

# -PA ——— Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

August 11, 2008

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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## **\$10 Million REAP Farm Conservation Tax Credits Gone In Hours**



August 4 was the first day the State Conservation Commission accepted applications for the \$10 million available under the [REAP farm conservation tax credit program](#), but it only took until lunch time to take in enough applications to exceed that cap.

This year's program has been so successful, the Department of Agriculture announced it will stop taking applications on August 15.

Last year, it took 10 days to exhaust the funds available, clearly this year's applications show how the popularity and demand for farm conservation work has increased in just one year.

"The response by Pennsylvania farmers has been overwhelming," said Department of Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. "Farmers are doing their part to help protect the environment. REAP is helping them do that by cutting costs for implementing conservation practices that will reduce soil and nutrient loss impacting Pennsylvania's streams and watersheds."

More than 400 applications requesting more than \$14 million in tax credits have been submitted since August 4. Applications are currently being reviewed by the Commission on a first-come, first-served basis.

Farmers can receive tax credits of up to \$150,000 per agricultural operation for 50 or 75 percent of the total cost of a conservation project, depending on the best management practice implemented. Farmers may also qualify for a 50 percent tax credit to purchase no-till planting equipment.

The Commission has 60 days to review each application from the date received. The Commission will notify the applicant in writing if the application meets the requirements and is considered eligible. The commission then informs the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue of complete projects and tax credit amounts. The department also has 60 days to issue a letter stating the amount is credited to the applicant's account.

Part of the [PA Fair Share for Clean Water Plan](#) to reduce nutrients from wastewater treatment plants and farms called for an increase in the REAP tax credit from \$10 to \$35 million to help them meet this federal Clean Water Act mandate imposed by the Department of Environmental Protection, but the General Assembly and Gov. Rendell failed to take action on that proposal.

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The General Assembly and Gov. Rendell did act to provide \$1.2 billion for water infrastructure improvements, including upgrades to wastewater treatment plants as part of the budget adopted in July.

However, \$400 million of this funding hinges on the passage of a bond issue referendum on the ballot for the November election.

For more information, visit the [REAP Program webpage](#) or contact program administrator Mary Bender at 717-787-8821 or by sending email to: [mabender@state.pa.us](mailto:mabender@state.pa.us).

**Link:** [First Come, First Serve REAP Farm Conservation Tax Credit Applications](#)  
[Fair Share Coalition Fight for Clean Water Funding](#)

### Online Video Feature

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#### Fort Indiantown Gap July Regal Butterfly Tour

In July, the Fort Indiantown Gap National Guard Training Site held a public tour of regal fritillary butterfly habitats they are preserving on the post.

Go along with the tour in this video feature and learn about current efforts to restore native grassland habitat with the ultimate goal of returning the Regal Fritillary.



Fort Indiantown Gap is the only live fire, maneuver military training facility in the commonwealth. It balances one of the region's most ecologically diverse areas with a military mission that annually supports 19,000 Pennsylvania National Guard personnel and more than 130,000 other states' Guard, military, law enforcement, and civilian personnel each year.

**Video Blog:** [Fort Indiantown Gap Regal Butterfly Tour](#)

**Video Blog:** [Summer Garden Visitors](#)

**Links:** [Fort Indiantown Gap Wins Army's Highest Environmental Award](#)  
[Guided Tours of Regal Fritillary Butterfly Habitat Slate at Fort Indiantown Gap](#)

#### Water Resources in Deer Creek Watershed Stressed By Growth

[A report](#) by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission says the Deer Creek Watershed in York County will become progressively stressed over the next 17 years as growth spreads and populations rise.

This Video Blog story produced by the York Daily Record includes interviews with residents who talk about some of the issues involved.

**Full story:** [Local Watershed Going Out of Balance.](#)

**Video Blog:** [Deer Creek Watershed Stressed](#)

## EPA Region 3 Launches Podcast Series

Region 3 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is introducing a series of audio podcasts to bring environmental news and feature stories as well as helpful consumer tips to the public.

Called "Environment Matters," the podcasts will be posted regularly on the agency's website and are available as an RSS feed for automatic distribution.

The [August 1 Environment Matters](#) podcast highlights the Student Environment Development Program for high school youth interested in environmental careers.

[Environment Matters is available online.](#)

## Campaign Trail

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### Chesapeake Bay Foundation Endorses Capt. John Smith For President

In the thick of a national race to claim the White House in November, what are the Presidential candidates saying about the pressing need to address the nation's clean water problems, including the Chesapeake Bay?

**Video Blog:** [Capt. John Smith For President](#)

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation launched the "[Captain John Smith for President campaign](#)" to dramatize the need for greater, more meaningful federal involvement—particularly Presidential—in addressing these serious water quality issues.

Why is Capt. Smith Running for President?

In 1607, with a crew of 15 men, Capt. John Smith set sail in an open barge to explore the Chesapeake Bay. His resourcefulness, far-sightedness, leadership, and character were instrumental in his election to the presidency of the Jamestown colony.

Capt. John Smith realized the economic opportunities the Chesapeake Bay region provided with its lush forests and abundant fish, crabs, and oysters. Upon his return to America in 2007 for the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, Capt. Smith was appalled at the state of his beloved Chesapeake Bay. His frustration has led him to take a bold stand and declare his candidacy for President of the United States.

This is a campaign with all the trimmings, including TV ads, T-shirts and bumper stickers.

To be part of the fun and promote the clean water message, visit the [Captain John Smith for President Campaign webpage](#).



## On the Hill

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

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

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### Session Schedule

The Senate took one day off of its already short Fall voting schedule—

#### 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 – CANCELLED), 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](#) (Rublely-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

**Senate:** the Game and Fisheries Committee holds a hearing on [Senate Bill 1527](#) (McIlhinney-R-Bucks) increasing the cost of hunting license in Erie, Pa.

## Bill Introduction

This bill of interest was introduced this week-

**Prescribed Burning:** [House Bill 2735](#) (Haluska-D-Cambria) regulating prescribed burning practices.

## Senate Committee Holds Hearing On Increasing Hunting License Fees

On August 12, the Senate Game and Fisheries Committee has scheduled a hearing in Erie on [Senate Bill 1527](#) (McIlhinney-R-Bucks) that would increase fees on hunting licenses issued by the Game Commission.

Expected to testify are Carl Roe, Executive Director of the Game Commission, Joe Shrader and Emil Samec, Cambridge Springs Rod and Gun Club and Rocco Ali and Melody Zullinger of the PA Federation of Sportmen's Clubs.

The hearing will start at 9:30 and be held at the Northwestern Rural Electric Coop Association, Cambridge Springs, Pa.

Sen. Charles McIlhinney serves as Majority Chair of the Committee and Sen. Wayne Fontana (D-Allegheny) serves as Minority Chair.

