Boswell, Somerset County, has been sworn in as the newest Fish and Boat Commissioner. Commissioner Lichvar fills a vacant seat for Commission District 4, comprised of Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Mifflin and Somerset counties.

Commissioner Lichvar is deeply involved in conservation matters, both professionally and in numerous volunteer organizations. He is currently Project Manager for the Somerset Conservation District. He previously served as Executive Director of the non-profit Southern Alleghenies Conservancy for eight years.

He is Chairman of the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project and is on the board of the Somerset County Conservancy. Commissioner Lichvar is a board member, Stream Improvement Chairman and Yellow Creek Coalition representative for the Mountain Laurel Chapter of Trout Unlimited. He is a member of the Jennet Rod and Gun Club. He has previously served on the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers.

In addition, Commissioner Lichvar is a freelance outdoor writer and photographer whose works have been published in local, state and national publications. Twice he has won recognition from the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association for the best published article on trout and coldwater conservation. He is presently an Outdoors Correspondent for the Somerset Daily American and produces a monthly outdoors page for the newspaper.

Other community interests include the Boswell Area Jaycees, where he is an alumni member, two-time past president and current newsletter editor and publisher. He is also current president and founder of the Boswell Area Historical Society and Chairman of the Boswell Centennial Homecoming Celebration Committee.

Commissioner Lichvar and his wife, Becky, have two children.

See & Hear

Environmental Learning Doesn't Just Happen in the Classroom

A special [GreenWorks online video](#) looks at four examples of environmental education centers in Pennsylvania where students and adults can have a hands-on environmental experience, and learn something!

Wildwood Lake Sanctuary, Shaver’s Creek Environmental Center, Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art and Jennings Environmental Education Center are profiled.

This special webpage also links to an online directory of dozens of environmental education facilities all over the state published by the [Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education](#).

Feature

“Celebrating Partnerships in the Bennett Branch Watershed”

By Kim Lanich

Watershed Specialist

Elk County Conservation District



This photo represents the many partners that have joined the efforts of the Bennett Branch Watershed Association since its inception. Federal, state, grassroots organizations and private industry are partnering to clean up the watershed.

On an exceptionally warm April day, members from the Bennett Branch Team, DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty, and other elected officials met to discuss the environmental problems facing the Bennett Branch Watershed.

Deep in the heart of elk country, Acid Mine Drainage is a major problem affecting water quality to many tributaries flowing into the main stem of the Bennett Branch. AMD in Elk County is directly linked to over one hundred years of mining, and as you can see in the photo, mining is still part of the economic industry today.

For decades Pennsylvania officials have been attempting to abate the AMD issues in Bennett’s Valley. Finally, tested, successful technology and engineering is catching up in the battle with the iron, sulfuric acid and other heavy metals that contaminate so many tributaries flowing into the Bennett Branch.

In 1998 the Bennett Branch Watershed Association formed to begin the restoration work needed on the Bennett Branch to restore it to its pre-mining condition, and in 2004

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the DEP completed an assessment of the work required to remediate the impacts of AMD and AML in the watershed.

After the assessment, the Mineral Resources Management Deputate organized the “Bennett Branch Team” comprised of Department of Environmental Protection staff from the Cambria Office of the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation, the Moshannon and Knox offices of the Bureau of District Mining Operations, and members of the BBWA.

Since then others have joined this team such as: the Baltimore District of the US Army Corp of Engineers, the Elk County Conservation District, the Game Commission, Gannett Fleming, P & N Coal Company, Earthsavers, and the newest partner [BioMost, Inc.](#)

Currently there are many projects on-going in the watershed. In the lower portion of the Bennett Branch, the US Army Corp of Engineers has been working on three projects in the Dents Run sub-watershed.

Site 3888 is a Vertical Flow System that was previously built, which needs retrofitting to increase the removal of acidity. Design work includes the addition of an alkaline pond and will be out for bid in 2007, and construction should begin shortly thereafter.

