

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

August 29, 2005

Fall Legislative Session Shaping Up

Most vacations are done, the kids are headed back to school and the mornings are a bit nippy, naturally our thoughts turn to what the General Assembly will be doing on environmental legislation this Fall (well some of us anyway).

With the environmental bond issue and implementing legislation, farming and local ordinances, storage tank fees, watershed association funding and infrastructure security projects taking up the first part of the year, a variety of other issues will now be taking center stage.

Already the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee has announced a meeting and hearing on the timber industry and uniform covenants legislation.

Legislation to implement provisions in the environmental bond issue legislation to provide grants for historic preservation and a sales tax holiday for energy efficient appliances are pending.

Legislation to require the collection of mercury switches from junked automobiles, formally creating the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education, setting energy efficiency standards for appliances and extending the Recycling Fee are also in Committee.

The Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy and the development of a Pennsylvania-only rule for limiting mercury emissions from power plants have legislative interest.

To help sort your way through the different bills, the *Digest* has updated its list of some of the key environmental bills pending in the House and Senate. (*See the attachment below.*)

What will actually be considered when the Senate and House return in September, well that's the fun of the legislative process, you never really know for sure.

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[Black Moshannon State Park](#) Bog Trail.
Photo by Karen Hohman

Attachment – [PA Environment Digest 08/29/05 - PDF](#)

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On the Hill

Timber Industry Subject of House Environmental Committee Meeting

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee is holding an informational meeting on August 31 on the timber and lumbering industry in Pennsylvania.

Paul Laskava, from the [Pennsylvania Forest Products Association](#), will provide an overview of the industry and its role in environmental protection. Also invited is Craig Brooks, Executive Director, Joint Legislative Air, Water, Pollution Control and Conservation Committee to discuss the [Forestry Task Force Report](#).

House Committee Sets Hearing on Uniform Brownfield Covenants Bill

[House Bill 1249](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) which would establish a uniform covenant for brownfield sites needing post-cleanup and maintenance, will be the topic of a September 27 hearing by the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

The legislation follows model national language that would establish standard covenants covering limitations on use, maintenance obligations and institutional controls after a brownfield cleanup.

At least ten other states have adopted similar legislation, most recently Delaware.

Environmental Issues Forum to Feature State Recreation Plan Presentation

On October 24 the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee will hold an [Environmental Issues Forum](#) to hear presentations on the State Recreation Plan.

Representatives of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the [Pennsylvania Parks and Recreation Society](#) are scheduled to present comments.

Joint Committee's August Environmental Synopsis Available Online

The [August issue of Environmental Synopsis](#) published by the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) is now available online.

In this issue, Chairman Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) talks about a recent visit to Oil Creek State Park and a National Recreation Trail designation by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, glass recycling, coastal area development and the price tag for infrastructure needs.

In Other News

State to Explore Use of More Hybrid Vehicles in Fleet, Grants Available

Gov. Rendell [this week announced](#) the state will explore the use of more hybrid and alternative-fueled vehicles in the state fleet to help reduce air pollution and reduce the consumption of foreign oil.

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The Commonwealth plans to increase the number of hybrid vehicles in steps: by 2006 it will add 30 vehicles, by 2008 50 more vehicles, by 2010 add 75 vehicles and by the 2011 model year at least 25 percent of all new passenger vehicles purchased for the Commonwealth fleet will be hybrid vehicles.

These purchases will be made as long as the total cost of ownership does not exceed the average total cost of ownership of the rest of the fleet, according to the announcement.

The Department of General Services will prepare annual reports analyzing its fleet options, total cost of ownership and, in conjunction with DEP, environmental benefits of the program.

Individuals, school districts and others can also buy hybrid vehicles with the help of the [Alternative Fuel Incentive Grant Program](#). Applications are due October 3.

The grants include rebates for the purchase of hybrid and alternative fueled vehicles and biofuels.

Alternative fuels include compressed natural gas, liquefied natural gas, liquid propane gas, ethanol, methanol, hydrogen, coal-derived liquid fuels and fuels derived from biological materials.

For more information on Green Transportation initiatives at the Commonwealth, visit the [Governor's Green Government Commission webpage](#).

NewsClip: [State Commits to Buying More Hybrid Vehicles](#)
[Editorial: Hybrid Leadership](#)

York Waste Authority Awards Combustion Ash Research Grants

The York County Solid Waste and Refuse Authority [has awarded two grants](#) to support innovative technology and market development of non-traditional uses for municipal solid waste incinerator ash from the York County Resource Recovery Center.

The grants were awarded to Pittsburgh Mineral & Environmental Technology, Inc. and eco/Technologies, LLC.

The purpose of the grants is to support and stimulate technological or market innovation that results in the development of non-traditional viable commercial uses for the municipal waste combustion ash from the York County Resource Recovery Center. The Authority's combined funding support to these two entities amounts to \$243,542.