**Link:** [Groups Support Broadening Funding Base for Game, Fish & Boat Commissions](#)  
[Game Commission Urges Support for License Fee Increase](#)

## Other News

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### Department of Agriculture Honors Conservation Leaders

Four individuals and two county districts were recognized this week by the Department of Agriculture for their conservation efforts in Pennsylvania.

"Wise use of natural resources and protecting and restoring the natural environment is a top priority for all Pennsylvanians," said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. "With people and groups leading conservation efforts and supporting our programs, the commonwealth is building a sustainable future."

Sen. Roger Madigan (R-Bradford) and Walter Peechatka earned the [State Conservation Commission's](#) Distinguished Service Award for demonstrating consistent service and leadership in conservation.

Sen. Madigan is a long-time agricultural and conservation leader, first as a dairyman and now as the operator of a crop and tree farm in Bradford County. He has hosted stream bank erosion roundtable discussions, sponsored tours to address environmental issues, and helped establish the dirt and gravel road maintenance program.

He received the 2007 Legislator Recognition Award from the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts.

Peechatka, the senior advisor and former executive vice president of PennAg Industries, has shown his commitment to improving conservation practices in Pennsylvania during his time at PennAg and in his work in many senior leadership roles at the Department of Agriculture.

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Peechatka served as bureau director for soil and water conservation for the Department of Environmental Resources and as the State Conservation Commission's executive secretary.

Lycoming County's Gordon Hiller received one of three Conservation Leadership Development Awards for helping to organize the county's conservation district and serving as its chairman. After working as a dairyman, Hiller served as a field representative for the State Conservation Commission, as a program specialist for the state erosion and sedimentation control program, and as a regional director for the Department of Agriculture.

The second leadership award went to Richard VanNoy of York County, a founding director for the Bradford County Conservation District. VanNoy's 30-year conservation career started as secretary of the Pennsylvania State Grange. He later served as a field representative with the State Conservation Commission and as a division chief within the Department of Environmental Protection, where he helped to develop the Conservation District Fund Allocation Program.

The Westmoreland County Conservation District received the third Leadership Development Award for its ability to promote and inspire district leadership excellence. The district's board members engage in strategic planning and are focused on its long-term viability and its ultimate purpose for the community. Members include J. Roy Houston, Ronald Rohall, Conrad Donovan, William Doney, Tom Balya, Albert Barnett, Thomas Kuzumchak, Kim Edward Miller and Fred Slezak.

The District Director Attendance Award recognizes the local efforts of Pennsylvania's 66 conservation districts. Nearly 500 directors volunteer their time to help plan, direct and assist with programs to preserve their county's resources. Franklin, Allegheny and Columbia counties had the highest rate of director attendance.

The departments of Agriculture and Environmental Protection oversee the State Conservation Commission, which is an 11-member panel that provides oversight and supports the state's 66 county conservation districts.

### Lycoming Students Work To Decrease Water Pollution, Preserve Local Streams

[Lycoming College](#) students interning with the College's Clean Water Institute are volunteering their time this summer to help educate the local community about storm water pollution and how to prevent further damage to Lycoming County streams and the Susquehanna River, which eventually spill into the Chesapeake Bay.

The interns are painting "Do Not Dump – Drains to the River" on storm drain inlets in downtown Williamsport.

*In the photo, Students Bruce Withey and Megan Shulze stencil area storm drains.*

The message is to remind citizens not to dump waste into storm sewers or contribute more pollutants to ordinary storm water runoff by littering, over fertilizing or sweeping yard debris into the street.

The project is being aided by the use of stencils provided by the Pennsylvania College of Technology and paint, brushes and safety equipment donated by the city of Williamsport.



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According to [Dr. Mel Zimmerman](#), director of the Clean Water Institute and professor of biology at Lycoming, storm drain stenciling has been used successfully in other communities, such as Lewisburg, Pa., to reduce overall water pollution.

The project, put into motion in July, is a product of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Partnership, a group of six Williamsport area municipalities working together to prevent storm water pollution from construction, new development and illegal discharges to the storm sewer system.

Other municipalities involved are Old Lycoming Township, Loyalsock Township, South Williamsport Borough, Duboistown Borough and Montoursville Borough.

Zimmerman says common, every day materials are often forgotten once they're out of sight and mind, but substances such as household chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides, used motor oil, yard debris, antifreeze and pet litters are washed from parking lots and driveways into the streets and eventually the storm drain inlets.

There's also the danger of people who deliberately dump hazardous materials, specifically motor oil, into storm sewers, an illegal act prohibited by an adopted municipal storm water ordinance. A single quart of motor oil can ruin the quality of 250,000 gallons of water.

"Many people don't understand that storm drains are the entry point into the storm sewer system and that storm water leaving the system does not get treated first like sanitary wastewater," said John Grado, community development director for the city of Williamsport. "Untreated storm water is carried directly into area streams and the river."

Disposing of oil and other dangerous materials via sinks or toilets is also discouraged due to the fact that they are also extremely harmful to sewage treatment plants. Instead, residents are highly encouraged to recycle these resources.

"Every citizen has a role in preventing pollution," said Kevin Johnson, an environmental specialist at Penn College. "These kinds of projects work because they get the government, volunteer groups and businesses working together to solve a shared problem."

For more information, please contact Lycoming County MS4 Coordinator Kevin McJunkin at 570-320-2136. (By Sarah Feaster '09, [Lycoming College News](#), August 4, 2009)

### **Clinton County CleanScapes Sponsors August 16 Pine Creek Cleanup Event**

[Clinton County CleanScapes](#) is sponsoring the 2nd annual Pine Creek Two Rivers Cleanup Event on August 16.

The cleanup event will be run along Pine Creek in Clinton County to the West Branch Susquehanna River, Jersey Shore Borough.

Kayakers and Canoers, meet at the lower end of Pine Creek. From Rt. 220, take the Rt. 44 N. Pine Creek Exit and drive south onto Tiadaghton Ave. (toward Jersey Shore). At stop sign turn left toward Jersey Shore (E. Central Ave.), drive 0.15 miles and pull off onto a gravel parking lot on right just before the bridge. Drop off your canoe/kayak and drive your vehicle to a Jersey Shore parking lot at the corner of Smith & Main Sts. Complementary shuttle service back to the launch site provided.

Waders, meet at the Jersey Shore boat launch area. From Rt. 220 take the Rt. 44 S. (Main St.). Drive south into Jersey Shore Boro. Drive through stop light. Just after Jersey

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Shore State Bank, take first left. Right turn onto one way street, boat launch at the corner of Front and Smith Sts. Parking instructions will be provided at this site.

