

—PA — **Environment Digest**

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

PACD Awards Recognize Commitment to Conserving PA's Natural Resources

The [PA Association of Conservation Districts, Inc.](#) hosted a conservation awards program this week to acknowledge efforts of individuals and organizations to further the activities and accomplishments of conservation districts on a statewide basis.

The awards were presented at the [61st Annual PACD/JCC Joint Conference](#).

The 2008 Ann Rudd Saxman Conservation District Director Excellence Award was presented to Patricia Sueck, director at the York County Conservation District for the past eighteen years.

She has held various offices in PACD, including president, and remains the only female president in the association's history. At the national level, Sueck represents Pennsylvania in the National Association of Conservation Districts and is chair of the northeast NACD board of directors.

The Ann Rudd Saxman Conservation District Director Excellence Award is given to a conservation district director or associate director for his or her outstanding volunteer efforts that have furthered the activities and accomplishments of conservation districts on a statewide basis.

The Conservation District Employee Excellence Award was presented to Gerald M. Heistand, assistant to the administrator of the Lancaster County Conservation District. He has been with the district for the past twenty-five years in a variety of positions and has organized and hosted tours for conservationists from other states and nations.

The Conservation District Employee Excellence Award is given to a conservation district employee for his or her outstanding efforts that have furthered the activities and accomplishments of conservation districts on a statewide basis.

The PACD President's Award was given to the [Pennsylvania Fair Share for Clean Water Coalition](#).

In addition to PACD, the Coalition includes the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and Pennsylvania Builder's Association. The Coalition created the PA Fair Share for Clean Water Plan - a funding proposal to support the needs of Pennsylvania farmers and municipalities faced with the challenges of meeting state and federal clean water mandates.

The award, selected this year by PACD President Larry Kehl, is given to an individual, organization, or agency for their outstanding efforts that have resulted in furthering the accomplishments of the non-profit organization.

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

Online Video Feature

Old Fashioned Groundbreaking for Quecreek Mine Rescue Visitors Center

There was an old fashioned groundbreaking last Saturday for a new Visitors' Center at the [Quecreek Mine Rescue Site](#) in Somerset, Pa, where everyone pitched in, including volunteers from an Amish community in Ohio.

The new Visitors' Center will be housed in a 2,400 square foot building overlooking the mine rescue site. It will include educational display areas and other typical visitor center amenities.

“We want to thank all those who contributed their labor, materials, equipment or their donations to help build the visitors center. So far we've raised about half of the \$200,000 needed to finish the building,” said Bill Arnold, President of the Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation. “We certainly welcome participation in this unique project from those who believe, as we do, that the Quecreek mine rescue was a miracle.”

Video Blog: [Bill Arnold Talks About the Visitors Center Project](#)

Rep. Bob Bastian (R-Somerset) also participated in the groundbreaking, providing an overview of state legislation passed into law in response to the accident, including the Mine Families First Act he sponsored and the general update to the deep mine safety law sponsored by Sen. Richard Kasunic (D-Somerset) that was signed into law in July.

Video Blog: [Rep. Bastian On Updating Deep Mine Safety Laws](#)

On July 24, 2002 miners broke through into an abandoned, water-filled mine flooding the Quecreek Mine with over 50 million gallons of water. Nine miners scrambled to safety, but nine were trapped in a pocket of air in the dark, cold, water-filled mine. They were rescued four days later through the combined efforts of state and federal mine rescue agencies and hundreds of workers and volunteers.

For more information, visit DEP's [Quecreek Mine Rescue webpage](#) or the [Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation website](#).

NewsClip: [Quecreek Visitors Center Work Begins](#)



On the Hill

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

The Senate and House committee meeting schedules and floor Calendars are listed here--

Session Schedule

The House and Senate voting schedule has only 10 days overlapping this fall--

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House

September 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, and 24

October 6, 7, and 8

November 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 24, and 25

Senate

September 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24

October 1, 2, 6, 7

The Senate will not be in session after the November election.

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

Calendars/Committees

The Senate and House committee meeting schedules and floor Calendars as they left them for summer recess--

Calendars

House (September 15): [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 Bill 44](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) banning the sale, installation and unsafe disposal of mercury thermostats; [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate gas and energy prices;; [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-D-Philadelphia) designating November 15 as “Pennsylvania GIS Day” and the week of November 11-17 as “National Geography Awareness Week.”

Senate: All bills on the Calendar were tabled before the summer break.

Committees

House: the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee holds a hearing on mitigating the impact of electric rate caps expiring in Allentown.

House GOP Policy Committee Hearing On Lifting Electric Rate Caps

Electric rate cap mitigation and energy conservation were the subjects of a [House Republican Policy Committee](#) hearing hosted by state Rep. Tom Quigley (R-Montgomery) and held at Montgomery County Community College in Pottstown.

Testimony was offered by representatives from Philadelphia Electric Company, Public Utility Corporation and BioChem Technology Inc. from King of Prussia.

"My staff has for several years been very proactive in trying to prepare for and educate the public about the removal of rate caps, some of which have already taken place," said Robert Powelson, commissioner of the PUC. "Independently, consumers can take several steps before the expiration of the caps that may help them control the size of their electric bills. Energy conservation is a key."

Powelson expressed disappointment over the recently passed state budget, which failed to include a PUC request for \$5 million to be spent on a statewide consumer education plan aimed at preparing the public for the expiration of rate caps. He hopes the General Assembly will take up the proposal during the upcoming fall session.

Powelson also referenced the need to further explore clean coal and nuclear technology, pointing out in particular Pennsylvania's failure to make progress in bringing more nuclear plants on line. He said the commission has evaluated states like Maryland and Texas that have gone through similar lifting of caps and is trying to avoid the mistakes made in these instances.

There has been a call for an extension of the rate caps. Lisa Crutchfield, senior vice president of Regulatory and External Affairs for PECO, testified as to the magnitude of the mistake such a move would be, citing the example of California's extension of caps in 2000-01.

"The [California] extension contributed to rolling brownouts and some blackouts, the bankruptcy of one of the state's utilities and the near bankruptcy of the other, higher electricity prices for consumers, and the public's loss of confidence in the state's governor," commented Crutchfield. "Moreover, a rate cap is unconstitutional, and utilities would be forced into lengthy and costly legal battles that could mean additional costs for customers." She said the lifting of caps will result in competition among electric suppliers and mentioned the high number of utility companies that have flooded the market in Texas, resulting in lower prices for consumers.

Fifty percent of every Pennsylvania municipality's electrical energy is used to process wastewater, according to Allen Twiford, sales manager for BioChem Technology. He testified about his company's work in helping treatment plants maximize efficiency while cutting costs.

Copies of testimony should be posted on the [House Republican Policy Committee](#) website.

House Committee Hearing On Expiration of Electric Rate Caps August 5

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will hold a hearing on August 5 to help seek solutions for consumers after the electric rate caps come off in 2009-10.

The Committee Majority Chair is Rep. Camille George (D-Clearfield) and the Minority Chair is Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

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"The Committee is coming to the Lehigh Valley because PPL's 1.4 million customers are in the bull's eye for massive increases in electric rates beginning in less than 17 months," said Rep. George, "Electric generation charges already are projected to jump by 37 percent for PPL's residential ratepayers, and commercial customers could face substantially higher increases."

The hearing will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Lehigh County Building, 17 S. Seventh St., Allentown.

Tentatively scheduled to testify are: David DeCampli, president, PPL Electric Utilities; David F. Ciarlone, manager, Global Energy Services, Alcoa Inc.; James Engledow, plant manager, Alcoa Lancaster Works; Stephen G. Poje, senior vice president/development, Site Global; and Ed Ryan, member, AARP Pennsylvania executive council.

"I encourage anyone with the opportunity to attend the hearing," Rep. George said. "While some of the utility terminology is daunting, the issue will have enormous effect on Pennsylvanians' pocketbooks."

Rep. George said PPL customers should be aware that the PPL rate cap on electric-generation charges, which make up more than half of a customer's total bill, expires on December 31, 2009. One year later, caps expire for Allegheny Energy, PECO, Met-Ed and Penelec, and their customers face projected increases of 63, 20, 50 and 54 percent, respectively.

"Together, the five electric-distribution companies represent more than 80 percent of the state's electric customers," Rep. George said. "Few are going to go unscathed if deregulation is not rewired to protect rather than punish consumers."

"This summer, the state Public Utility Commission filed a federal complaint alleging that the power grid operator's flawed pricing model has produced unjust and unreasonable prices," Rep. George said. "State regulators, consumer advocates and even utilities without generation capacity have described the wholesale power market as broken, consumer unfriendly and fatally flawed."

Rep. George noted that even the internal market monitor for PJM Interconnections, the Valley Forge-based distributor of power across the eastern United States, complained of an excessive \$20 million payment to a generator.

"Utilities' generating companies are showing record profits almost across the board under a wholesale market scheme that is not fair, functional or transparent," said Rep. George, noting that Maryland is seeking \$1 billion in rebates for its residential customers. "How many red flags must go up before Pennsylvanians stand up and demand better rates and treatment."

Pennsylvania's consumer advocate estimated that residential customers of the five utilities would pay about \$1.55 billion more annually once the rate caps expire. Based on the PPL power auction through PJM in March, a PPL residential customer now paying \$62.57 a month in generation and stranded costs would pay \$105.22 monthly when PPL's rate cap expires.

Rep. George has sponsored [Special Session House Bill 54](#) which would extend electric-generation rate caps for at least two more years.