PMET's research will focus on the use of RRC ash in their "Brixx" process to manufacture bricks for building applications. Research work will include collecting ash samples, characterizing RRC ash with respect to parameters critical to the "Brixx" process, optimizing the ash mix for production, defining product standards, testing the product for functional and environmental performance, pilot production of approximately 3,200 bricks for testing and marketing and developing a scale-up plan for commercial Brixx production using RRC ash.

eco/Tech will undertake two research projects. One will explore the use of RRC ash in technical ceramics and the other will explore the use of RRC ash in compression-formed masonry products. Research work will include defining product standards, identifying manufacturers potentially interested in incorporating recycled ash into their production processes, characterizing RRC municipal waste combustion ash with respect to parameters relevant to technical ceramics and compression-formed masonry products,

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and optimizing the ash mix for TC and CFM production based on multiple rounds of production and performance testing.

The work also includes quarterly reports and a final report describing the research program and presenting all testing data. eco/Tech will team with Columbia University and Sustainable Dynamics, LLC to complete this research.

Work is expected to be completed within 12 months.

Since 1998, the Authority has had an agreement with American Ash Recycling Corporation to recycle 100 percent of the municipal waste combustion ash from the Resource Recovery Center. The ash is currently recycled into an aggregate material marketed commercially as “AggRite”. AggRite is permitted by the state for use in a variety of construction applications.

For more information visit the [Ash Research Grant webpage](#) or contact Ellen O’Connor at 717-845-1066.

Final Collection for “Hard to Recycle” Items Features Free Best Buy Gift Cards

The Pennsylvania Resources Council is hosting its final “[Hard to Recycle](#)” collection event in Pittsburgh on September 17.

The event runs from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and will take place at Construction Junction, 214 N. Lexington Street in the Point Breeze section of Pittsburgh.

In addition to electronics, PRC will accept latex paint, tires, and large appliances for a nominal fee. No oil based paint products will be accepted. Individuals may drop off only appliances at Appliance Warehouse, 523 Bingham Street – South Side at the same times.



As a special incentive, participants dropping off electronics at the event will receive free Best Buy Gift Cards while supplies last.

At a similar event on July 16, over 5.6 tons of mixed electronic equipment, 6.75 tons of latex paint, 268 tires, and approximately 250 appliances were collected from about 300 participants.

Through collaboration with the Verizon Wireless HopeLine Program, PRC will accept wireless handsets at no charge at its event—this includes the handset, charger, battery and accessories.

Through the award-winning Verizon Wireless HopeLine program, most of the donated phones and equipment are refurbished and sold, with proceeds going to support domestic violence awareness and prevention programs. Any remaining phones are recycled in an environmentally friendly way.

The collections for “Hard to Recycle” materials are designed to remove items from the waste stream for recycling and refurbishing.

PRC is offering a one-stop drop off for these items at a reduced cost for what individuals would normally pay for disposal of these materials. PRC is accepting cash only—no checks or credit cards, please. See the fee structure below.

- Tires: \$1 No rims. Tires must be 18” or smaller

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- Latex Paint: \$1/can (includes quarts, pints, etc. up to a gallon) or \$1/gallon for cans over a gallon
- Appliances: Air conditioners \$15; Other Freon items \$10; Stoves, washers, dryers and other large appliances \$5
- Electronics: CPUs, monitors, VCRs, DVD players, stereos \$5; Mice and keyboards \$1; Cell Phones are FREE; Complete computer system (including CPU, monitor, mouse, and keyboard) \$10; Printers – small \$10, large \$15; Televisions up to 19” in size \$15; 20” and up \$20

The “Hard to Recycle” collection events are a project of PRC, Construction Junction, the City of Pittsburgh and the Allegheny County Health Department and are sponsored by Office Depot, Verizon Wireless, and Best Buy.

For more information call Ginette Walker Vinski at 412-488-7490 or visit the [Hard to Recycle event webpage](#).

York Educator Wins Conservation District Award

The York County Conservation District has presented Jennifer Bankowski with the award for “Outstanding Conservation Educator for 2005.”

The award is given each year by the Conservation District to recognize individuals and groups whose efforts have demonstrated support of conservation in York County .

Bankowski received the award for her efforts as Community Services Specialist for the York County Solid Waste Authority. In that capacity, Bankowski provides school students and civic groups with environmental education programming on a wide range of waste management topics including paper recycling, composting and waste-to-energy.

She also assists with the County Envirothon and serves on the sponsorship committee. In addition, Bankowski serves on the board of the York County Conservation Society and handles public information related to promoting the Society and the educational benefits of Indian Steps Museum.

\$872,000 in Grants Awarded by NRCS in PA Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Five [Conservation Incentive Grants](#) were awarded to groups in the Pennsylvania portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed totaling over \$872,000 by the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service.

The program is designed to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in conjunction with agricultural production.