Boaters: meet at the launch site mentioned above at 8:15 a.m. to drop off canoes/kayaks. Launch at 9:00. Waders: meet at 8:45 a.m. at the Jersey Shore Borough boat launch. Complementary lunch at 12-1 p.m..

Garbage bags and gloves will be provided.

Pre-registration is required by noon on August 14 and all participants will enjoy a complementary lunch and refreshments. Youth seventeen and under must be accompanied by an adult.

Registration and questions should be given to Project Director Elisabeth Lynch McCoy of Clinton County CleanScapes at 570-893-4123 or send email to:

[elynych@clintoncountypa.com](mailto:elynych@clintoncountypa.com).

### Recycling Performance Grant Applications for Calendar 2007 Due September 30

The Department of Environmental Protection is now accepting applications for Calendar [2007 Recycling Performance grants](#).



Recycling Performance grants will be awarded to municipalities based on a formula comprising the weight of source-separated recyclable materials identified in Act 101 recovered by municipal recycling programs, the population of the municipality as determined by the most recent decennial census, and other factors.

Grants will be awarded only for properly documented, eligible materials that were actually marketed on or after January 1, 2007, to and including December 31, 2007.

Eligible materials include post-consumer: clear glass, colored glass, aluminum cans, steel and bimetallic cans, high-grade office paper, newsprint, corrugated paper, other marketable grades of paper, and plastics.

Municipalities wishing to file an application should contact their County Recycling Coordinator or DEP at the address that follows.

Applications may also be downloaded from DEP's [Recycling Grant webpage](#) or contact Mark Vottero, Bureau of Waste Management, Department of Environmental Protection, Rachel Carson State Office Building, P.O. Box 8472, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8472 or send email to: [mvottero@state.pa.us](mailto:mvottero@state.pa.us).

### August Issue EE Connections Available From PA Center for Environmental Ed

The [PA Center for Environmental Education](#) now has available the [August issue](#) of the *EE Connections* newsletter covering a variety of topics of interest to the environmental education community. This issue includes:

**General News:** Job Opening at PCEE, Outdoor Task Force Findings Released, New Law Makes Funding Energy Use Easier, Plant Trees in PA with Help from Odwalla DEP Accepting Applications for \$500 Hybrid Vehicle Rebates, PA CleanWays Releases Nine More Illegal Dumpsite Surveys, PA Roads Cleaner Thanks to Adopt-A-Highway Group



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**K-12 News:** PLT Releases New Secondary EE Module, Online Website Facilitates Taking Children Outside. Encyclopedia of Earth Climate Change Collection Available, High School Science Teachers Needed for Field Test

**Higher Education:** New Resource Available for State Colleges and Universities Watershed Symposium, Call for Abstracts Deadline Extended, Allegheny College Pilots Energy Efficiency Program, Successful EE Course Now Available to Universities

**Professional Development:** Watershed Literacy Held at Camp Kon-O-Kwee/Spencer Lehigh Valley Zoo Hosts PA Songbirds Workshop, River Ecology Workshop Comes to Cook Forest, Stroud Water Research Center Presents PA Herps, Sustainability in the Classroom

**Grants/Awards:** PPL Offers Environmental Education Grants, EPA Seeking Nominations for Water Efficiency Leaders, Green Building Product Innovation Proposals Due

Contributions welcome! The Center receives news and information from a variety of sources across Pennsylvania and beyond. Center staff appreciates all of the organizations, agencies and individuals who provide EE services and share their relevant information.

If you would like to contribute to future issues of EE Connections, please submit your article before the 15th of the month. Articles should be of statewide interest and are subject to space availability. Send email to: [info@pcee.org](mailto:info@pcee.org) for more information.

Share EE Connections! If you know of others who would appreciate receiving EE Connections, please [complete the on-line form](#) or call 724-738-9020.

### **Educator's Workshop on Building a Schoolyard Wetland August 16**

The [Jennings Environmental Education Center](#) will host a POW! The Planning of Wetlands workshop on August 16 in Slippery Rock.

The [POW! workshop](#) is a guide for the design, construction and monitoring of a wetland on school grounds or within the community. The 25 exciting and challenging activities promote conservation and stimulate interests in community service, conservation, science, math and engineering careers. The activities all correlate to the National Science Standards and are presented in lesson plan format with Student Activity Pages ready for copying.

Call 410-745-9620 for more information or send email to [POW@wetland.org](mailto:POW@wetland.org).

### **New Year Underway For Mentored Youth Hunting Program**

Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe this week reminded experienced hunters, who have historically helped pass along the state's rich hunting heritage, that the new license year means another year to begin introducing youths to hunting through the [Mentored Youth Hunting Program](#).

"Pennsylvania's hunters have a remarkable opportunity to introduce those under the age of 12 to hunting," Roe said. "Hunting is deeply woven into the cultural fabric that is Pennsylvania, and it is important that we recruit new hunters to carry on this tradition."

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Roe noted that the logic behind the Mentored Youth Hunting Program is simple and clear: create expanded youth hunting opportunities without compromising safety afield.

"This program paves the way for youngsters to nurture their interest in hunting early and allows them to take a more active role in actual hunting while afield with mentoring adults," Roe said. "The program accommodates hands-on use of sporting arms and can promote a better understanding and interest in hunting and wildlife conservation that will help assure hunting's future, as well as reinforce the principles of hunting safely through the close supervision provided by dedicated mentors."

Under the program, a mentor is defined as a properly licensed individual at least 21 years of age, who will serve as a guide to a youth while engaged in hunting or related activities, such as scouting, learning firearms or hunter safety and wildlife identification. A mentored youth is identified as an unlicensed individual less than 12 years of age who is accompanied by a mentor while engaged in hunting or related activities.

The regulations require that the mentor-to-mentored youth ratio be one-to-one, and that the pair possesses only one sporting arm when hunting. While moving, the sporting arm must be carried by the mentor. When the pair reaches a stationary hunting location, the mentor may turn over possession of the sporting arm to the youth and must keep the youth within arm's length at all times.

The species identified as legal game for the 2008-09 license year are woodchucks (groundhogs), squirrels, spring gobbler and antlered deer. At its June meeting, the Board of Game Commissioners gave unanimous approval to add coyote hunting to the list of species that mentored youth hunters can pursue. For the addition to take effect, the proposal must be approved at a subsequent meeting of the Board.

Those youths participating in the MYHP are required to follow the same antler restrictions as a junior license holder, which is one antler of three or more inches in length or one antler with at least two points.

The program also requires that both the mentor and the youth must abide by any fluorescent orange regulations, and that the mentored youth must tag and report any antlered deer or spring gobbler taken by making and attaching a tag that contains his or her name, address, date, WMU, township, and county where it was taken.