NewsClip: [PECO Rate Hikes Projected at 20 Percent](#)
[PJM Plays Key Role in Supporting Nation's Energy Goals](#)

Link: [Electric Rate Increases: Generators Offer Customer Options](#)

Other News

New Report Details the Status of Vital Species, Resources in Delaware Estuary

The [Partnership for the Delaware Estuary](#) released its “[State of the Estuary Report](#)” this week following two years of collaboration among environmental scientists in Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The purpose of this 36-page assessment is to provide readers with insight into the status and trends of select natural resources in the Delaware Estuary’s watershed, which is home to approximately 6.4 million people.

According to the report, the state of the Delaware Estuary is mixed. Some environmental conditions have seen dramatic improvements during recent decades, while others are becoming increasingly degraded.

“The Delaware Estuary is a place of contrasts, so it’s not surprising to see mixed results,” said Jennifer Adkins, the Partnership’s executive director. “On one hand, the estuary is a center of commerce that has sustained our region since the Industrial Revolution. Yet, on the other hand, we have this incredible wealth of natural resources, not the least of which is drinking water for millions of Americans. Managing it is a delicate balance we and many others are working hard to preserve and perfect.”

To prepare the report, the Partnership worked closely with the Delaware River Basin Commission, state and federal agencies, universities, and its 21-member Science and Technical Advisory Committee to share data and select 26 key “indicators.”

An indicator is a measure used to gauge environmental conditions, examples of which range from land use and wetlands to bald eagles and horseshoe crabs. Each indicator was carefully chosen based on the data available and its ability to help readers understand current conditions and future needs.

“Scientists and managers usually examine specific natural resources, but now we’re learning to look at the whole ecosystem. This helps us understand how its parts interact and why we see ups and downs,” said Dr. Danielle Kreeger, science director at the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary. “This report provided us with an excellent opportunity to do that. It showcases which resources are most in need of attention, and it suggests how we can strengthen future assessments by improving our monitoring capabilities and preparing for new challenges like climate change.”

The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary — a National Estuary Program — last issued a “State of the Estuary Report” in 2002. The information in these reports is used by the nonprofit to track the progress it is making toward the implementation of its long-term “[Delaware Estuary Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#),” created in 1996.

A copy of the 2008 [State of the Estuary Report](#)” is available online or call 800-445-4935.

NewsClip: [River report Finds Life and Loss](#)

CBF Calls For Enforceable, Accountable Bay Clean Up Plan At Hearing

This week Roy Hoagland, Chesapeake Bay Foundation Vice President for Environmental Protection and Restoration, appeared before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Water Resources and the Environment calling for an enforceable, accountable Bay cleanup plan.

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The hearing focused on the re-authorization of the Chesapeake Bay Program, the federal program created through the Clean Water Act.

Hoagland joined Congressmen John Sarbanes (D-MD) and Rob Wittman (R-VA), representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, GAO, and the EPA inspector general's office, and Bay scientists and advocates to present testimony on the current state of the Bay.

His comments focused on the larger question of whether the Clean Water Act has been effective in the federal Bay restoration effort.

Hoagland presented a strong and focused argument that Congress needed to strengthen the authority of the Clean Water Act when it comes to Chesapeake Bay restoration. He argued that Congress needs to clearly direct EPA to use all of its authority to ensure there is an enforceable and accountable clean up plan.

EPA is currently developing a pollution “budget” for the Bay called a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). Hoagland said that the TMDL the EPA is creating for the Bay needs to be a national model, one that ensures we will achieve the pollution reductions the TMDL will specify.

Much of the discussion at the hearing centered around Hoagland’s arguments. In the coming months, CBF will work with the subcommittee staff on legislative language.

[A copy of Hoagland’s testimony is available online.](#)

NFWF Awards \$680,000 in Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants for PA Work

The [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#) last week awarded 34 grants worth \$1.2 million under the [Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grant Program](#), 9 of which were for work in Pennsylvania totaling \$680,000.

Typical of the projects was a \$110,000 grant to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s Pennsylvania office in support of a project that aims to reduce pollution to Pennsylvania’s rivers and streams and the Chesapeake Bay by implementing the combination of two conservation practices: rotational grazing and forested buffers.

CBF estimates that this grant will remove over 227,925 pounds of nitrogen, 11,608 pounds of phosphorus, and 3,348 tons of sediment from local streams and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

Forested buffers are highly effective filters that keep pollutants from reaching streams,” said Matthew Ehrhart, Executive Director for CBF’s PA office. “When combined with forested riparian buffers, they offer even more water quality benefits.”

Rotational grazing and forested buffers are both excellent tools for reducing nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution in streams and the Chesapeake Bay. This grant project will do double duty to entice landowner participation in forested buffer restoration through USDA’s Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, and also pay for rotational grazing systems components.

Rotational grazing is a livestock management method that focuses on increased reliance on pastures versus cropland for meeting animal needs and production goals. It involves rotating animals from one pasture to another to maximize grass production and prevent overgrazing.

“Helping farmers with financial and technical assistance is the most cost effective means of reducing pollution,” Ehrhart said. “Well managed farmland is much better for our rivers, streams, and the Bay than sprawling development.”

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Other grants awarded that include work in Pennsylvania are:

- **Upper Potomac Farm Stewardship:** The Chesapeake Bay Foundation will work with local landowners in the Upper Potomac watershed to install 28 acres of riparian forest buffers on agricultural land and stabilize 9.5 miles of stream bank. This project will facilitate the enrollment of landowners in existing state and federal conservation programs. \$100,000.
- **Conservation Capacity Building:** Defenders of Wildlife will mentor two land trusts to increase capacity for land preservation of targeted lands in both the tidal coastal plain and non tidal headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This project will help land trusts identify parcels valuable for both water quality protection and wildlife conservation. Defenders of Wildlife will facilitate the collaboration of multiple stakeholders to assist regional land trusts and their local partners identify fundraising and outreach techniques to implement management practices on protected lands. \$90,000
- **Chesapeake Advanced Biofuels Summit:** The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay will convene an advanced biofuels summit to develop a sustainable biofuels strategy for the Chesapeake Bay watershed. \$25,000.
- **Fishing Creek Stream Restoration:** The Clinton County Conservation District will reduce sediment loads and improve aquatic habitat in three sections of Fishing Creek in Clinton County. \$70,000.
- **Green Lane Farms and Spangler's Mill Dam Removals:** The Cumberland Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited will remove two nonfunctional dams from Yellow Breeches Creek in Cumberland and York counties to improve migratory fish passage. This project will open 4.3 miles of stream to fish passage, stabilize 6,642 linear feet of stream bank surrounding the dam removal area and restore 3,321 linear feet of riparian buffer habitat. \$50,000.
- **Quittapahilla Creek Stormwater Wetland:** The Lebanon Valley Conservancy will design and construct a high priority stormwater Best Management Practice in the Quittapahilla Creek watershed to treat nutrient and sediment loads. The project will construct a stormwater wetland that will annually remove an estimated 240 tons of sediment, 2,500 pounds of nitrogen, and 140 pounds of phosphorous while providing valuable wildlife habitat. \$60,000.
- **Mahoning Creek Habitat Enhancement Project:** The Montour Area Recreation Commission will install stream bank stabilization to decrease erosion and sedimentation in Mahoning Creek. The project will install several in-stream fish habitat enhancement structures to improve the aquatic environment of Mahoning Creek. In all, this project will restore 1,600 linear feet of stream, plant 3,200 linear feet of riparian buffers and install educational signage. \$35,000
- **Upper Susquehanna Community-Led Watershed Management:** The Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District will support targeted Tributary Strategy implementation by using a GIS prioritization system to locate wetland construction projects that maximize nutrient pollutant reduction. This project will engage local communities in the restoration and creation of 70 acres of wetlands and 3,000 linear feet of riparian buffer habitat along Appalachian Creek. The project will also conduct a workshop to identify future wetland restoration opportunities and promote stewardship among landowners. \$100,000.

- **Centre County Stream Restoration Program:** The Wildlife For Everyone Endowment Foundation will obtain engineering services to complete design work for 11 restoration sites in Centre County. This project will help target and coordinate technical and financial resources to high priority projects that will result in the restoration of 2,400 feet of stream bank, 60 acres of riparian buffers, the installation of 20 fish habitat structures and the renovation of 280 acres of pastureland. \$150,000.
[A complete list of grant recipients is available online.](#)
Visit the [Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grant Program webpage](#) for more information.

Canoe Access Development Grant Applications Due September 5

The [Western Pennsylvania Conservancy](#) is now accepting applications for grants of up to \$5,000 from the [Canoe Access Development Fund](#) to help provide improved access to Class 2 and 3 waterways.

Applications are due September 5.

Non-profit conservation organizations must be the recipients of the grants and a proposed new access site must be located along a Class 2 or Class 3, stream or river featured in the [Canoeing Guide to Western Pennsylvania and Northern West Virginia](#).

Grants of up to \$4,000 per site are available for the construction and enhancement of access locations for items like: parking areas, creating stabilized access areas and paths to the waterway, purchase of conservation land easement and/or riverside access, paying for a portion of a larger land tract for access, upgrading an existing access location.

An additional \$1,000 will be provided for a post project 10 year maintenance plan. The organization applying to the Fund must be committed to maintaining the access site for 10 years after the project is completed.

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

Prior to submitting an application, an application is required to contact Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's Eli Long at 724-459-0953 ext. 106 or send email to: elong@paconserve.org.

Save the Dates: DEP to Hold Meetings, Hearings on Water Resources Plan

The Department of Environmental Protection and the Statewide and Regional Water Resources Committees this week posted a tentative schedule of public meetings/hearings on the draft Pennsylvania State Water Plan.

The meetings and hearings are set for: Ohio Region - September 8, Great Lakes Region - September 9, Delaware Region - September 11, Lower Susquehanna Region - September 15, Upper/Middle Susquehanna Region - September 17 and Potomac Region - September 18

The meetings and hearings are an opportunity for citizens to provide input on drafts of the updated State Water Plan.