The Pennsylvania grants went to—

Pennsylvania State University - \$196,291 research using new and conventional manure injection technologies on no-till and sod soils to control odor and nutrient losses to surface water runoff;

Brian Brake - \$9,265 to determine the impact of planting alternative dairy forages;

Chesapeake Bay Foundation - \$440,616 using precision dairy feeding to reduce nutrient pollution;

Chester County Conservation District - \$10,700 using a horse drawn no-till planter for plain-sect farmers;

Mifflin County Conservation District - \$215,433 using environmental sensitive maintenance on farm access roads to eliminate nutrient and sediment pollution in the Kishacoquillas Valley Watershed.

For more information visit the [Conservation Innovation Grants webpage](#).

New Angler & Boater Magazine Website Goes Online



The Angler & Boater magazine published by the Fish and Boat Commission now has a new website – www.AnglerBoater.com.

Angler & Boater is published six times a year and features over 64 ad-free pages of information and stories about fishing and boating in Pennsylvania.

The current issue, for example, [features the Swatara Water Trail](#).

For more information, visit the [Angler & Boater magazine website](#).

Pitt to Teach Green Building, Sustainable Water Use Technology in Brazil

Starting this fall, University of Pittsburgh students will be able to travel to the University at Campinas in São Paulo, Brazil, to conduct research in green construction and sustainable water use technology under a new Pitt program funded by a \$3.2 million Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship grant from the National Science Foundation.

The program, spearheaded by the [Mascaro Sustainability Initiative](#) in Pitt's School of Engineering and a joint effort of the school and the Center for Latin American Studies within Pitt's University Center for International Studies, will allow engineering doctoral students to journey to São Paulo for eight-month international research rotations at UNICAMP, one of the top engineering schools in South America.

"Sustainability is a global issue, and an appropriate technology for the U.S. may not be appropriate for another region," noted principal investigator Eric Beckman, who is Bayer Professor of Chemical Engineering at Pitt and codirector of the MSI. "At UNICAMP, students will gain an international perspective on technology and design, with an eye to learning about novel approaches to sustainability developed by our Brazilian colleagues."

"We believe that by learning to adapt to the Brazilian culture and to study, research, and live in Brazil for an extended period, the IGERT fellows will then have the confidence and ability to adjust to other cultures throughout the world," Beckman added. "This will make the graduating fellows highly desirable to government, nongovernmental organizations, and industry."

In an effort to increase the number of Hispanic students in the field of engineering, the program also includes partnerships with the University of Texas at El Paso and the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez. Students from those institutions will be able to complete the Master of Science degree at their home institutions, transitioning into the IGERT program during their final semester and pursuing the Ph.D. degree at Pitt.

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The program, which is the first IGERT grant led by Pitt, involves faculty from all seven engineering departments at the University. Coprincipal investigators are associate professors of industrial engineering Kim LaScola Needy and Mary Besterfield-Sacre; Robert Ries, assistant professor of civil engineering and director of Pitt's Green Construction Program; and Laura Schaefer, assistant professor of mechanical engineering.

The curriculum emphasizes team-based design that crosses departmental lines. Unlike most graduate engineering programs, it will include a capstone sustainable design course, so that engineers from different specialties can learn a common framework for sustainable design.

Created in 2003 through the generous sponsorship of John C. Mascaro (CEE '66, '80) of Mascaro Construction Co. LP, the Heinz Endowments, the Dominion Foundation, and the estate of George M. Bevier (PetE '13), the MSI supports research and educational programs that focus on greening the built environment and the sustainable use of water. (Courtesy [Green Building Alliance](#))

Conservation Consultants Building Achieves Gold LEED Standard



The CCI Center on Pittsburgh's South Side, designed and operated by [Conservation Consultants, Inc.](#), just received the LEED for Existing Buildings Gold Certification. This is the first LEED-EB certification in the Pittsburgh region.

The Gold rating criteria includes building operations and system upgrades in existing structures where the majority of interior or exterior surfaces remain unchanged.

CCI worked with Tai + Lee Architects, Bert Davis, and Clearview Project Services Company on the initial green renovation of the building in 1998.

Subsequently, CCI and the Green Building Alliance developed green policies for future construction and implemented a green operations and maintenance plan in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Resources Council and Tudi Mechanical Systems.

Learn more about the CCI Center by reading the [Green Building Alliance case study](#). (Courtesy [Green Building Alliance](#))

Green Building Alliance Cornerstone Newsletter Now Online

The summer issue of *Cornerstone*, the newsletter of the Green Building Alliance in Pittsburgh, is now available online.

This edition features a story about the green rehabilitation of the Heinz History Center, an interview on planning green meetings and conferences, urban heat islands and more. [Download *Cornerstone* by clicking here.](#)

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Workshops Help Reduce Energy Use in Industrial Settings by Best Practices

Rising energy costs have created new challenges for Pennsylvania industry using energy-intensive equipment and systems including large motors, fan and pumping systems, air compressors, boiler and steam systems, and process heating equipment. Three new [workshops will teach best practices](#) that will help reduce energy costs in these areas for businesses.