The youth must submit a harvest report card, which is available on page 33 of the 2008-09 Pennsylvania Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations, within five days for any antlered deer or spring gobbler he or she takes.

For more information, visit the [Mentored Youth Hunting Program webpage](#) or on page 15 of the 2008-09 Pennsylvania Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations, and a sample harvest tag can be found on page 33 of the Digest.

### **New Partnerships Encouraging City Teens to Explore State Parks**

Buoyed by success last summer in Harrisburg and Philadelphia, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is broadening an urban recreation initiative to introduce more young people to the adventure, natural beauty and learning opportunities found in their state parks.

After opening early last week, DCNR's Youth Adventure Camp has been held, or is planned in six more cities where DCNR and local recreation staff partner. Besides

Harrisburg and Philadelphia, events will also be held in Pittsburgh, Williamsport, Erie, Scranton, York and the Allentown area.

"We know our pilot effort last summer achieved a major goal – to introduce inner-city young people to parks and activities that are often far removed from their neighborhoods," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "Many state parks not in urban areas. These partnerships with cities are opening new opportunities to connect our state parks with urban youth.

"We hope an exciting outdoor adventure will not only make them repeat visitors, but will teach them about diversity in the natural world so, as citizens, they are lifelong stewards and make wise decisions about what our world looks like," Secretary DiBerardinis said.

A return to Harrisburg is welcome news for Rick Hicks, who last year watched teens -- many of whom he knew -- file off a van for a day of hiking at Kings Gap Environmental Education Center near Carlisle, Cumberland County. The experience "opens a whole new world" to his young charges, said the sports and special program coordinator for Harrisburg's Parks and Recreation Department.

"You know it's working when a kid who lives to play basketball every day tells you, 'I really had fun'," Hicks said. "And that could have been fishing for the first time, or looking for fossils. One kid actually had the confidence to start swimming lessons."

Another city, another endorsement from a Philadelphia Parks and Recreation official: "I believe that a seed has been planted that will become an opportunity for them to reach beyond their current world," said Kathi Muller. "We may never fully know the impact of the experience, but rest assured that each young person attending Youth Adventure Camp has been touched in some way."

Participants, ranging in age from 12 to 15, already are involved in recreational programs in their hometown neighborhoods.

Park activities will include team building, compass use/orienteering, photography, survival skills, fishing, horseback riding, boating, disc golf, knot tying, beekeeping, gardening, climbing and rappelling, and camping.

The Youth Adventure Camp is being held this week at the Boys and Girls Club of Erie, the United Neighborhood Centers in Scranton, and the Wildlands Conservancy in the Lehigh Valley. The camp has already been held in the other cities.

For more information on any of Pennsylvania's 117 state parks, visit [DCNR's website](#).

### **Volunteers Work Hard on Wissahickon Sustainable Trails Initiative**

Volunteers from the Friends of the Wissahickon have been working hard this summer on a one-mile section of the lower trail on the east (Chestnut Hill) side of Wissahickon Creek between Bells Mills Road and Thomas Mill Road (the covered bridge).

This project entails complete reconstruction, partial re-routing, and replanting of this section of trail, and is part of FOW's Sustainable Trails Initiative.

Pictured here is Lou and Paul Harris from



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Roxborough and Ben Dunphey of Glenside placing straw bails at the trail site, which will keep loose soil from washing away as the trail is restored.

For more information, visit the [Sustainable Trails Initiative webpage](#) or call 215-247-0417.

### PA American Water Helps WPC Reopen Community Garden in Pittsburgh

With repairs to the Homestead Grays Bridge in Pittsburgh completed, the community garden located at 8th Avenue in Homestead has reopened after a two-year hiatus, thanks to the support of [Pennsylvania American Water](#).

Their support is helping to fund the Homestead garden and seven other Western Pennsylvania Conservancy community gardens across Western Pennsylvania this year.

“The goal of the community gardens is to enhance and beautify all types of communities by partnering with local residents, corporations and organizations” said Judy Wagner, senior director of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy [Community Gardens and Greenspace program](#). “We are grateful that our long partnership with Pennsylvania American Water has helped us make this vision a reality. Pennsylvania American Water has been an ideal partner by making a long-term commitment to the region’s environment through both its volunteers and its crucial financial support.”

Pennsylvania American Water has been a sponsor of WPC’s community garden program since 2000. In addition to the Homestead garden, PAW currently helps to fund two Pittsburgh gardens: Wenzel Avenue and Broadway Avenue in Beechview and Mifflin Road and Interboro Avenue in Lincoln Place.

PAW also sponsors WPC gardens at: Brentwood Middle/High School in Brentwood, Route 286 and Indian Springs Road in Indiana County, Hanson Avenue and Route 68 in Butler, Route 40 and Broadway Street in Brownsville and Route 18 and Tyler Avenue in Washington.

"While the aesthetic improvements that these gardens offer our communities is important, we're equally pleased with their environmental impact," said Deborah P. Lippert, senior director field operations, Pennsylvania American Water. "The green space and run-off prevention measures the gardens offer are important in helping to capture rain water before it enters the storm sewer system."

Youth from Multicultural Young Life, a Christian ministry focused on youth in urban communities, helped to plant the Homestead Bridge community garden and will act as caretakers of the site throughout the season. Volunteer groups from Macy's and the West Mifflin Environmental Club also participated in planting this garden.

Last year, PAW also made a \$10,000 environmental grant to WPC to help restore and protect the Shenango River watershed.

WPC’s community gardens have become a signature image of the Western Pennsylvania landscape. Appearing in 140 locations with varied, colorful configurations, the gardens provide a backdrop and enhancement for other cultural and civic assets.

WPC coordinates more than 5,000 volunteers and dozens of community organizations and businesses to plant, maintain and support gardens in 19 Western Pennsylvania counties.

For more information, visit the WPC’s [Community Gardens and Greenspace Program webpage](#).

## Green Building Grants Available To Achieve LEED Certification

Economic development organizations, business and commercial builders can now apply for grants of up to \$5,000 to pay registration, design and construction reviews needed to achieve Gold certification under LEED green building standards.

Applications will be accepted through November 30.

For more information, download the [LEED Certification Program outline](#) or discuss your project with Sharon Ward, PPL Economic Development Director, 610-774-5453.

## PPL Rate Stabilization Plan to Mitigate Projected Rate Increases OK'd

The Public Utility Commission this week approved a settlement that will permit PPL Electric Utilities Corp. to begin implementing its Rate Stabilization Plan to help customers deal with an expected 33 percent increase in electric rates in 2010.

“The strength and the weakness of this plan is that it is entirely voluntary.

Unfortunately, there will be those who cannot afford to participate in it and there will be others who can afford to opt in to the program, but will not do so,” said Vice Chairman James H. Cawley. “It is also unfortunate that this is one of the few beneficial options that we can provide to consumers to blunt the effects of rising global energy prices.”