For more information, visit the [PA State Water Plan – Act 220 webpage](#).

Agencies Test Aquatic Invasive Species Readiness – Video Blog

More than 30 representatives of local, state and federal agencies and community groups boarded boats and headed for Erie's Presque Isle Bay this week to measure their response capabilities should an aquatic, non-native species invade the Great Lakes.

More than 180 non-native aquatic species have been documented in the Great Lakes and the introduction rate of new species is quickening.

According to Lori Boughton, head of the Department of Environmental Protection's Office of the Great Lakes, some of the invasive species are harmless, while others like the zebra mussel, sea lamprey and round goby, have damaged the ecology and economy of the region.

"These organisms prey on or directly compete with our native species for the same limited resources, threatening Pennsylvania's biological balance," said Boughton. "While preventing new introductions is the single most important thing we can do to combat aquatic invasive species, it also is important to detect and respond quickly to new infestations. This week we are improving our preparedness by testing the abilities of multiple jurisdictions to communicate and respond in a coordinated fashion."

The on-the-water exercise is part of a three-day mock aquatic invasive species response exercise developed by the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration, sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and hosted by DEP.

A table top exercise preceded the on-the-water session to help familiarize participants with the roles and responsibilities of each agency or organization in a real-life response.

"The Great Lakes ecosystem is a priceless natural resource and this exercise is helping ensure that we are ready to protect it," said Gary Gulezian, director of the Great Lakes National Program Office. "Pennsylvania is demonstrating how all levels of government can work together to pool their resources and prevent new invaders from becoming established."

During on-the-water exercise in Presque Isle Bay, participants practiced coordinated trawling and electroshocking fish sampling techniques to better prepare themselves for a real-life situation where such methods could be used to confirm the presence of an invasive species.

Harmful aquatic invasive species are introduced and spread through a variety of means; one of the most prevalent pathways is the unintentional spread by boaters and anglers.

"Water recreationalists and sportsmen who visit an infested waterway may unknowingly pick up an uninvited aquatic hitchhiker and deliver it straight to the bay," said Boughton. "Recreational boaters and anglers can play an enormous role in preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species by cleaning, draining and drying their boats each time they leave a body of water."

For more information on invasive species in Pennsylvania, visit the [Governor's Invasive Species Council of PA website](#).

Video Blog: [Group Plans to Fight Non-Native Species](#)

61st Annual PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference Was “In Focus”

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The conservation district community and its partners met in State College from July 28-30 for the 61st annual Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. / State Conservation Commissions Joint Annual Conference themed “In Focus: A New Vision for Conservation Districts.”

At the PACD annual meeting several policy issues were discussed including gas exploration, leasing, and development. PACD delegates passed policy urging conservation districts to work with and encourage the Penn State Cooperative Extension and other organizations to educate landowners about gas exploration, leasing, and development, and to use conservation districts as a resource. PACD will also encourage DEP Bureau of Oil and Gas Management to work with conservation districts to ensure water resource protection.

A number of educational opportunities were presented during the convention including a leadership development session, a presentation on agricultural law, safety training for erosion and sedimentation technicians, and conservation planning for agricultural technical staff.

During the convention several awards were presented. (*See separate story*)

Larry Kehl, President of PACD stated, “It is a real honor to be the President of PACD. Conservation districts are an integral part of most communities whether they are located in rural, suburban, or urban communities. I hope to continue promoting the great work accomplished by districts across the Commonwealth.”

Susan Marquart, Executive Director stated, “Our convention gave participants the opportunity to further education themselves on conservation issues, share ideas and solutions, and create sound conservation policies.”

Brenda Shambaugh, Government Relations/Policy specialist concluded, “The policy items our delegates passed will be forwarded to our elected leaders in Harrisburg and Washington DC so they understand the thoughts and concerns of conservation districts in Pennsylvania and the entire northeast.”

Sponsors for the convention include Filtrexx International, PA DEP, State Conservation Commission, ACF Environmental/CPESC, Inc., Eco-Bound, Inc., M & T Bank, Octoraro Native Plant Nursery, Dominion, East Coast Erosion Blankets, Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads, Maintenance Equipment & Chemicals, Inc., and PLGIT.

For more information, visit the [PACD](#) and [State Conservation Commission](#) websites

Westmoreland Conservation District Announces Upcoming Workshops, Events

From a “top-to-bottom” tour of the Sewickley Creek Watershed, to a field day showing homeowners how to save energy, the [Westmoreland Conservation District's](#) upcoming slate of programs offers a variety of informative and fun ways to learn more about conservation.

All programs are open to the public and, while some are geared to specific audiences or an advanced level of technical expertise, anyone is welcome to attend. Most programs require registration and have a nominal fee.

A list of selected upcoming events is included below.

For more information on a specific program, or to register for all programs, contact Christie at the Westmoreland Conservation District at 724-837-5271 or send email to christie@wcdpa.com .

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- **September 26-- Conservation Bus Tour** – “Top to Bottom” in the Sewickley Creek Watershed. 8:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. Bus leaves from, and returns to, Westmoreland Conservation District, Greensburg.

On this tour, participants will get to know the Sewickley Creek Watershed by following a route that water takes as it flows across the land. The tour begins in the high, healthy forests on Chestnut Ridge, rambles down across farms and urban areas, and ultimately ends near Sewickley Creek’s confluence with the Youghiogheny River, Pennsylvania’s 2008 River of the Year.

Along the way, participants will see how various activities – farming, urban development, and natural resource extraction – affect the quality of this watershed, for better and worse.

Stops include: Saint Boniface Woods, Friendship Farms, Mammoth Park, New Stanton Borough, a private farm with a natural-gas well, and the innovative Lowber abandoned-mine-drainage cleanup site.

Space is limited and registration is required by September 17. \$25, includes lunch and transportation from and to the Westmoreland Conservation District.

Financial and other support for this project is provided by the PA Association of Conservation Districts through its education grant from the Department of Environmental Protection under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

- **September 27 - Forestry I Workshop.** 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Westmoreland Conservation District and Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park, Greensburg.

Learn common forestry terms and basic tree identification, how to measure the diameter and height of a tree, and how to use a forester’s prism. Part of the class will be spent in the wooded Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park.

Participants will leave with an understanding of forest industry terms, basic measurement methods, and timber-volume estimating. Led by forester Tony Quadro, this workshop is cosponsored by the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association.

Space is limited and registration is required by September 22. \$5; reduced rate of \$4 for members of the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association.

- **October 16 - Sustainable Energy Field Day – Homeowners’ How-To.** 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Workshops. 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Open House. Westmoreland Conservation District, Donohoe Center, and GreenForge buildings – all located adjacent to each other on Donohoe Road, Greensburg

Experts from various fields will be on hand to give homeowners tips and techniques for saving energy. Topics may include: conducting a home-energy audit...the practicality of using energy alternatives such as wind, hydro, and solar...how native plants and careful landscaping can save energy...what’s new in insulation, windows, and metering your electric use...and funding programs that could help with the cost of making energy-conservation changes.

Space for the workshops is limited and registration is required. by October 3. \$20, includes lunch.

The morning’s experts will be on-hand to talk one-on-one, a variety of vendors and exhibitors will be displaying their energy-saving products and services, and tours of the campus’s sustainable buildings will be on-going. Activities for children also are planned.

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The Open House is FREE and it is NOT necessary to register. Just come!

The Sustainable Energy Field Day is sponsored by the Westmoreland Conservation District, Penn State Cooperative Extension, US Department of Agriculture Rural Development, GreenForge, Allegheny Power, the Western Pennsylvania Sustainable Energy Fund, and Home Depot.

- **January 6-7 - Geographic Information Systems Workshop.** Time TBA. Time TBD. Westmoreland County Community College, Youngwood

This workshop will help participants identify which online mapping systems are most appropriate for their particular needs, as well as help both new and experienced users become more proficient with their use.

Space is limited and registration is required.

- **January 23 - Contractors' Workshop.** Time TBA. Westmoreland Conservation District, Greensburg.

This workshop will feature timely, practical information helpful to contractors. Exact topics are being determined. Participants will receive a copy of the updated Westmoreland Conservation District Best Management Practices manual.

Space is limited and registration is required January 16. A fee will be charged.

Friends of the Wissahickon Seek Volunteers To Clean Up Devil's Pool

The [Friends of the Wissahickon](#) have been leading a successful volunteer effort to clean up the area surrounding [Devil's Pool](#) this summer, which will continue through August and September.

The group, led by FOW interns Kate Reilley and Kristin Brown, has placed trash cans in the area, collected litter, painted metal railings along both wooden walkways on either side of the pool, and removed graffiti from boulders, a stone bridge, and trees.

“Our volunteers have made substantial progress in keeping the pool area clean,” says Kevin Groves, FOW Volunteer Coordinator.

From August through mid-September, workdays at Devil's Pool will be held every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Groves offers these tips for volunteers:

- Drink lots of water! Please bring your own reusable water bottle. This will help us to reduce the waste of disposable bottles and cups. Volunteers are welcome to bring their own snacks.
- Wearing work boots is best. Hiking boots are second best. Sneakers are acceptable. Sandals and flip flops are not allowed.
- Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Some of the heavier work we do is not appropriate for children.
- Sunglasses are a good idea on sunny days. Shorts and t-shirts are fine, but light weight long pants/sleeves are great to protect against ticks, and poison ivy, and still stay cool.

Directions: Meet at the trail head by the stone bridge across the creek from Valley Green Inn. Please do not park at the lot next to the Inn. Please park in the lot on the Wise Mill Road side (P-7 on the FOW Map), or the upper lot on the Valley Green Road Side (P-9 on the FOW Map). Volunteers are encouraged to bike or carpool to the work day.