Site 3893 will include a Passive Treatment System. Design has been completed and construction will begin in 2007. Gannett Fleming has been working on these projects in conjunction with the USACE.

Site 3895 (design by BioMost Inc.) will consist of two phases. Phase 1 design is complete and will consist of an oxidation and precipitation channel in conjunction with a Vertical Flow Pond. Construction will begin in mid July. Phase 2 is currently being designed, and will consist of two vertical flow ponds, two wetland ponds and a horizontal flow limestone bed. Construction is anticipated to begin within the next year.

The DEP Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation, is also working on sites in the Dents Run watershed.

Site 3898 is a surface mine reclamation site including removal of highwalls, grading for proper slopes, alkaline addition, and drains and culverts.

On site 1934, mining still continues. Limestone is removed and left onsite for future use, and acid rock extracted from this site will remain onsite, but will be layered with fly ash, and will then be capped with clay to stop rainwater infiltration. Dangerous high walls were also removed and re-graded for appropriate slopes.

In the upper reaches of the Bennett Branch, the Bennett Branch Team is recommending restoration of the main stem in two phases. DEP’s BAMR is in charge of this part of the restoration project.

Phase 1 includes the design and construction of an active chemical treatment plant in the Hollywood/Tyler area; and Phase 2 will be the design and construction of an active chemical treatment plant in the Caledonia area.

Phase 1 has begun design for the treatment plant and plans are due by December 2006, with construction to begin in 2007. Design, construction and operation of the second treatment system in Caledonia is planned to follow sometime later.

From the watershed assessment, all high priority Abandoned Mine Land sites were inventoried and catalogued. Reviewers targeted twenty-four problem areas with human health and safety hazards, with an approximate \$30 million to reclaim. The Office of Surface Mining has begun working on five of these surface mine reclamation projects.

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The Bennett Branch Watershed is inundated with mine discharges and abandoned mine lands. The BBWA is fortunate to have such a diverse, highly qualified team to remediate the many AMD and AML issues plaguing the watershed.

So on August 9, the BBWA will hold a celebration to thank the many people who have worked so hard cleaning up this beautiful watershed. The event will be held at 11:00 on Winslow Hill.

If you are interested in attending this event, please contact Kim Lanich at the Elk County Conservation District at 814-776-5373, or by email at klanich@elkoes.ncentral.com

Quick Clips

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

[Wayne County Releases Recycling Report](#)
[Rush Twp. Landfill May Tap Into Biodiesel Boom](#)
[Gamesa Plant Opens in Ebensburg](#)
[Adams County Measures Wind Power for County Energy Needs](#)
[Conservancy Deeds Islands to State](#)
[New Frick Park Portal Next Up in Nine Mile Run Plan](#)
[Rachel Carson Trail Hike Offers Challenge](#)
[State Pledges Help to Save Land in Lehigh Valley](#)
[Group Receives \\$20,000 Invasive Plant Control Grant](#)
[Bush Signs Mine Safety Law](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Federal Mine Cleanup Fund Extended](#)
[Celebration to Mark Completion of System Helping Catawissa Creek With Lehigh River Dam Gone, Habitat Improves](#)
[New Curriculum Emphasizes Importance of Water](#)
[Watershed Plan Takes Aim at Runoff](#)
[Local Group Conducts Water Quality Survey](#)
[Miles of Luzerne County Streams Polluted](#)
[Susquehanna River Deemed at Risk](#)
[State Grant to Help Clean Up Acid Mine Drainage](#)
[Successful Resolution Reached on Chatham Run Watershed](#)
[Grant Funds Water Quality Research in the Susquehanna](#)
[Susquehanna Riverfest](#)
[Clarion Prof Publishes Pictorial on the Allegheny River](#)

Regulations

[DEP published notice](#) of a draft [2006 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report](#) (formerly known as the 305(b) report) for public comment. Comments are due: August 16.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – June 17, 2006](#)

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 draft and final guidance documents](#) covering a variety of programs, notice of renewal of a waste general permit and an updated list of firms authorized to do radon-related work in the state. Here's the rundown...