The first will be held on September 13 at the Penn State McKeesport Campus and is co-sponsored by DEP's Southwest Regional Office and The Electro-Technology Application Center in Bethlehem PA. Prospective attendees should contact Kathryn Watson in the DEP Pittsburgh Office at 412-442-4140 to register.

The second workshop is scheduled for October 5 at the Spirax Sarco Steam Training facility located in Center Valley, Lehigh County. Angela Funk is the workshop coordinator and can be reached at 1-800-996-3232 for registration.

Spirax Sarco will also hold an advanced 2.5-day steam specialist qualification workshop on January 24-26, 2006. This workshop provides the opportunity to become a DOE-qualified steam specialist and as such requires the successful completion of a rigorous examination on the last day of the workshop.

These workshops are presented through a cooperative effort involving voluntary sponsors from across Pennsylvania, the U.S. Department of Energy's Industrial Technology Program, and DEP's Office of Energy & Technology Deployment are planning multiple energy-saving workshops.

For more information about [Best Practices Workshops](#) or to sponsor an event, contact Richard Illig, DEP, at 717-772-5834, or by e-mail rillig@state.pa.us. Also visit DEP's [Industries of the Future webpage](#).

Webcast of Naphthalene Reduction Workshop Available

An August 10 workshop called "[Opportunities for Naphthalene Reduction in Coatings and Solvents](#): A Dialog with Coil Coatings and Coating Industry Leaders on Waste Minimization" is now available for viewing online.

The workshop, sponsored by the Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Mid-Atlantic Region Waste Minimization Program, and the National Coil Coaters Association provides an understanding of the issues related to the Coil Coating Industry and the innovative ideas for the industry to reduce Naphthalene presence in coatings and solvents.

The workshop is now archived at the [Villanova Center for the Environment web site](#).

Keystone HELP! Program Funds Energy Efficient, Clean Energy Projects at Home



AFC First Financial Corporation, an Allentown-based financial institution, along with West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, announced the formation of [Keystone HELP!](#) (Home Energy Loan Program), serving residential customers of Allegheny Power in

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Western and Central Pennsylvania.

The program will provide low interest loans to homeowners who make home improvements that promote clean energy.

Special interest rate consideration will be given to those utilizing ENERGYSTAR Rated Heating & Air Conditioning, ENERGYSTAR Rated Windows, Doors, and Siding, and Geothermal, Solar and Small Wind Systems and other qualifying home improvements.

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

Watershed Alliance of York to Host Sustainability Conference

The [Watershed Alliance of York](#), a coalition of public and private stakeholders committed to encouraging watershed planning, restoration and protection in York County, will host a conference on the sustainability of York County on September 23.

“[Pigs, Parks and Superstores: A Conference on the Sustainability of York County](#),” the conference is designed to begin a dialogue among York County citizens on the subject of sustainability and what it means to York County.

The Codorus Watershed Endowment of the York County Community Foundation and local businesses and municipal governments are sponsoring the conference.

The morning session will feature two keynote speakers. Dr. Jim Hamilton, a professor at Penn State – Mont Alto, will provide a presentation centered around the question - Is sustainability impossible or inevitable? Thomas Hylton, a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist from Pottstown, will make a presentation entitled Save Our Lands, Save Our Towns.

Afternoon breakout sessions will focus on specific topics of interest to York County residents including urban beautification, municipal land use planning, developing tools for sustainable development and providing tools for collaboration.

The conference is open to all, but pre-registration and payment of a \$10 fee for lunch are required. Attendance is limited to the first 190 people to pre-register.

For more information visit the [Conference webpage](#) or contact Gary Peacock at 717-840-7430. The registration deadline is September 16.

Community Forestry Conference Set for September 27-28

The 14th annual Pennsylvania Community Forestry Conference will be held on September 27-28 at the Penn State Great Valley Warren V. Musser Auditorium in Malvern.

The conference is sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the [Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council](#).

Day one of the conference features seminars and presentations on:
Bare Root Trees: Successes in Community Collaborations, Interactive Stormwater Management: Modeling Green BMPs into Site Design, Pennsylvania Pest Problems and Solutions, Assessing Storm Damage to Urban Forests: Timely, Accurate and Low-cost Measurement and Reporting Tools, Assessing Urban Forests and Its Integration with Environmental Regulations, Trees as an Urban Stormwater Best Management Practice,

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New Tools for Risk Assessment, Inventory and Analysis – An Overview, Teaching Tree Pruning: Review of a New USDA Forest Service/ Penn State CD

The second day features a welcome address by DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis, followed by sessions on: Marketing – How to Compete in Today’s Marketplace . . . And Win, An Open Space Plan For Southeastern Pennsylvania, Ecological Restoration and Design, Getting to Yes: Testimonials of Successful People and Organizations, Transforming Abandoned Land – The Philadelphia Story, Pittsburgh’s Shade Tree Program, Diana Ames, Pittsburgh Tree Commission

More registration information Julianne Schieffer, Extension Urban Forester, Penn State School of Forest Resources, Collegeville, at 610-489-4315 or send e-mail to jxs51@psu.edu .