To register, contact Kevin Groves by sending email to: groves@fow.org or call 215-247-0417.

For more information, visit the [Devil’s Pool Project webpage](#).

DEP Awards \$5 Million in Recycling Performance Grants

The Department of Environmental Protection announced \$5 million in [recycling performance grants](#) to reward more than 320 municipalities based on the amount of materials they collect and recycled in 2006.

“Record-high fuel and energy costs are challenging local governments, businesses and families all across our state,” said Gov. Rendell. “These grants will help local communities defray those higher costs while continuing to expand their recycling collections, and in some cases earn increased revenues from these valuable commodities.

“Recyclable materials are a great benefit to manufacturers, who save on their own energy costs because recyclable materials require less energy to process than virgin raw materials.”

The high costs of energy and fuel are straining budgets for many recycling programs, but some communities are finding opportunities to offset costs and increase revenues by expanding recycling collections.

With the price of petroleum near record highs, commodity markets for recyclable paper and plastics are expanding because prices for recovered materials are increasingly attractive compared to virgin materials. Communities that contract to sell the recyclable materials they collect benefit by increasing revenues and avoiding the costs to dispose of the materials.

Within the past 13 months, Allentown has taken advantage of improved market opportunities for recyclable materials by expanding its curbside and drop-off collections, implementing innovative revenue-sharing contracts, and boosting participation through convenient single-stream collections and limits on trash disposal.

When Allentown implemented its curb-side paper fiber recycling program, it added cardboard and paperboard to the list of items it accepts for drop-off and curb-side collections and increased revenues for the second-half of the year by 25 percent to \$169,859.

The city projects a 40 percent increase this year.

Most recently, Allentown announced that #1 through #7 plastic bottles, jugs, containers and buckets can now be recycled. Previously, only those coded #1 and #2 could be recycled. Compared to this time last year, Allentown has increased its commingled glass, aluminum, steel and plastics collections by 53 tons, a 7 percent increase in materials recycled, and received increased revenues of \$23,898, a 256 percent increase.

Pennsylvania is home to more than 3,200 recycling and reuse businesses and organizations that generate more than \$18 billion in gross annual sales and provide paychecks totaling \$2.9 billion to more than 81,000 employees. Additionally, these businesses add more than \$305 million in taxes to the state treasury.

Pennsylvanians divert 5 million tons of recyclables from municipal waste each year, which benefits the commonwealth by:

- Saving more than 95 trillion Btu of energy, or an amount equivalent to the output of three large coal-fired power plants;
- Saving consumers and industries more than \$250 million in disposal costs and providing businesses with \$550 million worth of materials; and

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

- Reducing carbon dioxide emissions by an equivalent of more than 2.5 million metric tons, which is like offsetting the emissions from 1.7 million cars and light trucks.

DEP has approved 323 of the 779 performance grant applications received for calendar year 2006 recycling. The remaining applications are being reviewed and additional grant awards may be announced in the coming months.

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

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

PUC Releases Summer Edition of the 'Keystone Connection' Report

The Public Utility Commission this week released the summer edition of the Keystone Connection report.

The quarterly report represents the PUC's efforts to provide beneficial information to the public about important developments in the electric, natural gas, transportation, telecommunications and water markets.

The publication's format contains coverage of all utilities under the PUC's jurisdiction, including news on consumer issues and general information on Commission happenings.

[A copy is available online.](#)

Want to Apply For New Energy Funding? Register For Email Updates Online

Households, small businesses, political subdivisions and companies that want to save money through energy conservation or that plan to develop alternative and renewable energy technologies can [now register for email updates](#) as information on Pennsylvania's new \$650 million Alternative Energy Investment Fund becomes available.

Since Gov. Rendell signed Special Session Act 1 of 2008 into law earlier this month, the Department of Environmental Protection has received a large number of calls and emails from constituents and businesses seeking more information on the programs, according to DEP's Deputy Secretary for Energy and Technology Deployment Dan Griffiths.

"The response has been phenomenal and shows that the public and businesses are ready to use and develop alternative forms of energy and that they want to take steps to conserve energy and save money," said Griffiths. "Pennsylvania's families and employers are facing higher prices at the pump every day and they're wondering how much it's going to cost to heat their home this winter since heating oil is twice as expensive as it was last year. On top of that, they're worrying about a double-digit increase in their electricity bills in the coming year.

"Consumers are seeing all of this and looking at how it'll affect their pocketbook or their bottom line and they're searching for alternatives. The investments we'll make with the new Alternative Energy Investment Fund will help consumers take advantage of alternative technologies that are increasingly more cost effective and help them take on projects that will make their homes more energy efficient, which will save them money."

DEP, working with the Department of Community and Economic Development and the Commonwealth Financing Authority, are developing the guidelines and applications for each program as called for in the law.

[A quick list of new programs is available online.](#) Other information is available on the [Energy Independence Strategy webpage.](#)

DOE, DEP Energy Use-Reduction Grants, Workshops Promote Energy Savings

Pennsylvania's [Energy Reduction Grant Program](#) provides a financial incentive to learn and apply the best operating practices that improve the efficiency of primary energy-using systems as well as helpful workshops.

The grant program requires participation in a U.S. Department of Energy Industrial Technology Program workshop co-sponsored by the Department of Environmental Protection.

The DOE workshops address compressed air, steam, motor, fan, pumping, and process heating systems. Organizations eligible to apply for a grant include industrial and commercial businesses, institutions, and municipal drinking water and wastewater treatment operations located within Pennsylvania. Plant managers, engineers, equipment operators, and maintenance staff often benefit most from workshop participation.

Annually, the DEP co-sponsors several "Best Practices" workshops at locations throughout the state with support from a variety of commonwealth organizations.

Up to 10 grants of \$1,000 each will be awarded to eligible applicants that participate in a workshop, apply best operating practices presented during the workshop, and report achieved energy savings to DEP within a four-month application window following each workshop.

Project applications judged "best in class" following review by DEP staff will receive a grant. Applications are evaluated on multiple criteria including: sustainable energy and economic benefits, technical merit, the application of workshop "Best Practices," and completeness.

August 15 is the application deadline for participants at the Steam System Assessment workshop to be held in April 16, 2009, in Ridgeway, Elk County.

Two additional workshops are currently being scheduled for this fall: September 23 at the Chester County Economic Development Council in Exton and another in October with details to be announced.

Visit the DEP's [Industrial Energy Resources webpage Events Calendar](#) for full details.

Application packets will be available following each workshop on DEP's [Energy Reduction Grant webpage](#). Questions regarding grant project eligibility and organizations interested in sponsoring a workshop may contact DEP Program Specialist Richard Illig at 717-772-5834, or send email to: rillig@state.pa.us.

For more information on Pollution Prevention/Energy Efficiency and Industrial Energy Resources, visit DEP's [Energy Resources webpage](#).

For more information on the [DOE's Industrial Technology Program webpage](#).

Industrial Energy Assessments Available to Show How To Save Energy, Money

Pennsylvania industries looking to control rising energy costs can benefit by registering for a no-cost targeted assessment offered by the U. S. Department of Energy's Industrial Technology Program, Save Energy Now initiative.

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

A Save Energy Now assessment targets industry's primary energy use in process heating, compressed air, steam, motor, pumping, or fan systems.

Assessments are performed by highly experienced DOE Qualified Energy Specialists in unison with key plant staff such as managers, equipment operators, engineers, maintenance staff, or others. The specialists work to increase system energy efficiency through the application of industrial best practices.

Participating manufacturers have reduced energy consumption in targeted systems by 8 percent annually, or roughly \$2 million dollars, on average.

An added benefit of the program is that plant staff are trained in the use of DOE's system analysis software tools. This aspect of the assessment process empowers companies to enhance energy savings through continued application of the software tool in similar systems or at branch operations.

Total energy consumption by a company requesting an assessment should equal or exceed approximately 300 billion Btu's, or more, annually. This includes all energy sources used plant wide. Although exceptions may be made for a manufacturer that demonstrates a particular need for an assessment, those below 300 billion Btu's are automatically referred for assessment by the DOE Industrial Assessment Center nearest their location.

[Follow this energy assessment link](#) to complete DOE's online application, review all details of the program, and join over 500 manufacturers already saving energy and money.

Businesses applying for an assessment are also required to apply DOE's Quick Plant Energy Profiler tool. This tool provides data helpful in completing DOE's assessment application and provides a picture of overall plant energy saving potential, areas using the most fuel, and company resources available to implement energy saving recommendations.

Companies already assessed under the [Save Energy Now initiative](#) may also register for a second assessment during 2008 without the need for cost-sharing. Suspension of the cost-sharing requirement equates to an added savings approaching \$10,000.

DEP Closes Small Business Advantage Grant Program Early

The Department of Environmental Protection announced this week it has closed the application period for the 2008-09 [Small Business Advantage Grant](#) early due to demand.

The program helps small businesses reduce energy consumption and promote pollution prevention technologies.

DEP said the program exhausted the available resources within 10 business days, which would shatter the previous year's record. Last year, the grant round was open for only 22 days and more than 170 grants were awarded to small businesses within Pennsylvania.

The Small Business Advantage Grant Program provides a 50 percent matching grant of up to \$7,500 for businesses with 100 or fewer full-time employees to purchase equipment or institute processes that reduce energy consumption and prevent pollution while helping to increase profitability. The program is open to small business owners whose business or facility is located in Pennsylvania.

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

The variety of projects illustrates how small businesses are attempting to cope with escalating energy costs and, according to DEP's Small Business Ombudsman Julien Gaudion, the growing interest in the grants speaks to the immediate needs of small businesses to improve profitability and their operational efficiency.