[In a statement](#) Commissioner Tyrone J. Christy said, “I am disappointed that more meaningful proposals are not on the table at this time. I believe we must continue to pursue every possible measure to protect customers from the lethal combination of a dysfunctional wholesale market and a retail framework that adds unnecessary costs to already-high wholesale prices.”

Commissioners Kim Pizzingrilli and Robert F. Powelson [issued a joint statement](#).

The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the RSP, which is designed to allow customers to prepay in anticipation of large price increases for supply service that will occur when PPL’s generation rate caps expire on December 31, 2009.

In its filing, PPL projected a 34.5 percent increase for the average residential customer using 1,000 kWh per month. Because of its projected increase, PPL had sought approval to phase in the estimated 2010 rate increase.

As part of the plan, PPL customers can choose to make additional payments and receive corresponding credits on their electric bills through December 31, 2011. The plan is available to residential, small commercial, small industrial and certain street lighting customers. According to the settlement, PPL may collect the RSP charge on a monthly basis from customers who voluntarily participate.

The amounts collected under the RSP, plus 6 percent interest, will then be paid back to those customers participating in the form of an RSP credit on monthly bills from January 1, 2010, through December 31, 2011.

As part of the settlement, the Commission directs PPL to begin its public notice campaign as soon as practicable and to submit a timeline to identify its target dates for customer notice, as well as the anticipated start date for the RSP payments.

On March 6, 2008, a Recommended Decision was issued by the PUC’s Office of Administrative Law Judge recommending approval of a settlement, which had been submitted on February 27, 2008, by various parties, including PPL Electric Utilities

Corporation, the PUC's Office of Trial Staff, the state's Office of Consumer Advocate, the state's Office of Small Business Advocate and the Retail Energy Supply Association.

The settlement resolves all issues associated with the RSP, filed by PPL on Nov. 30, 2007, which is intended to mitigate the expected 2010 rate increase over a period of several years with most participating customers receiving a series of annual single digit percentage increases through December 2011.

Visit the [PUC's Electric Choice webpage](#) for more information.

**NewsClips:** [PPL Customers Can Disperse Rate Increase Over Time](#)  
[PUC Approves Optional Phase-In of PPL Increase](#)  
[Could PPL's Rate Hike Skyrocket?](#)  
[PUC Approves PPL Electric Rate Plan](#)  
[PPL Rate Hike Phase-In Option OK'd](#)

### **Model to Compare Market Prices for Electric With Capped Rates**

The [Public Utility Commission](#) has announced plans to release estimates comparing current market prices for electricity with capped rates paid by consumers today.

A majority of electricity customers currently pay rates under caps, which are set to expire over the next couple of years consistent with the implementation of the state's electric competition law.

"The Commission continues to develop a model to compare current market prices with capped rates," said Vice Chairman James H. Cawley. "We have consulted with stakeholders during this process, including a meeting earlier this week with consumer advocates to discuss the model and determine whether it is producing reasonably accurate results. However, customers must understand that these estimates represent a snapshot of current market prices in the short term, and do not in any way represent a Commission forecast of retail rates two or three years from now when the remaining rate caps expire."

Commissioner Tyrone J. Christy added that the Commission is "now considering that feedback, and we will issue the results of our model within a week. This will be an important tool that we will update regularly to educate and prepare our electric ratepayers for rising energy prices."

Wayne Williams, Ph.D., Director of the PUC Bureau of Conservation, Economics & Energy Planning, said "the Commission has been regularly monitoring the difference between the current capped rates and existing market prices for electricity. The market price of electricity changes on a daily basis, and is subject to large swings based on the price of fuels in the wholesale energy markets, over which the PUC exercises no jurisdiction. As part of our ongoing efforts to educate customers about the expiration of rate caps, the Commission began a dialogue with consumer advocates and utilities to develop a model for identifying the current market price of electricity in service territories still under rate caps. We are finalizing that model now."

The information that the Commission will release will demonstrate that market prices can fluctuate dramatically on a regular basis due to changes in fuel prices such as natural gas, oil and coal.

Consumers should be aware that the Commission has approved energy procurement rules that will reduce retail rate volatility by directing electric utilities to acquire a portfolio of energy products of different contract lengths and composition at different points in time.

This portfolio approach will reduce the level of risk in energy procurements, and thereby help insulate customers from large, unexpected rate changes.

This comparison is consistent with the Commission's May 17, 2007, Final Order (Docket No. M-00061957), by which the Commission began developing plans to educate electric customers statewide about rising energy prices and the resources available to help them, such as energy conservation, low-income programs and choice.

On January 1, 1997, the Electricity Generation Customer Choice and Competition Act went into effect and began the process for creating a competitive marketplace for electricity in this Commonwealth. This Act provided the framework for how electric generation would proceed in Pennsylvania, breaking down electric service into distribution, transmission and generation services.

Under the Act, distribution and transmission services continued to be regulated, generation services became unregulated, and the price of electricity became frozen at 1996 levels. During the subsequent implementation of the law, a schedule was set for the expiration of the rate caps for each electric distribution company.

Rate caps have already expired for customers served by Citizens' Electric Co.; Duquesne Light Co.; Pennsylvania Power Co.; Pike County Light & Power; UGI Utilities Inc.; and Wellsboro Electric Co. Some of those customers experienced significant rate increases while others are paying lower rates than when rates were capped. The majority of electric customers still pay rates capped at essentially 1996 levels.

Visit the [PUC's Electric Choice webpage](#) for more information.

**NewsClip:** [Sen. Boscola Fires Off Charges in Utility Rate Battle](#)

### **Electric Generators' Assn. Outlines Ways To Deal With Electric Rate Increases**

Doug Biden, President of the [Electric Power Generation Association](#), this week reiterated his organization's plan to help Pennsylvania customers deal with anticipated higher electricity prices being driven by higher fuel and commodity costs.

[Biden made his comments](#) on a day when the Pennsylvania House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee held a hearing on the issue in Allentown, Pa. The hearing is part of a larger effort by Pennsylvania lawmakers to deal with the expiration of electricity rate caps over the next several years.

Biden said, "Pennsylvania lawmakers are rightfully asking questions about what can be done to help residents adjust to paying market prices for electricity. The key is to develop constructive policies that align solutions with the real causes of the problem."

Biden argued that Pennsylvania legislators can best respond to this challenge by: educating customers on how they can conserve and save, giving customers options to phase-in higher prices, encouraging conservation and reductions in peak demand for electricity, and reviewing the adequacy of low income assistance programs.

Biden said electricity prices are rising across the country, both in states that restructured markets to allow competition and those that retained traditional regulation. Biden said, "It's a well established fact that we're competing with countries such as China and India for fuel and commodities used to generate electricity. Those realities are driving up the underlying costs of producing electricity."