Have We Been Invaded? Native Plant Seminar September 3

“Have We Been Invaded?” is the theme of a native plant seminar to be held September 3 at the Fisherman’s Cove Allegheny River launch site 10 miles downstream of Franklin in Venango County.

The seminar will feature a walk along the river to identify native and nonnative species, background on wildlife living along waterways and information on the best way to use native species in your own backyard/riverside habitat.

The [Audubon Society](#), the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council’s Northern Allegheny Project](#), the [Venango County Conservation District](#) and the Fisherman’s Cove Preservation Foundation are sponsoring the event.

For more information contact Cathy Kentzel, 412-931-0703 or send email to: kentzel7cove@aol.com

Worldview, Sustainability and Environmental Education Course Offered

Penn State is offering a new course to environmental educators on sustainability at Shaver’s Creek Environmental Center.

“Worldview, Sustainability and Environmental Education” offers environmental educators the opportunity to learn about teaching environmental education from the worldview and how teaching a worldview shapes attitudes towards sustainability.

To register for this three credit course contact Theresa Heaton, 814-865-1852 or send email to: tuhl@psu.edu .

Attachment: [Worldview Course Flyer - PDF](#)

Pennsylvania Preserves 4,300+ Acres of Farmland

Pennsylvania’s Farmland Preservation Board voted this week to approve the permanent preservation of 37 farms covering 4,357 acres. With the additional 37 farms, Pennsylvania has preserved 2,687 farms, totaling 308,461 acres.

The farms added this week were from 18 counties: Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Bradford, Bucks, Centre, Chester, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Perry, Snyder, Union and York. Fifty-five of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties are currently enrolled in the program.

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The Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program was developed in 1988 to help delay the loss of prime farmland to non-agricultural uses. The program enables state, county and local governments to purchase conservation easements (also called development rights) from owners of quality farmland.

For more information, visit the [Farmland Preservation Program webpage](#).

More Options for Applying for Mine Subsidence Insurance

The Department of Environmental Protection now offers property owners new options to apply for [Mine Subsidence Insurance](#).

Previously, DEP's MSI website referred all applicants to an insurance producer and only provided an online application for insurance producer use.

Now DEP provides property owners three application options: use a PDF application provided online, call a toll-free number to be mailed an application package, or apply through an insurance agent/producer.

A fourth application option is under development. It features an interactive form that will electronically submit data to DEP and provide for payment by check or credit card.

For more information and to apply for mine subsidence insurance, visit DEP's [Mine Subsidence Insurance webpage](#).

Budding Geologist in Your Household? Get a PA Rock Hound Kit!

Are you a rock hound, geologist looking to study rocks or a student heading back to school? The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is offering the [Pennsylvania Rock Hound Kit](#) with samples of 12 rocks and spaces for six more you collect.

The kit also contains an insert that explains characteristics and the location of the 12 samples, as well as an interactive CD-ROM that includes lesson plans, educational publications, maps, a video and interactive games.

The cost for the box is \$15 with a \$4.95 shipping fee. The program, which includes periodic teacher workshops across the state on bringing Pennsylvania geology into the classroom, supports itself. For every rock box sold to the public, several boxes can be offered to teachers free of charge.

Support for the Rock Hound Program is a partnership between DCNR, the [Pennsylvania Aggregates and Concrete Association](#), state Department of Education and the [Field Conference of Pennsylvania Geologists](#).

Pennsylvania has a number of clubs that organize field trips to collect rocks, minerals and fossils. A director of clubs can be found at the [Penn Minerals webpage](#).

For more information and to print out an online order form, go to the [Pennsylvania Rock Hound Kit webpage](#) or call 717-702-2017.

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Heritage Conservancy Honors Richard Sprenkle



Richard G. Sprenkle, recently retired DCNR Deputy Secretary of Conservation and Engineering Services, was honored with a “Lifetime Achievement Award” at an annual awards celebration hosted by the [Heritage Conservancy](#).

Sprenkle retired January 14 from the deputy secretary’s position where he had served since DCNR’s formation in 1995. He oversaw three DCNR bureaus— Recreation and Conservation; Facility Design and Construction; and Topographic and Geologic Survey.

Founded in 1958, the conservancy is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving natural and historic heritage. Working with private landowners, communities and government agencies, the Heritage Conservancy has helped preserve thousands of acres of natural lands and many historic buildings.

Feature - Mercury

A Variety of Opinions on Mercury Emissions from Power Plants

With the Department of Environmental Protection [set to develop a Pennsylvania-only rule to reduce mercury emissions](#), a U.S. Environmental Protection mercury reduction rule already in place that will reduce mercury emissions in Pennsylvania by 86 percent and a variety of lawsuits pending on the issue, the *Digest* thought it might be helpful to gather a variety of opinions and information on the issue in one place.