"The interest in the Small Business Advantage Grants is being driven by high and volatile energy prices that are pinching the bottom line of Pennsylvania's small businesses, and that poses a threat to our economy," said Gaudion. "These grants will help businesses conserve energy and operate more efficiently.

"Small businesses will also benefit from the newly passed Alternative Energy Investment Fund, which will provide \$192.5 million to help small businesses and residential power consumers purchase and install solar energy and energy conservation technologies."

For more information, visit the [Small Business Advantage Grant](#) webpage.

2008 Rachel Carson Legacy Conference Set for September 20

"[Green Chemistry: Solutions for a Healthy Economy](#)" is the theme of the 2008 Rachel Carson Legacy Conference on September 20 at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh sponsored by the [Rachel Carson Homestead Association](#) in partnership with a consortium of universities in the Pittsburgh area.

The conference will address several key topics: Environment and Health Connections- The Green Chemistry Solution; Innovations in Products and Processes; Design for Non-toxic Results; and Business Strategies: Risk, investment and insurance.

Pittsburgh enjoys a rare convergence of expertise in health, environmental and medical research; academic excellence in chemistry including green chemistry, and multiple industrial research and applications companies.

The Conference is an opportunity to focus the collective wisdom of all three disciplines –academic research, business, and health- on designing products, processes and activities that are benign to health and the environment. Innovations in green chemistry can be part of defining Pittsburgh as an icon of a prosperous city with a powerful green dimension to its economy.

Working Group Roundtables will allow conference participants to develop recommendations for further actions on the topic of implementing green chemistry principles.

The conference is the result of collaboration among several universities: Duquesne University; Carnegie Mellon University; Chatham University; The University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute Center for Environmental Oncology, the Mascaró Sustainability Initiative, and the Department of Geology and Planetary Science Environmental Studies Program; La Roche College; Robert Morris University; and Carlow University; The Pittsburgh Technology Council, and Sustainable Pittsburgh.

For more information, visit the "[Green Chemistry: Solutions for a Healthy Economy](#)" webpage.



DCNR Accepting Deer Management Assistance Program Apps Starting August 4

Deer hunters could find more hunting opportunities in state forest and parklands and a wealth of information designed to boost hunter success because of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' participation in the Game Commission's [Deer Management Assistance Program](#), or DMAP.

On August 4, DCNR will begin accepting DMAP applications by mail only. At 8 a.m. on August 18, the will begin accepting applications from walk-ins, and by mail, telephone, and its online application page.

The program, offering landowners the chance to request additional antlerless deer hunting permits be made available to hunters, enables DCNR and others to more effectively manage white-tailed deer and curtail damage to crops and forestland by requesting that the Game Commission issue additional deer hunting coupons.

"DCNR will offer additional deer hunting opportunities this year through its DMAP program," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "In addition to 2.5 million acres of state park and forest land open to public hunting, DCNR has enrolled 870,517 acres in its DMAP program. On these tracts, along with an additional 88,881 acres of state parkland, hunters can harvest additional antlerless whitetails with a valid DMAP tag."

DCNR's DMAP strategy takes into account the shortened antlerless season in Pennsylvania Game Commission Wildlife Management Units 2G, 2D and 4B, in the north central, western and south central sections of the state, respectively.

"We're concerned how the shortened antlerless season in some regions, where hunters can harvest bucks in these areas only during the first week of the traditional hunting season, will affect hunter participation and success in state forests," Secretary DiBerardinis said. "State forestlands enrolled in DMAP will provide hunters an additional week of antlerless hunting opportunities."

As a result, DCNR adjusted DMAP coupon applications in state forest districts where shortened antlerless seasons apply: For example, Sproul State Forest District will be seeking 1,650 DMAP coupons for 82,700 acres - up from 1,000 DMAP coupons for 50,400 acres in 2007-2008. Elk State Forest District is seeking 1,300 coupons for 131,500 acres - from 600 for 30,000 acres.

"Our DMAP program helps promote forest habitat health while providing hunters additional opportunities to hunt and harvest antlerless deer," Secretary DiBerardinis said. "Harvesting additional antlerless deer in these DMAP areas helps balance the deer population with available habitat, promotes healthy forest habitat, healthy deer and provides quality hunting experiences.

"Hunters are invaluable allies in forest management," Secretary DiBerardinis said, noting the Bureau of Forestry has ramped up its DMAP information to help boost hunter success. Clearly defined maps of DMAP areas that include habitat information, past hunter success reports, application procedures, comments from district foresters and other information is available at [DCNR's DMAP webpage](#)."

Overall, 14,550 DMAP coupons are being sought for 870,517 acres of state forest and parkland. In addition, there will be five more state parks participating this year, with a total of 1,775 coupons being sought for park hunters across the state.

In 2007, DCNR requested the Game Commission to issue 17,541 coupons to hunters to pursue deer on 67 state forest sites totaling 861,415 acres, and 1,595 coupons in

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

16 state park sites totaling 80,312 acres. In 2006, DCNR sought 17,642 coupons for hunting in 63 state forest DMAP tracts totaling 802,346 acres.

Enrolled state park areas this year include: Bald Eagle, Beltzville, Blue Knob, Canoe Creek, Codorus, Cook Forest, Hickory Run, Keystone, Kings Gap, Moraine, Nescopeck, Ohiopyle, Oil Creek, Pinchot, Presque Isle, Prince Gallitzin, Raccoon Creek, Ricketts Glen, Ryerson Station, Shawnee and Tobyhanna.

Buchanan and Cornplanter state forest districts again will not be enrolled in the DMAP program. Managers of these districts point to reduced browsing pressure, improved forest regeneration and other factors, and believe additional doe harvests through the DMAP program are not needed.

"We're seeing some positive signs in habitat conditions across the state," said Bureau of Forestry Director Daniel Devlin. "Some districts, such as Tiadaghton, Moshannon and Tioga, saw reductions in DMAP tags or acreage because of what we're seeing on the ground in terms of forest habitat and the reduced need for deer enclosure fences. We're encouraged by this progress.

"There are many areas, however, that still show limited signs of recovery given existing deer impacts. Sproul and Elk state forests are just two examples of where DCNR is taking a more aggressive approach with DMAP this year," Devlin said.

DCNR first implemented DMAP in 2003 on a trial basis within its state forest system only, enrolling 38 tracts totaling 446,821 acres in 11 of its 20 state forest districts.

To obtain applications, maps and others details for state forest or parkland, hunters can visit [DCNR's DMAP webpage](#). For more DMAP details contact Roy D. Brubaker, Forest Resource Planning, Bureau of Forestry, 717-783-0382 or send email to: robrubaker@state.pa.us.

Game Commission Thwarts Raystown Lake Feral Swine



Officials with the Game Commission and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Raystown Lake recently trapped and euthanized four [feral swine](#) that had been reported roaming the eastern side of the Raystown Lake property in late June by fishermen and boaters.

Jeff Krause, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers biologist, confirmed the reports and noted serious habitat damage along a section of the 30-mile long lake in Huntingdon County.

He contacted the Game Commission, which, in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, developed a trapping team comprised of Krause; Justin Vreeland, Game Commission Southcentral Region Wildlife Management Supervisor; Don Garner, Game Commission Southcentral Region Information and Education Supervisor; Dr. Matt Lovallo, Game Commission Game Mammals Section supervisor; Dr. Walter Cottrell, Game Commission Wildlife Veterinarian; and Rob Criswell, Game Commission Southcentral Director.

The effort also was supported by Juniata College Raystown Field Station personnel, which provided boat access and maintained bait stations prior to trapping.

"Cross-referencing numerous trail camera photos, it was determined that all feral pigs were removed from the Corps of Engineers facility," Garner said. "All carcasses were

shipped to Penn State University for disease analysis. Found among stomach content was immature hickory nuts, salamanders and vegetation."

Criswell praised the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Raystown Lake staff and facility for its exemplary stewardship of the resources it oversees.

"The Raystown Lake staff is to be commended for, once again, demonstrating its commitment to responsible wildlife management and habitat protection on lands under its supervision," Criswell said. "The resources and assistance they provided ensured a quick and successful conclusion to this situation."

In Pennsylvania, feral swine have been a growing concern as they have been devastating wildlife habitat in Penn's Woods. Whether escaped or illegally released, feral swine have established breeding populations in several areas of Pennsylvania.

As a result of a December 27, 2007, Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision, the Game Commission was vested with the responsibility of attempting to control feral swine, such as the imported European wild hog, also referred to a Russian boar.

"Feral swine are omnivorous and will eat anything from grain to carrion," Garner said. "Due to their habit of rooting for nutrients, feral swine can cause major, sometimes irreparable, damage and remove crucial wildlife cover in a manner matched only by motorized equipment.

"One of the mainstays for many wildlife species is acorns. Deer, squirrels, ducks, turkeys, grouse, birds, bears and many other species depend on acorns for a significant part of their diet. Feral swine also love acorns, and are very efficient at finding them. In Texas, feral swine predation on livestock is a serious problem and, in some counties, feral swine kill and consume lambs and kid goats."

According to Dr. Cottrell, feral swine also will kill ground-nesting birds, such as ruffed grouse and wild turkeys, and destroy their nesting sites. Feral swine also pose a significant threat to sensitive wetland habitats like vernal pools and small streams and creeks along with the rare, threatened, and endangered plant species associated with them.

"Additionally, domestic pork producers have a legitimate concern that far-ranging wild hogs serve as disease vectors," Dr. Cottrell said. "Feral hogs carry brucellosis, which has been documented to have been transmitted from feral hogs to domestic stock and humans, pseudorabies, which causes domestic pigs to abort, and causes death in domestic and wild animals that contract it, and a host of other diseases. Cases are documented in Arkansas of feral hogs transmitting diseases such as brucellosis and trichinosis to humans, either directly or indirectly."