Biden said it is both wrong and counterproductive to blame competition for rising electricity prices. "Competition promotes efficiencies that provide the best means to

counter underlying cost pressures. Competition is the solution to rather than the cause of higher electricity prices."

Biden said EPGA is committed to working with House and Senate leaders as well as the Administration to develop comprehensive legislation that helps Pennsylvania consumers make the transition to paying market prices for electricity.

For more information, visit [PA Energy News](#).

**NewsClip:** [Sen. Boscola Fires Off Charges in Utility Rate Battle](#)

## **PUC Establishes System to Measure Electric Supply in Competitive Market**

The [Public Utility Commission](#) this week finalized regulations that will establish reporting requirements to facilitate measurement of the development of Pennsylvania's competitive retail electric supply market.

The Commission voted 5-0 to adopt requirements for electric distribution companies and electric generation supplies to report on electric supply activity. The reports will provide specific data that will facilitate commission efforts to monitor customer switching from the EDC to the EGS for electric generation supply, as well as customer preference for other products and services such as real time or time of use service.

The reports will provide the commission with information needed to fulfill its duties under the 1996 Electricity Generation Customer Choice and Competition Act.

The act charged the commission with monitoring sales activity and conducting milestone reviews of the development of the state's retail market for the supply and distribution of electricity. The commission can also take steps to prevent anticompetitive or discriminatory conduct and the unlawful exercise of market power.

The reports will collect data on residential, industrial and commercial rate classes and will include total sales of both EDCs and EGSs and total customers. EDCs will be required to file quarterly reports while EGSs will file annually. The reports will be available to the public.

The rulemaking now goes before the state's Independent Regulatory Review Commission, the Office of Attorney General, the Governor's Budget Office and the standing committees in both houses of the General Assembly for review. Once that review is completed, the regulations would become final once published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

Visit the [PUC's Electric Choice webpage](#) for more information.

## **Allegheny Power Customers Can Now Support Wind Power Development**

The Public Utility Commission this week approved a plan to allow customers of Allegheny Power (West Penn Power Co.) to purchase alternative energy credit to support the development of wind generation.

The Commission voted 5-0 to approve the voluntary plan saying that programs such as this provide incentives for the early development of alternative energy generation and enable customers to directly support renewable energy projects. Vice Chairman James H. Cawley [made a statement](#). A motion by [Commissioner Tyrone J. Christy](#) to increase consumer education on the plan passed unanimously.

"This voluntary plan to support alternative energy is a good idea, but customer choice must be an informed choice," Commissioner Christy said. "It's important that



customers receive easily understandable information not only at the start of this program but throughout its duration to ensure they have the opportunity and understanding necessary to participate.”

AECs place a value on the generation of alternative energy. One AEC is created when one megawatt hour of alternative energy. Money collected from the purchase of AECs is used toward the development of alternative energy generation projects such as wind.

Under the plan, customers may voluntarily purchase blocks of 100 kwh of wind energy renewable attributes. The rate per block would be \$2.50, which would be in addition to the regular monthly cost per kilowatt hour of electricity consumed by the customer. The customer will be able to designate any number of blocks to be purchased per month, up to 100 percent of the customer’s total energy used. The company will begin informing customers of the program through bill inserts.

The Commission said the Allegheny plan furthers the goals of the state’s Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act of 2004. The AEPS Act requires that a certain percentage of all electric energy sold to retail customers within the Commonwealth be derived from alternative energy sources. By 2021, electric distribution companies and electric generation suppliers must supply 18.5 percent of electricity using alternative energy resources.

Since the passage of the AEPS Act, the PUC has moved expeditiously to develop the rules and regulations necessary for fostering Pennsylvania’s alternative energy market and has implemented a website to make information about AEPS available to the public in a user-friendly manner.

For more information, visit the [PUC’s Alternative Energy website](#).

### **PUC Commissioner Testifies On Federal Transmission Corridors Ruling**

The Public Utility Commission expressed continued disappointment in the U.S. Department of Energy's decision to finalize its [National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor for the Mid-Atlantic Region](#), which includes 52 out of the state's 67 counties.

[In testimony](#) submitted to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Commissioner Tyrone J. Christy called the implementation of the plan outlined in Section 1221 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 "flawed."

"The statute is flawed because it is based upon the unproven assumption that State commissions and State judicial systems cannot be trusted to properly review transmission siting applications and that federal oversight is needed over all state siting proceedings," said Commissioner Christy. "Additionally, Section 1221 gives transmission project owners nearly unfettered discretion to pursue their interests either in State courts or at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, while giving other parties no choice of forum at all. This open invitation to forum shop is contrary to traditional notions of justice and due process."

Section 1221 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 directed the DOE to conduct studies of electric transmission congestion every three years, and authorized the federal agency to designate NIETCs based on those studies.

Commissioner Christy also criticized the DOE of its initial designation of the corridor, stating that the designation constitutes three quarters of Pennsylvania, including many state parks and game lands, as well as historical and archeological sites, which are

areas where no significant transmission currently exists. The comments were filed as part of the Department's considerations of NIETC designations.

On July 6, 2007, the [PUC filed comments](#) with the DOE calling the plan overly broad and unreasonable. The PUC called for the proposal to be withdrawn and asked for a new designation that has a more narrow scope and better reflected the Congressional intent in establishing NIETC.

The Commission also said DOE "has misinterpreted and failed to follow the legal requirements set forth by Congress for NIETC designation, has failed to make the detailed factual findings required by Congress and should not be adopted by the Department."

The PUC has taken an active role in representing the interests of Pennsylvania before the federal government, filing comments on the issue and participating as a party in this case. The Commission petitioned the DOE for a rehearing, or seeking to overturn the designation as being beyond the scope intended by Congress by filing before the U.S. Court of Appeals.

The proposed NIETC includes 52 out of Pennsylvania's 67 counties in the corridor's Mid-Atlantic region. Cameron, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Lycoming, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Sullivan, Tioga, Venango and Warren counties are not included in the draft corridor designation. Besides Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region encompasses all or portions of Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Virginia and West Virginia.

### **Help Wanted: Delaware River Basin Commission**

The [Delaware River Basin Commission](#) is accepting applications for a full-time Water Resources Engineer/Modeler in the Modeling Section of its Modeling, Monitoring, and Assessment Branch.

Duties include providing engineering services in the overall surveillance and investigation of existing and potential conventional and toxic pollution and in the development, modification, and management of hydrodynamic and water quality models for waters within the Delaware River Basin.

Qualifications include a bachelor's degree in Civil or Environmental Engineering or Environmental Science from an accredited college with 3 years experience in water quality modeling. An advanced degree may substitute for experience.