[PennFuture – Mercury Emissions and Hotspots](#)

[Cut Mercury Emissions in Ways that Make a Real Difference and Without Threatening Our Jobs](#) – United Mine Workers, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Electric Power Generation Association and Pennsylvania Coal association.

[Regulating Mercury in Pennsylvania by Senator Ray Musto](#)

[Position of Senate and House Environmental Committee Chairs](#)

[DEP’s Report on PennFuture Mercury Petition](#)

[PennFuture Response to DEP’s Report](#)

[Overview and Technical Information on U.S. EPA’s Mercury Rule
Basic Information and Background](#)

NewsClip: [Pitt DOE Grant Aimed at Controlling Mercury Emissions
Mercury Disposal by Dentists Focus of DEP Review](#)

Feature – Mine Water Treatment

Mine Water Treatment Technology Conference Attracts Over 260



In a fitting location half a mile from the mouth of the Ohio River on the banks of Monongahela River, the first ever [Mine Water Treatment Technology Conference](#) was held last week at Pittsburgh's Station Square.

Over 260 people from 3 countries and 17 states attended the four day event where the latest advances in mine water treatment technologies were presented.

Passive treatment pioneer Bob Kleinmann from the U.S. Department of Energy set the stage in his keynote address as he put the current state of the art in the perspective of just how far the field has advanced from its birth in the 1980's.

The federal Office of Surface Mining's Brent Means paralleled Kleinmann's presentation by characterizing the growth of expenditures in publicly-funded mine water mitigation projects using passive treatment. An amazing \$64 million has been spent on over 200 projects since 1992 in Pennsylvania alone.

In what appears to be a growing and important trend in mine water treatment, a number of presentations were made where advances in understanding the microbiology of mine water may be exploited. For example, sulfate reducing bacteria are being used in bioreactors to remove heavy metals and neutralize acids in polluted mine water at locations on several continents.

Those same sulfate reducing "bugs" may someday allow in situ treatment where mine water is actually treated in the old mine workings using waste products to feed the bugs as they perform their chemical magic. Various types of bacteria may also promote the removal of a variety of harmful metals from mine polluted water.

Several novel approaches to removing iron, the most common metal pollutant in mine water, were presented. Each in its own way provided optimizations improving performance and/or reducing the costs of treatment.

Related to iron removal were presentations dealing specifically with the production of waste iron sludges, a by-product of treatment systems. Methods that reduce sludge volumes, a very important factor in lowering the cost of operations of treatment facilities, were discussed.

Other ways of optimizing performance of treatment systems were also explored. For instance, an understanding of how limestone dissolves can lead to treatment systems that make the most of this inexpensive material in neutralizing acids.

Understanding failure modes of treatment systems as well as ways of designing systems to avoid failures were presented. One presentation offered design optimization strategies for flushing residues that would otherwise lead to system failure.

An entire day of the conference was devoted to a relatively new subject in mine water treatment: resource recovery, i.e. the proverbial making lemonade from lemons.

[Bob Hedin](#), the godfather of resource recovery, discussed how some iron sludges are valuable as a source of paint pigments. In fact, [Environoxide](#), his company's family

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of pigments derived from iron sludge, has won a 2003 Top 10 GreenSpec award for excellence as an environmental building product.

Other uses of treatment system sludges are being developed that may eventually help in paying for treatment costs, or maybe even turning a profit. Here's a sampling of the kinds of applications using sludge and turning them into value added products.

- A corrosion inhibitor for iron reinforcing bars for use in concrete;
- Self-lubricating pressed metal bearings;
- Additives to Portland cement improving its physical properties and appearance;
- Raw feed material for use in blast furnaces in making iron and steel; and
- A product preventing phosphorus losses from agricultural lands into waterways.

One presentation discussed harnessing the power of flowing water of abandoned mine discharges using small scale electric generation equipment.

In addition to presentations by nationally known experts, the conference also included a heavily attended one-day workshop on passive treatment design. The most current design principles and in-depth look at mine water chemistry were emphasized.

The conference also heard from Congressman John E. Peterson, (R-5th District) who talked about his efforts to accelerate clean-up the historic problems caused by abandoned coal mines.

[His introduction of HB 2721](#) would reauthorize the ability to collect fees on every ton of coal mined in the United States. Unless Congress acts, that authority will expire on June 30, 2006, which in turn would cut off one of the most important sources of funding for reclaiming lands and waters damaged by old mining practices.

Additionally Peterson's legislation would strategically direct more funding to areas having the most abandoned mine problems, while limiting spending on non-abandoned mine related problems. While vowing to work for a solution good for Pennsylvania, the Congressman noted the existence of powerful interests having competing notions on how funding should best be spent. To move forward, he acknowledged some compromise will need to occur.

The conference was a joint effort among many organizations. The [federal Office of Surface Mining](#), having a mandate to provide technology transfer, joined with the coalition that organizes Pennsylvania's annual conference on abandoned mine reclamation and with the [Southern Alleghenies Conservancy](#) which had sponsored several symposiums on resource recovery.