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

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

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

[PA Farm Bureau Applauds Game Commission Action on Feral Swine](#)

The Great Pennsylvania Outdoor Challenge

What's on your personal outdoor challenge list? Is there a hike in Pennsylvania calling your name? Or is the sound of elk bugling beckoning you each September?

If you have postponed some of your



favorite outdoor activities, for any reason, wait no longer. [The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation](#) has the incentive you need.

[The Great Pennsylvania Outdoor Challenge](#) offers a series of personal challenges that supporters of parks and forests set to help raise funds for state parks and forests, as well as build awareness of exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities available in Pennsylvania .

“I wanted to develop an event that anyone could participate in, regardless of age or outdoor interests. It’s so easy to join in, as a team or individually, and our parks and forests offer almost anything you can imagine,” said Marci Mowery, President of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation. “We’ve set the date for the challenge between September 12-30th, in honor of [Dr. Maurice K. Goddard](#), the father of Pennsylvania’s state park system. And to make it simple, you pick the location and activity most convenient for you.”

What does a challenge entail? You decide. Bike rides, hikes, cleanups, trail repair, nature programs, count a species, canoe or kayak trips....anything goes. Currently, registered challenges include:

Biking on the Great Allegheny Passage; Hiking from Caledonia State Park to King’s Gap; Finishing an unfinished section of the Loyalhanna Trail; and motorcycle camping over the course of a weekend.

How do you participate? Set a challenge for your self, register your challenge [online at First Giving PPF](#). Choose to participate by registering your challenge OR take it up a notch and choose to raise funds for the Foundation, a park or forest of your choice, or your favorite friends group.

Spending a few hours, a day, a weekend or longer recreating in one of our state parks and forests, doing something you love to do, and supporting a good cause...what could be more fun, at a great time of year, in beautiful Pennsylvania ?

Registered GPOC challengers will receive a t-shirt and be eligible for prize drawings. Get your gear, your kids, or your friends together and register [online at First Giving PPF](#) or send email to Marci Mowery at mmowery-ppff@pa.net to receive your free information kit or become a sponsor.

Spotlight

Recycling Mandates in PA Make Twenty Year Mark, Future Is Cloudy

Monday, July 28, 2008, marked the twentieth anniversary of the signing of Act 101- Pennsylvania’s Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act. This landmark legislation, signed by Gov. Robert Casey, launched the \$18.4 billion recycling industry that the Commonwealth enjoys today.



Act 101’s original goals were to “reduce Pennsylvania’s municipal waste generation; recycle at least 25 percent of waste generated; procure and use recycled and recyclable materials in state governmental agencies; and educate the public as to the benefits of recycling and waste reduction,” according to The Department of Environmental Protection, who are responsible for administering and enforcing the act.

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

Pennsylvania's state legislature noted the purpose of Act 101 was demonstrated in the benefits recycling would provide the state. Specifically, recycling and waste reduction include reduced pollution risks; conservation of natural resources, energy and landfill space; and reduced disposal costs.

Act 101 mandated recycling in Pennsylvania's larger municipalities, required counties to develop municipal waste management plans, and established grant programs for municipalities and counties to assist in meeting these new regulations.

Specifically, curbside recycling was required in all of the Commonwealth's municipalities with populations exceeding 10,000 residents. For communities with more than 300 persons per square mile but between 5,000 and 10,000 residents, they were also required to establish curbside recycling programs. Communities that were not mandated were still eligible for grant funding to establish recycling programs, including recycling drop-off centers at all disposal facilities. Mandated municipalities are required to collect at least 3 of the following materials: clear glass; colored glass; plastics; aluminum; steel and bimetallic cans; high grade office paper; corrugated paper and newsprint.

The regulations did not stop at residential recycling. Commercial, municipal and institutional establishments within a mandated municipality are required by Act 101 to recycle aluminum, high-grade office paper and corrugated paper, in addition to other materials chosen by the municipality. Mandated municipalities are also required to separate leaf waste from other municipal wastes.

Twenty years later, the state has successfully diverted close to the 25 percent goal originally stated in 1988. In addition, the state's economy has been boosted by the Recycling industry:

- Recycling and Reuse Establishments - 3,247;
- Recycling and Reuse Employment - 81,322 jobs; and
- Annual Sales Receipts - \$18.4 billion (DEP statistics)

Counties, townships, and municipalities have well established recycling programs in most areas of the Commonwealth. The DEP Grant program has been instrumental in developing and maintaining recycling programs by offering education to residents.

Carl Hursh, DEP Chief Recycling & Markets, recently commented on the state of recycling at the 20 year mark in The Pennsylvania Recycler Magazine, "Today's otherwise wealth of recycling opportunities did not manifest overnight but resulted from the dedication of statewide organizations, a Legislature that approved Act 101 with only one dissenting vote, the support of Governors and Lt. Governors, the counties charged with planning for recycling, the municipalities charged with providing recycling programs, the private and public recycling industry who responded to the supply side drive, and most of all, a public that has, for the most part, embraced participation in recycling."

However, as recycling professionals celebrate the anniversary of Act 101, there are concerns about the future of the recycling program.

John Frederick, Executive Director of the [Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania](#) reported to PROP members, "In an effort to shore up revenue shortfalls, the Governor proposed and the General Assembly adopted, a budget that authorized removing \$15 million from the Recycling Fund and placing it in the General Fund. The latest \$15 million withdrawal from the Recycling Fund brings the cumulative diversion of money from the fund to nearly \$150 million. While we are still uncertain of the specific impact this will have on the grant programs, it is certain that the Department of Environmental Protection will have much less money available for Section 902 grants and other technical assistance,

outreach and education funding. A lower fund balance will also reduce interest income, translating into a fund loss in excess of \$15 million.”

Frederick explains the impact of this fund diversion on recycling programs.

“Meanwhile, demand for the Section 902 Recycling Grants continues to far outpace available funding. Since the first substantial diversion from the fund was made in 1999, requests have consistently exceeded available funding, on several occasions by more than \$20 million. This is complicated by two other issues: the sun setting of the Recycling Fee on January 1, 2012 and the loss of fees collected by counties. The possible loss of the Recycling Fee (levied on trash disposed of in all Pennsylvania facilities) means that there is no assurance that future grant funding will be provided.”

These funding issues were the subject of great importance at the [18th Annual PROP Conference](#), which convened in Gettysburg July 29 at the Wyndham Gettysburg. This year, PROP anticipates well over 200 attendees, exhibitors and other notable speakers and visitors to be in attendance during the four day event. Media are encouraged to contact Jill Reigh at the PROP office for admittance to the event.

The [Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania](#), headquartered in Bellwood, is the state’s official non-profit recycling association of recycling professionals dedicated to promoting and enhancing the interests of recycling, recycling programs, composting, and composting programs in Pennsylvania through education, information exchange, technical support, applied research and coordination of recycling industry initiatives.

(Provided by the [Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania](#).)

Feature

Eagles, Eagles Everywhere! Bald Eagles Thriving Throughout Pennsylvania

The [bald eagle](#) continues to supplant its recent - and remarkable - nesting successes with new records, according to the Game Commission. And from all indications, this raptor isn't done making headlines.

"The bald eagle's ascension from its perilous past is an inspiration to all who care about environmental reform and wild Pennsylvania," explained Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe. "These birds are living proof that responsible natural resource management and conservation make Pennsylvania a better place to live and ensure wildlife will be around for future generations to enjoy.

"It's fitting that news about the continuing triumphs of bald eagles have graced our headlines over the Fourth of July for the past several years. As our nation's symbol, their presence is essential in America's outdoors. They immediately add a touch of class and true wilderness to any area they inhabit, whether it's on the outskirts of Philadelphia or a remote stretch of the Lake Erie shoreline."

This spring, bald eagles are known to be nesting in at least 47 of the state's 67 counties. Their tally of nests is expected to exceed 140 nests. In June 2007, biologists



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estimated Pennsylvania had 120 known nests in 42 counties. The final count of those nests turned out to be 132, and they produced more than 150 eaglets.

As recently as 1983, there were only three eagle nests remaining in Pennsylvania. That year, the Game Commission began a seven-year bald eagle reintroduction program in which the agency sent employees to Saskatchewan to obtain eaglets from wilderness nests.

The Richard King Mellon Foundation of Pittsburgh and the federal Endangered Species Fund provided financial assistance for this effort. In all, 88 Canadian bald eagles were released from sites located at Dauphin County's Haldeman Island and Pike County's Shohola Falls.

"What's so exciting about the bald eagle's return is that each year they're nesting in more counties, strengthening their population in Pennsylvania and giving more residents the chance to enjoy these magnificent birds," Roe said. "Their presence is stronger than ever and it doesn't appear that they're close to being done claiming new nesting territories in the Commonwealth. Who knows, maybe your county will be the next to host eagles."

Bald eagles have symbolized America's greatness for centuries and now they've become America's latest success story in wildlife management and environmental reform. But their comeback in Pennsylvania took time, because their population had been decimated.

Partnering with other states and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and countless other state wildlife agencies, the Game Commission helped to bring bald eagles back from the brink of extinction. The effort dovetailed with important gains made in improving water quality and the banning of pesticides such as DDT, which led a cleaner environment and increases in the quality and quantity of freshwater fish, a staple in the eagle's diet.

Pennsylvania's eagle resurgence also was likely stimulated by young eagles dispersing from the Chesapeake Bay, which now has hundreds of nesting pairs, and neighboring states that reintroduced eagles, too.

The Game Commission currently classifies the bald eagle as a threatened species in Pennsylvania. They are no longer protected by the federal Endangered Species Act - delisted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2007 - because delisting goals have been achieved.