Salary range is \$52,600 - \$78,800, plus a comprehensive benefits package. EOE. This position will remain open until it is filled.

Send résumé and salary history to Richard C. Gore, Chief Administrative Officer, DRBC, P.O. Box 7360, West Trenton, NJ 08628.

### **On Stage**

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#### **PA Environmental Council Features Alt-Country Artist Jason Ringenberg Online**

[Jason Ringenberg](#) is the latest musical artist to be featured on stage at the Pennsylvania Environmental Council website.

Farmer Jason is the "twin brother" of Jason & the Scorchers frontman Jason Ringenberg (wink-wink), a legend in alternative country. Hot out of Nashville, the Scorchers



essentially invented alternative country in the early 1980s with a sound that fused country with punk.

They have been hailed as the best band ever from the modern American South, and in September 2008 will be honored with the Americana Music Association's lifetime achievement award.

Jason recently re-united the Scorchers, but this father of three also is a huge hit with kids when he performs as Farmer Jason, featuring songs about forests, wildlife (including a "Punk Rock Skunk"), a butterfly and catfish.

Listen to two of Jason's quite-different songs - the clever "Catfish Song" by Farmer Jason and "Harvest Moon" by the Scorchers - as part of PEC's on-going featured artist series. While PEC is known across the state for our work on watersheds, sustainable communities and energy and climate change, our music feature is offered just for fun!

Fans and the curious will get a rare treat Aug. 29-31 when Jason performs four shows at the AmeriServ Johnstown FolkFest, which features 25 artists. Jason & the Scorchers will reunite for two shows, and Farmer Jason will play two at this free music festival.

A father of three, his Farmer Jason character was originally invented to entertain his young daughters. His Farmer Jason albums are witty, entertaining, and feature musicianship that's as good or better than anything Ringenberg's ever done. Many of his songs, especially those on "Farmer Jason Rocks The Forest," express environmental themes to kids without ever talking down to them. Wrote No Depression, "Sounding as excited as a Captain Crunch 6-year old on Saturday morning, Farmer Jason dares you not to sing along. Resistance is utterly futile whether you're 7 or 70."

Ringenberg, who was once memorably described as "a hayseed Iggy Pop," also has had a notable solo career, and in fact just released a solo retrospective, "Best Tracks and Side Tracks: 1979-2007."

Other artists featured on the [PEC website](#) include Last Train Home, The Rescues, The NewLanders and Guster.

## Spotlight

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### Recreation, Park Agencies Play Key Role In Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

When community leaders brainstorm ways to improve the health and well-being of youth and families, a team usually brings together doctors and health care professionals, hospitals, public health organizations and schools.

But recreation and park agencies are another key player in the fight against childhood obesity, sedentary lifestyles, and chronic diseases says a new report.

"Community recreation and parks is the health provider that you don't know about," says Andrew Mowen, Ph.D., lead author and associate professor of recreation and park management at Penn State. "Traditionally, these agencies are considered as organizers of games and sports in a town's parks or ball fields. But our study shows that 9 out of 10 recreation and park professionals are actively involved in a health partnership, sometimes several of them."

Mowen and his research team conducted a nationwide survey of over 1,200 recreation and park administrators, who were members of the National Recreation and Park Association. Also, in-depth interviews were completed with 16 recreation

professionals across the United States in order to understand key themes and issues for the survey.

"Twenty years ago, health care providers didn't consider recreation and park professionals to be a partner in the campaigns to promote health. But in the 1990s, community-based health partnerships were starting to consider the role of recreation and parks in promoting physical activity and quality of life, since many related programs are offered by recreation and park managers," said Geoffrey Godbey, co-principal investigator of the study, and professor emeritus in the recreation, park and tourism management department.

The study found that 88 percent said their organization was involved in a health partnership, with an average of four partnerships per agency. The most common partners were schools, public health agencies and non-profit organizations.

Municipal recreation and parks agencies provide access to low-cost facilities such as ball fields, parks and walking trails for programs, which are highly visible and well known to local residents. Such agencies already reach out to at-risk groups targeted in health campaigns such as children, older adults, low-income and minority families.

"Health campaigns naturally involve recreation and park departments because they provide low-cost, close-to-home opportunities for physical activity, such as trails, recreation centers, outdoor courts, and outdoor swimming facilities," says Mowen. "Parks, trails and recreation centers can also serve as settings for physical rehabilitation."

Successful partnerships were likely to show high levels of trust among partner agencies, a recognized need for the collaboration, administrative support, and staff empowerment. Common health partnership challenges include a lack of seed funding, communication and turf issues, and garnering full support from community stakeholders such as local government or school board members.

Despite these barriers, study results suggest that small, rural recreation and park departments are increasingly interested in being an active health partnership participant.

"Having facilities is critical, but then, programs also have to be established to bring in residents and encourage them to take part," says Mowen. "Partnerships that include after-school programs, diet and nutritional information, and policy efforts to promote recreational settings should be encouraged."

"The study was designed to provide baseline information on the state of current health partnership practices within the profession, their successes and their challenges," says the Penn State researcher. "Such information can be used to help a community effectively develop a program in health and physical activity promotion."

Other study authors are Laura Payne, University of Illinois, and Elizabeth Oresega-Smith, University of Delaware.

The report was sponsored by the National Recreation & Park Association and supported with a grant from the National Recreation Foundation.

For more information, contact Dr. Mowen by sending email to: [amowen@psu.edu](mailto:amowen@psu.edu) or call 814-865-2102.

**Links:** [PA Recreation and Park Society](#)  
[PA Parks and Forests Foundation](#)

## Feature

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### New Zealand Mud Snail Impacts Great Lakes, Alters Ecology

Long a problem in the western U.S., the New Zealand mud snail currently inhabits four of the five Great Lakes and is spreading into rivers and tributaries, according to a Penn State team of researchers.

These tiny creatures out-compete native snails and insects, but are not good fish food replacements for the native species.

"These snails have an operculum, a door that closes the shell," says Edward P. Levri, associate professor of biology at Penn State's Altoona Campus. "They can be out of the water for longer than other snails and when fed to fish, they are not digested and sometimes come out alive. This has a potential to alter the salmon and trout fisheries because they alter the food chain."

The New Zealand mud snail grows to a maximum of a quarter of an inch and is more normally a sixteenth to an eighth of an inch in length. The hard shell is capable of sealing off the soft animal from outside influences. In New Zealand, the snails reproduce asexually, resulting in identical clones, or sexually. However, in invaded areas, asexual cloning is the only mode of reproduction.

This mud snail spread to England as early as 1850 and Europe in the late 1800s. It is found in Japan, but when the snail arrived there is unknown. The first mud snail found in the U.S. was in 1987 in the Snake River, Idaho, but the species did not appear in the east until 1991 in Lake Ontario.