Organizations playing roles in producing the conference included the [Department of Environmental Protection](#), both the [Eastern](#) and [Western](#) PA Coalitions for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, [Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program](#), [Western Pennsylvania Conservancy](#) and the [Kiski Basin Initiatives](#).

Because of the success of this year's conference, the partners are interested in producing future conferences, perhaps once every several years, while reverting to a traditional Pennsylvania focus in intervening years.

Detailed information on all presentations is available at the [Conference website](#).
[Click here to send a letter to your member of Congress supporting HR 2721.](#)

(Contributed by [Bruce Golden](#), Regional Coordinator, [Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#))

Feature – Land Protection

Many organizations are involved in the permanent preservation of sensitive habitat and other land resources in Pennsylvania. Here's how one organization—the Wildlands Conservancy in the Lehigh Valley—recently reorganized its land protection efforts.

The New Legacy Land Funds

By Nelson Markley, Chairman of the Board, [Wildlands Conservancy](#)



In January, the board of directors of Wildlands Conservancy approved a significant change in its land-protection program by creating the Legacy Land Funds. Acting on its conviction that land preservation is one of the most important challenges facing eastern Pennsylvania, the board established this new funding structure to provide a strong foundation for expanding the Conservancy's work in this area. The intent of the board's action is to position the organization to play an even greater role in land protection in the Lehigh Valley and the Lehigh River Valley.

Land protection has always been one of Wildlands Conservancy's strengths. With many partners, it has sheltered over 43,000 acres of precious habitat in eastern Pennsylvania by purchases or by conservation agreements established with individual landowners. Over the last 32 years, many millions of dollars have flowed through this organization for all kinds of land-protection projects. We have much to be proud of and much more to do in the future.

A significant part of Wildlands' success in land protection is found in its work with the Pennsylvania Game Commission in acquiring gamelands. Starting in 1983 under the leadership of Charlie Nehf, the Conservancy, using its own Wildlands Preservation Fund as a funding resource, has helped to protect about 32,000 acres of wildlife habitat.

Although the driving force for gamelands protection is the sporting community, this activity benefits all us. These woodlands add to the beauty of the region, protect the habitat of a diverse list of animals and plants, and provide wonderful opportunities for year-round recreation. The new Legacy Land Funds builds on Nehf's ideas and broadens their purpose.

The broader goals of the Legacy Land Funds are to support financially the Conservancy's mission of identifying suitable working farms, gamelands, fishing-access lands, parks, greenways, trails, reserves, preserves, and sanctuaries – and to assist in their protection through methods ranging from simple acquisitions and to a wide variety of conservation agreements. At the outset three specific funds were authorized under the umbrella of the Legacy Land Funds.

The first fund is a familiar one, and it remains unchanged in its focus. The Wildlands Preservation Fund was established by the Conservancy about 20 years ago as a flexible "revolving fund" used to assist the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry in gathering land into their land-holding systems.

Using this fund, the Conservancy has been successful in helping to protect about 32,000 acres so far, and we are surely not finished. In spite of a current scarcity of

funding from these agencies, Wildlands is still very active in this area with a focus on access to existing public lands. The emphasis remains precisely the same as founder Charlie Nehf envisioned it: the protection of habitat-rich lands accessible by the public. Contributions to the Wildlands Preservation Fund are being sought from those interested in the protection of these types of public lands.

The second fund is new: The South Mountain Preservation Fund has been established to reflect the Conservancy’s renewed emphasis on the protection of the green backdrop to the Lehigh Valley: the beautiful South Mountain. Many years ago, Bob and Ardie Rodale helped launch the Conservancy into the business of protecting South Mountain by creating the original 197-acre South Mountain Preserve.

Since then, the Conservancy has added (through purchases and gifts) about 113 acres to this preserve. Coupling this preserve to an equal-sized parcel of park land to the east owned by the city of Allentown, the Robert Rodale Reserve was created in the early 1990s. To further the protection of undeveloped land on South Mountain, the Conservancy will now be actively raising funds for the new South Mountain Preservation Fund.

The third fund is also new: The Open Lands Fund has been established to help protect agricultural lands, park lands, and natural and recreational areas in the Lehigh Valley and the Lehigh River Valley. Contributions will be welcomed from all who want to support the wide-ranging land protection efforts of the Conservancy, whose staff works daily with land owners, counties, municipalities, and state agencies to acquire land for trails, parks, and other public-recreation areas.

Many of these projects require some measure of private funding. The Open Lands Fund is designed to be the flexible “revolving fund” that will enable the Conservancy to close the deal and protect more open lands for future generations.

This new configuration of funds will allow Wildlands Conservancy donors to have more control of the direction their contributions and bequests take in helping us protect land. The oversight of the Legacy Land Funds by the board of directors will assure that donations will be wisely invested in land protection that meets with the donors’ intentions.