However, bald eagles continue to receive federal protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which safeguard the birds from their nests disturbances and destruction.

Today, bald eagles are nesting in every state but Hawaii, which they never inhabited. The lower 48 states have a nesting population that is approaching 10,000 pairs, which is up considerably from the little more than 400 pairs America had in 1963.

"What's happening in Pennsylvania is also happening in many other states," noted Doug Gross, Game Commission ornithologist. "Bald eagles are thriving in Ohio and New York, and, of course, in Maryland, where more than 400 pairs have been documented. Some states with extensive big-water resources, such as Florida, Minnesota and Wisconsin, have more than a 1,000 pairs each.

"Pennsylvania is no slouch when it comes to big water and that's why we believe bald eagles will continue to build more nests near large impoundments and rivers where no eagles are present currently or there's room for another pair. New nests in Pennsylvania also are popping up in places that have surprised us, like in suburban settings close to buildings or near high-use recreational areas.

"It seems bald eagles have become more tolerant of people when selecting nest locations, but that doesn't mean they're comfortable with people approaching their nests. It remains critically important for people to stay a considerable distance away, preferably at least 1,000 feet. It's also against the law to disturb nesting eagles. Get a good pair of binoculars or a spotting scope to watch the nest or observe them in flight. Just please stay back and give them some room. Avoid making loud noises or approaching the nest directly or from above."

Since 1983, Pennsylvania's eagle nests have produced more than 1,100 eaglets, and the population has increased by about 15 percent annually. The heaviest production, of course, has occurred in recent years. Eagle nesting success has been 70 percent or greater for some time.

Poor weather conditions have the greatest impact on nesting success, followed by nest intrusions and predators, but as more eagles nest in-state and competition for prime nesting sites increases, eagle nesting success eventually may level off or drop.

"There's still plenty of new or sparsely-used territory for nesting pairs in the Commonwealth," noted Gross. "Some of the best remaining includes the Susquehanna's north and west branches, the Juniata River and the Lake Erie shoreline. There also are a number of large lakes and impoundments scattered across the state with more than adequate fisheries and no eagles."

The state's largest concentrations of eagle nests remain along the lower Susquehanna River, the upper Delaware River basin and the wetland-dominated Pymatuning region in northwestern Pennsylvania. The area still best known for nesting bald eagles remains the state's southwestern counties.

"I am surprised more eagles haven't claimed the various impoundments and free-flowing rivers of our southwestern counties," Gross said. "Maybe we're missing nests. Maybe it's because these counties historically have not attracted eagles. But the resources nesting eagles need are there. This irregularity may be related to the lack of a strong source population for eagles to disperse from. Young eagles dispersing from the state's established nesting centers, or the Chesapeake Bay, would be hard pressed to end up in southwestern counties following flowing water or riding wind currents."

Clearfield, Cumberland, Delaware, Juniata and Perry counties have recorded their first bald eagle nests this year. New bald eagle nests also were found in Armstrong, Bucks, Bradford, Butler, Erie, Forest, Lycoming, Northumberland, Mercer, Pike, Tioga, Warren, Wayne and Wyoming counties.

The Game Commission is always interested in reports from the public about new nests and news about bald eagle nests.

"The increased use of rivers and lakes at this time of year by the boating public has yielded new nests to our inventory in recent years," Gross noted. "If you encounter a nest, give the birds some elbow room, take some notes on the location and the eagles' behavior, and drop us an email about the specifics. Remember, we cannot protect a nest unless we know about it."

Emails can be sent to biologists via: pgccomments@state.pa.us. Use the words "Eagle Nest Information" in the subject field.

The return of the bald eagle in both Pennsylvania and the contiguous United States is directly related to reintroductions and nest site protection. But, the bird's resurgence is linked directly to the banning of DDT and other organochlorine pesticides. Eagles, as well as ospreys, peregrine falcons and a multitude of songbirds, were rendered reproductively

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

incapable by DDT and the like, because the birds were bio-accumulating toxins from the pesticides through consuming contaminated prey. DDT - banned nationally in 1972 - rendered the shells of birds' eggs so brittle, they broke when sat upon.

Rachel Carson wrote in *Silent Spring*, "The history of life on earth has been a history of interaction between living things and their surroundings." She referred to the interdependencies - that often aren't easy to identify or interpret - of organisms on each other and the environment.

When America was sprayed and dusted repeatedly and for decades with DDT, the environment was slowly loaded with toxins that eventually devastated bald eagles and many other creatures that had thrived for centuries. Without emergency and sustained special assistance from wildlife conservation agencies, bald eagles would have perished.

Doug Gross, Pennsylvania Game Commission ornithologist, said the stories and reports he receives about eagle's nests never ceases to amaze him. Yet, his most memorable experience was when he and his wife participated in a large group canoe trip a few years ago.

"I had suspected there could be an undiscovered eagle nest on a particular stretch of a local river based on reports of eagles being seen in the area, as well as my own observations," Gross said. "As we traveled down the river from one town to another, I told the tour guides that I had two islands and some isolated riverbanks in mind for the search, and would appreciate any hints or tips they could offer without alerting the 80 other canoes along for the trip.

"One of the tour leaders spotted something big in a tree on a large island. We quietly followed, and as I turned our canoe toward the target, I saw a stick nest the size of a Volkswagen in a large sycamore tree. I whispered, 'That's an eagle nest, let's get out of here.' We slipped off with the memory of that location. A friend returned later and took a picture of a young eaglet out of the nest nearby and the mystery of a missing nest was found with none of the other 80 boats knowing what was found on the trip."

Gross also noted that many other Game Commission employees share his enthusiasm for bald eagles, including Brenda Peebles, who coordinates bald eagle nest monitoring in the agency's Northwest Region. However, both Gross and Peebles rely on volunteers and Game Commission field personnel for the leads they need to investigate new eagle nests.

"A Game Commission Wildlife Conservation Officer in western Pennsylvania was so excited about the eagles fledging their young from a nest in his district that he called me at home after hours," Gross said. "He had to tell somebody that the eagles were successful and, since the Region Office was closed that night, he decided to call me."

In late June, Tioga County WCO Robert F. Minnich reported the number of bald eagle nests in his district has grown since he arrived in the district in 1999.

"I started with one nest and now am monitoring three nests in the area," WCO Minnich said. "This year the third nest was found and is being monitored. Two nests have been successful and the third was abandoned when a March ice storm brought branches down on the nest and incubating eagle. The eagles have remained in the area, but not incubating. The other two nests both have had two young hatch."

In late June, Juniata County WCO Daniel Clark confirmed the location of one pair of nesting bald eagles within the county and is watching a possible second site.

"This has been made possible through assistance and involvement of local bird watchers within the county," WCO Clark said. "I've been seeing mature bald eagles flying

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

the Juniata River between Mifflintown and the Lewistown narrows. No nesting sites for these birds have been located."

In June, Philadelphia/Delaware County WCO Jerry Czech has been monitoring two bald eagle nests with the help of a Deputy WCO and some volunteer birders.

"The Philadelphia Eagles start football training camp soon, and so too are the eaglets in these nests," WCO Czech said. "They are stretching their wings and jumping up on the edge of the nest, training for their first flights. Looks like the three eaglets will be ready to fledge and look for their own nesting sites soon."

Cameron County WCO Wayne Hunt, in May, sighted a pair of mature bald eagles in a Sycamore tree along the Driftwood Branch of the Sinnemahoning Creek. "The presence of these national birds could very well mean another nesting pair in the county," he said.

In May, Westmoreland County WCO Seth Mesoras reported that bald eagles previously seen nesting near Beaver Run Reservoir appear to have abandoned their nest. "I have observed both nests several times and have not noticed any eagle activity," he said. "Residents of northern Westmoreland County continue to report sightings, which mean that eagles still are in the area somewhere."

In May, Chester County WCO Keith Mullin reports that the bald eagle nest in his district partially collapsed last year after several severe thunderstorms, and it was not known if the birds would return to the nest or build a new nest at another location. "I'm happy to report that not only have the adult eagles returned, but they have one eaglet," he said. "Also, I can report a hatch at another nest, but cannot confirm the number of chicks there, although I believe there are two."

In May, Potter/Tioga Counties LMGS Denise H. Mitcheltree observed two mature bald eagles as they perched in trees near the Long Toe Road in Potter County. "Even from a distance, the size of these birds was quite impressive as the sun glinted off of their white feathered heads," she said.

Elk County WCO Dick Bodenhorn reports that once again this year there are at least two active eagle nests, with young eaglets, along the Clarion River in Elk County. "It is suspected there are other active nests that haven't been found yet," he said. "Anyone finding an eagle's nest is encouraged to call and report the location."

In early May, Bucks County WCO John Papson reports that the eagles have again successfully hatched two eaglets.

Unfortunately, not every sighting report is a positive one. In some cases, Gross said that the Game Commission receives reports of injured or dead bald eagles.

In May, Mercer County WCO Donald G. Chaybin received a report from kayakers who found a mature bald eagle carcass floating in Lake Wilhelm. "It was caught up in some limbs and appeared to have been there awhile," he said. "They freed it from the snag, but were unable to recover the rank carcass and upon returning home contacted the Northwest Region Office. The following morning, I spent several hours canoeing that area of the lake on SGL 270, but was unsuccessful in locating the eagle. Unfortunately, we will never know the cause of death of this bird. There was an active eagle's nest within a half mile of the area where they reported discovering the dead eagle."

In June, Snyder County WCO Harold J. Malehorn said that a severely injured, immature bald eagle was found and it had to be euthanized. "A local resident found the injured eagle along the side of Spruce Hollow Road in Franklin Township," he said. "The leg was broken and had nearly fallen off. After consulting with Dr. Walter Cottrell, Game

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

Commission wildlife veterinarian, it was decided that the most humane course of action was to euthanize it. A necropsy was conducted, but the cause of the injury was inconclusive."