The western and eastern U.S. populations are separate episodes of introduction, because they represent different clones; in each case, only one snail needed to be introduced to begin the invasion. The snails in the Great Lakes region appear to be the same as one clone found in Europe.

"In the western U.S., this species is of special concern largely because of their ability to modify ecosystems," Levri told attendees today (August 8) at the Ecological Society of America's annual meeting in Milwaukee.

The snails in western streams alter the nitrogen and carbon cycling. They are primarily grazers and detritus eaters with very wide food preferences. In some places in streams in Yellowstone National Park, they reach population densities of 323 individuals per square inch. Levri, working with undergraduates Warren J. Jacoby, Shane J. Lunen, Ashley A. Kelly and Thomas A. Ladson, found that densities in the Great Lakes are not anywhere near that in the West.

"In our most recent survey, we were lucky if we found a few hundred per square meter," says Levri. "In Lake Erie they are not very abundant, but it is unclear what they are doing 100 feet below the surface."

In New Zealand, the mud snails are not a problem because of native trematodes -- flukes -- that infect the snails and controls their population and reproduction. Some people have suggested that those who want to control the snail introduce this trematode to the U.S. to control the snails.

"There are two problems with introducing these trematodes," says Levri. "The first is that any introduction of a nonnative species can cause worse problems than they were



expected to cure. The second is that these flukes have a multiple-host life cycle, infecting ducks that are apparently not affected before infecting the snails. This might work in the west where the snails are in shallow water, but no duck is going to dive 100 feet to get snails."

Levri and his team found that in Lake Ontario, the densities of the snails peak between 50 and 82 feet and they were rarely found in water less than 16 feet.

"What we can do is limit their expansion," says Levri. "That means that recreational water users must be very careful moving from one place to another. We advise anglers to freeze waders and fishing gear, or use Formula 409 or something like that to kill the snails."

He notes that signs are beginning to mark areas in New York where the snail is found to warn people to clean their gear.

The Penn State researcher warns that the snails are difficult to control, noting "I have frozen them for 12 hours at a time and about 50 percent of them survive."

The National Science Foundation supported this work.

Dr. Levri can be contact at 814-949-5496 or by sending email to: [ep11@psu.edu](mailto:ep11@psu.edu) .

## Grants & Awards

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

- **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**—[WPC Canoe Access Development Grant](#)
- **September 9**—[EPA Water Quality Trading Funding Proposals](#)
- **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](#)
- **September 30**—**NEW.** [DEP Recycling Performance 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](#)
- **November 30**—**NEW.** [PPL Green Building Certification Grants](#)

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

## Quick Clips

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

[DEP Advisory Committee Accepting Comments](#)  
[Editorial: Boost Heating Assistance](#)  
[Home Energy Prices Are Expected To Soar](#)  
[State To Look At Gas Drilling Regulations](#)  
[Editorial: Never Too Late To Protect Public](#)  
[Watch Where You Drop Your Butts](#)  
[Pocono Environmental Center Winds Award](#)  
[Editorial: Everybody Wants To Be Green](#)  
[Editorial: On Energy, Think For The Future](#)  
[Drilling In Lake Erie](#)  
[Carbon To Get Second Biggest Solar Farm](#)  
[Massive Solar Plant Proposed in Carbon County](#)  
[Growing Pains Ahead As State Develops Wind Power](#)  
[Concerns About Bats, Birds and Wind Farms](#)  
[Editorial: Municipalities Prepare For Wind Proposals](#)  
[Southeast Energy Tour Highlights Sun, Wind](#)  
[Could PPL's Rate Hike Skyrocket?](#)  
[PUC Approves PPL Electric Rate Plan](#)  
[PPL Rate Hike Phase-In Option OK'd](#)  
[Editorial: Consumer, Utilities to Benefit From Smart Meters](#)  
[DEP Helps Another Dentist Save Energy, Reduce Waste](#)  
[Hydroelectric Plant On Lehigh River?](#)  
[Demand For Firewood Soars](#)  
[Open Space Threats Discussed At Brandywine Conservancy Forum](#)  
[To Save Open Space, Communities Dangle Carrot](#)  
[Hard to Find Fault With Eastern Quakes](#)  
[Flight 93 Memorial Design Remains Contentious](#)  
[Recycling Batteries Grows in Importance](#)  
[Recycling Facilities Busy As Gas And Food Prices Rise](#)  
[Tight For Cash, People, Businesses Seek to Recycle](#)  
[Rich Colors Dress Fields, Forests](#)

## Watershed NewsClips

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

[Allegheny Alligators Still Swim The Creeks](#)  
[Wyoming County Resident Wait for Hazard Mitigation Funding](#)  
[1874 Flood in Pittsburgh Showed Power of Elements](#)  
[Drillers Eye Hauling Well Drilling Wastewater](#)  
[Philipsburg to Host Moshannon Creek Festival August 24](#)  
[Officials Looking for Little Results in New Aquatic Search](#)

[Earth Conservancy Mine Water Treatment Grant](#)

## **Regulations**

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The Environmental Quality Board, Delaware River Basin Commission and the Public Utility Commission all published regulations this week.

The Environmental Quality Board published final amendments to [coal mining safety](#) regulations, [mine opening blasting](#) regulations and a [series of stream redesignations](#).

The Delaware River Basin Commission [published proposed changes](#) to its Water Code to implement revised water audit procedures.

The Public Utility Commission published advanced notice of a proposed order on [electric distribution company reliability and safety](#).

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – August 9, 2008](#)

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

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

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

## **Technical Guidance & Permits**

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No new policy documents were published this week.

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

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

## **Calendar of Events**

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

- **NEW.** [DEP Announces No-Cost Hazardous Material Remediation Training](#)
- **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.



## PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

- **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**—**NEW**. DEP [Statewide Water Resources Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **August 28**—DEP [Mine Families First Response and Communications Advisory Council](#) meeting. DEP Mine Rescue Station, 286 Industrial Park Rd, Ebensburg. 10:00.
- **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](mailto:ldodson@state.pa.us).
- **September 5**—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](mailto: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.
- **October 18**—**NEW**. Joint Conservation Committee Sewage Management and Treatment Task Force. Penn Stater Conference Center, State College. 10:00.
- **October 23**—**NEW**. Joint Conservation Committee Legislative Forestry Task Force. Penn Stater Conference Center, State College. 10:00.

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

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

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

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

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

## **Stories Invited**

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

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## **Supporting Member PA Outdoor Writers Assn./PA Trout Unlimited**

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*PA Environment Digest* is a supporting member of the [Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association](#), [Pennsylvania Trout Unlimited](#) and the [Doc Fritchey Chapter Trout Unlimited](#).