Waste General Permit: DEP published notice of [renewal and opportunity for public comment on a General Permit](#) covering the operation of residual waste processing facilities and the beneficial use of residual waste other than coal ash. Comments are due: July 17.

Draft: DEP ID: 394-2000-002 Pennsylvania's Nonpoint Source Management Program Update. The Pennsylvania Nonpoint Source (NPS) Management Program Update outlines the Commonwealth's plan to address nonpoint source pollution through 2012 based on having adequate resources including necessary personnel. Comments due: August 1.

Final: DEP ID: 563-2112-101. Aboveground Storage Tanks on Coal Mine Permit Areas. This technical guidance document describes the permitting and monitoring requirements for aboveground storage tanks on coal mine sites.

Final: DEP ID: 563-2504-201: Blanket Bond Program for Coal Surface Mine Sites. This document provides guidelines and procedures concerning the Department's voluntary Blanket Bond Program for coal surface mine sites.

Notice to Rescind: DEP ID: 363-4000-001. Compliance Assistance and Enforcement Manual. This guidance document was prepared to standardize the procedures and documents used by the Department for compliance assistance and enforcement under the provisions of the Dam Safety and Encroachments Act (32 P. S. §§ 693.1--693.27), the Flood Plain Management Act (32 P. S. §§ 679.101--679.601) and 25 Pa. Code Chapters 105 and 106 (relating to dam safety and waterway management; and floodplain management).

Radon: DEP notice of changes to list of firms certified to do radon testing and remediation in Pennsylvania. ([PaB 3037](#)).

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

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- **June 19** – USDA – U.S. Senator Rick Santorum [Renewable Energy Conference](#). Farm Show Complex, 2nd Floor VIP Room 9:00-3:00. Contact Vince Murphy, 717-237-2181 or send email to: Vincent.Murphy@pa.usda.gov .
- **June 20** – House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee meets to consider [House Bill 2619](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) establishing the Mine Families First Program. Room 60 East Wing. Call of Chair.
- **June 20** – **CANCELLED** – Environmental Quality Board meeting. Next scheduled meeting is July 18.
- **June 20** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Citizens Advisory Council meeting.
- **June 26-27** – [DEP Citizens Advisory Council meeting](#). Best Western University Inn, Indiana, PA. 7 p.m. and 9:30 a.m. respectively.
- **June 26** – Governor’s Renewable Agriculture Energy Council meeting. Room 309 Agriculture Building. 10:00.
- **June 27** – **CANCELLED**. DEP Stormwater Manual Oversight Committee meeting.
- **June 28** – [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee](#) public hearing on tritium at landfills. Senate Majority Caucus Room. 9:00.
- **June 28** – DCNR [Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **July 5-6** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board meeting.
- **July 12** – DEP [Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board meeting](#). DEP California District Mining Office, California, PA. 1:30.
- **July 12** – **CANCELLED**. DEP Water Resources Advisory Committee meeting.
- **July 19** – Governor’s Invasive Species Council meeting. Agriculture Building, 2301 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg.
- **July 25** – [DEP Stormwater Manual Oversight Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **August 29** – **CANCELLED**. State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators conference call.
- **September 13** – [DEP Water Resources Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **September 19-20** – [State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators](#). 10th Floor Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 and 8:30 respectively.

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- **October 31-November 5** – [National Historic Preservation Conference](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation. Pittsburgh.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#)

(courtesy [PA Organizations for Watersheds & Rivers](#))

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

Helpful Web Links

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

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

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

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

Stories Invited

Send your stories about environmental issues, programs and positive actions to **PA Environment Digest** - DHess@HolstonCrisci.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 Holston & Crisci and the public. Holston & Crisci is a Harrisburg-based government and public affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Holston & Crisci call 717-234-1716.

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