Nick Antolik, of Girard, Erie County, discovered a dead eagle along the banks of the creek, and contacted the Game Commission.

"I crossed the creek to see if I could determine what caused this bird's demise," Antolik said. "I decided to bring him back across the creek and secure him high up a beech tree, so he would not be further disturbed or removed by scavengers. As I did this, immature eagles watched the whole time.

"After speaking with the Game Commission, I was asked to bring the bird out, which I willingly did, and delivered it to Edinboro Outdoors, where it was picked up and sent down state for a necropsy."

In Mercer County, as Deputy WCO John McCurdy visited the Conneaut Lake Fire Hall, he looked out the large windows overlooking Conneaut Lake and saw a bald eagle dive toward the water and it grabbed a large fish. After catching the fish, the eagle turned and headed south toward power lines. The eagle's wing's spanned between two electrical lines and it was electrocuted and immediately spiraled into the marsh right next to Route 322. "As soon as I saw this, I went down and retrieved the eagle and brought it back to the PA Game Commission Northwest Region Office," he said.

In each of these cases, eagles carcasses that were recovered were shipped by the Game Commission to the National Eagle Repository at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services' Rocky Mountain Arsenal northeast of Denver, Colorado.

"It is illegal for any individual to possess a bald or golden eagle, including its parts, such as feathers or talons," said Rich Palmer, director of the Game Commission's Bureau of Wildlife Protection. "But the Repository provides a central location for distributing bald and golden eagles that are found dead, and their parts, to qualified Native Americans for use in religious Native American ceremonies.

"The distribution of bald and golden eagles, and their parts to Native Americans is authorized by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act."

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

NewsClip: [Bald Eagle Population Rising in PA](#)

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—

- **August 4**— [Start Submitting REAP Farm Conservation Tax Credit Applications](#)
- **August 29**—[DEP Local Government Greenhouse Gas Reduction Grants](#)
- **August 29**—**CLOSED.** [DEP Small Business Advantage Grant Program](#)
- **August 29**—[EPA Water Efficiency Leaders Awards](#)
- **August 29**—[PPL Territory Small Business Lighting Energy Efficiency Rebate](#)
- **August 31**—[PA CleanWays Community Cleaning Award](#)
- **September 5**—**NEW.** [WPC Canoe Access Development Grant](#)
- **September 9**— [EPA Water Quality Trading Funding Proposals](#)

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

- **September 12**—[Green Building Alliance Product Innovation Grants](#)
- **September 15**—[Vote for Rachel Carson Sense of Wonder Contest Winner](#)
- **September 20**—[Fish & Boat Commission Boating Facilities Grants](#)
- **September 21**—[EPA Clean Diesel Emerging Technology Grant](#)
- **September 24**—[Coca-Cola, NRC Recycling Bin Grants](#)
- **October 1**—[Eastern Brook Trout Habitat Grants](#)
- **October 3**—[NOAA Chesapeake Bay Watershed Education 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

[A Thousand Hours of Service](#)

[Little-Noticed Law Urges Officials to Pay Attention to Climate Changes](#)

[Editorial: New Law Requires State to Track Climate Change](#)

[Editorial: U.S. Steel's Clairton Plan Is A Big Step Forward](#)

[Coal Price Soars, Electric Rates Close Behind](#)

[Op-Ed: Preventing Blackouts, Glen Thomas](#)

[Power Plant: Camelina Finding New Purpose As Biofuel Source](#)

[Editorial: Go Beyond Corn for Alternative Fuel](#)

[Schuylkill Waste Coal Plant On Hold Because of Economy](#)

[Schools Putting Energy Savings Into Syllabus](#)

[Lafayette Goes Greener By Growing Corn](#)

[Hospitals Increase Efforts To Be Energy Efficient](#)

[Manure Turns To Electricity And Heat for Reinford Family](#)

[Energy Saving Sleuth Unplugs Power Thieves in Berks County](#)

[Plan Would Encourage Green Building Standards](#)

[Energy Prices Set to Skyrocket Ahead of Heating Season](#)

[Natural Gas Prices Rising 33%](#)

[PECO Rate Hikes Projected at 20 Percent](#)

[PJM Plays Key Role in Supporting Nation's Energy Goals](#)

[Editorial: State Should Free Heating Aid Funds](#)

[How Are Energy Costs Affecting Food Prices?](#)

[Not Enough Clean Energy To Go Around](#)

[Op-Ed: Speculators, Falling Dollar Hose Us At Pump](#)

[Fuel Costs Drain Fire Company Budgets](#)

[Paving Projects Feel Price Pinch](#)

[Energy Costs Putting Squeeze on School Budgets](#)

[Editorial: Puttering Ethanol](#)

[Federal Government Overstepping On Siting of Power Lines Casey Says](#)

[Death Puts Focus on State Park Lifeguard Policy](#)

[Teen's Drowning Revives Debate Over State Park Lifeguards](#)

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

[Editorial: Doesn't Seem Worth the Risk to Swimmers at State Parks](#)
[Unexpected Growth of Business Along the Great Allegheny Passage Trail](#)
[Tales From the Appalachian Trail](#)
[PA Wilds Initiative Will Test If Nature Can Nurture Business](#)
[DCNR Targets Illegal Camping on Allegheny Islands](#)
[Editorial: Graffiti Vandal Earns Himself a Bleak Scene](#)
[Recycling Fanatic Advocates Sustainable Living](#)
[Lancaster Revs Up Recycling Effort](#)
[Paxinos Man Hit With Dumping Charges](#)
[Editorial: Windshield Litter Law is Worth a Try](#)
[Op-Ed: Make a Cleaner Earth By Emulating Nature](#)
[Court Rules PA Camp Must Use Approved Raft Guides](#)
[Rail Line Handed Over](#)
[DEP Grant Helps Restore Former Everett Hardwood Property in Bedford County](#)
[Editorial: Poor Green Showing By Lawmakers](#)
[Editorial: State Promotes Local Agriculture, In-Town Revitalization](#)
[Editorial: Learning to Live With Bears](#)
[PA Snakes' Lives Last 4-50 Years](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[U.S. Senate Approves Great Lakes Compact](#)
[Op-Ed: The Allegheny River Runs Through Me](#)
[CBF Aids National Riparian Buffer Conference](#)
[Germ's Up: Erie Beach Quality Worsens](#)
[Deer Creek Watershed Out of Balance \(Online Video\)](#)
[Abandoned Mine Near Hyde To Be Reclaimed](#)
[Attorney General Charges Sewage Plant Operators With Falsifying Records](#)

Regulations

The Independent Regulatory Review Commission [published comments](#) on Environmental Quality Board proposed rules dealing with control of nitrogen oxide emissions from cement kilns and glass melting furnaces.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – August 2, 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 Public Utility Commission published notice of a proposed [policy on electric interconnection fees](#) related to the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act.

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

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

Calendar of 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.](#)
- **August 4**—**CANCELLED.** DEP Ohio Water Resources Regional Committee meeting. ([See Act 220 Participation webpage](#)).
- **August 5**—**NEW.** House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee holds a hearing on mitigating the impact of electric rate caps expiring. Lehigh County Building, 17 S. 7th St., Allentown. 1:00.
- **August 5**—**CANCELLED.** DEP Great Lakes Water Resources Regional Committee meeting. ([See Act 220 Participation webpage](#)).
- **August 7**—[Governor’s Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **August 7**—DEP Solar Work Group meeting. Second Floor Auditorium, Rachel Carson Building, Harrisburg. 10:00. Contact: Libby Dodson, 717-772-8907 or send email to: ldodson@state.pa.us.
- **August 11**—**CANCELLED.** DEP Lower Susquehanna Water Resources Regional Committee meeting. ([See Act 220 Participation webpage](#)).
- **August 12**—Senate Game and Fisheries Committee hearing on [Senate Bill 1527](#) (McIlhinney-R-Bucks) increasing the cost of hunting license. Northwestern Rural Electric, 22534 State Highway 86, Cambridge Springs, Pa. 9:30.
- **August 20**—House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee hearing on farm conservation fair share funding. Ag Progress Days, State College. 10:00.
- **August 20**—**CANCELLED.** DEP Upper/Middle Susquehanna Water Resources Regional Committee meeting. ([See Act 220 Participation webpage](#)).
- **August 22**—**Rescheduled.** DEP [Mine Families First Response and Communications Advisory Council](#) meeting. DEP Mine Rescue Station, 286 Industrial Park Rd, Ebensburg. 10:00.
- **August 28**—**NEW.** DEP [Mine Families First Response and Communications Advisory Council](#) meeting. DEP Mine Rescue Station, 286 Industrial Park Rd, Ebensburg. 10:00.

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

- **September 3**—[Governor’s Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **September 4**—DEP Solar Work Group meeting. Second Floor Auditorium, Rachel Carson Building, Harrisburg. 10:00. Contact: Libby Dodson, 717-772-8907 or send email to: ldodson@state.pa.us.
- **September 5**—**NEW**. DEP Climate Change Advisory Committee meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00. Contact Steve Wilson, 717-783-8411 or send email to: stewilson@state.pa.us.
- **September 9-10**—[DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting. Best Western Grand Victorian Inn, Sayre.
- **September 11**- **Location Change**. [State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators](#) will now meet on the 12th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **September 18**—**CANCELLED**. Joint Conservation Committee Sewage Management and Treatment Task Force. Penn Stater Conference Center, State College. 10:00.
- **September 19**—**CANCELLED**. DEP Potomac Water Resources Regional Committee meeting. (*See Act 220 Participation webpage*).
- **September 23**—[Governor’s Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.

[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.

Stories Invited

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

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