We looking forward to working with you, our donors, as we move forward in our important land-protection work making full use of the new Legacy Land Funds.

Reprinted with permission from the [Wildlands newsletter](#) published by the [Wildlands Conservancy](#).

Feature - Summer Interns II

Learning Can Be Tough for These DCNR Interns

A sea of green gobbled up the diminutive figure seconds after she received her marching orders from her Department of Conservation and Natural Resources taskmaster.

Spicebush limbs slapped her; green briar snagged



DCNR Interns Jessica Jerin and Nathan Fuller, Jr. and biologist Autumn Sabo

her; spider webs enshrouded her; and the mosquitoes and horse flies never stopped following.

There was no easy way through the understory jungle climbing steeply from the shore of Pinchot Lake. The only way was to follow the deer trails snaking through the brush, under fallen trees, and over slick rocks and logs.

When she finally stepped on to a cleared trail after helping canvass a 70 acre-tact in [Gifford Pinchot State Park](#), her clothes were soaked with perspiration and remnants of an overnight rain. She had burrs and spider webs in her hair, vegetation stains on her clothing, and a smile on her face spreading ear to ear.

Jessica Jerin of Carlisle was happy doing exactly what she had signed up to do. No classrooms, no assignments, no mandatory reading, just a daily diet of learning as she volunteered her knowledge, enthusiasm and stamina as a student intern assigned to the Ecological Services section with DCNR's Bureau of Forestry.

Every day is different for the 21-year-old biology major at [Shippensburg University](#), yet the end-result is the same—when she returns late this month to her senior year, she will have a summer of invaluable field work under her belt, and a better understanding of where she wants to go—and what she wants to do—with her science degree.

“I feel very fortunate that I've had this chance to learn at a summer job that teaches you something just about every day,” said Jerin. “I've learned how to use GIS (Geographic Information Systems), and I'm learning how to recognize plants, and just what the state is doing to protect those that are threatened.”

A lesson in the latter part of that learning experience came early this summer as Jerin teamed up with another Shippensburg student, Nathan Fuller of Lewisberry, and their mentor, boss, and friend, Autumn Sabo, an employee of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy who works with the Pennsylvania Native Plant Program.

Their assignment that day was to survey some 70 very rugged acres, looking for plant species of special concern that might lie in the path of a proposed disc golf course at Gifford Pinchot State Park in York County. Before and after the trek through the underbrush, Sabo peppered her students with questions following a basic theme: what is this and why?

A morning sampling: is this purple loosestrife growing lakeside? A rare but possible Schumard oak, or the more common red, white or pin? Take a sample back to the office for later identification. Or try now, using Sabo's fieldwork Bible, “Plants of Pennsylvania,” or other essential tools of her trade: hand lens, maps, ruler, knife and small shovel.

All help Sabo and her crew conserve Pennsylvania's native wild plants with the Pennsylvania Native plant program.. Their inventory results and data are contributed to The [Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program](#) (PNHP). PNHP maintains an integrated data management system of the location and status of special concern ecological resources, including rare plants like those surveyed at Gifford Pinchot. The goal is to build, maintain, and provide accurate and accessible ecological information needed for conservation, development planning, and natural resource management.

Fuller, 19, who is set on teaching biological sciences at the college level, said he is delighted to have the chance to help in this inventory effort: “Already this summer I've

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learned there are many endangered species in Pennsylvania, and my work here has shown me the startling rate at which their habitat sometimes is being developed.”

Fuller and Jerin were among 78 interns working this summer with DCNR at its Harrisburg headquarters as well as in state parks and forests across the state. Like other successful students who landed positions, they applied early and took the time to learn about where they wanted to work.

Details on DCNR intern programs, both paid and unpaid, can be obtained by telephoning 717-705-1082.

(Find this and other articles in [DCNR's August 16 Resource.](#))

Quick Clips

[Editorial: Council is Right to Focus on Cleaning Up City](#)
[Recycling Down Despite Success of Pilot Program](#)
[New Recycling Center Director Has Heavy Load](#)
[Study Shows Metalcasting Industry Can Save Money, Energy](#)
[Yellow Buses Getting Greener in PA](#)
[Chair Hopes for Environment Friendly Slots Parlor](#)
[Penn State Building Goes Green](#)
[McGinnis Education Center Goes Green in Sharpsburg](#)
[The Paradox of Green Retail by PNC Financial](#)
[Mercury Disposal by Dentists Focus of DEP Review](#)
[Op-Ed: Balance Mercury Controls with Economic Concerns](#)
[Students Build Solar-Powered House for Competition](#)
[School District Pumped Up Over Cleaner Fuel](#)
[Solar Facility Expected to Save Money](#)
[Couple Builds House of Clay and Straw](#)
[Tax Credit Energizes Wind Farms](#)
[How Do You Price Open Space?](#)
[Suburban Sprawl Reflects Freedom of Choice](#)
[Lawmakers Tread Softly Tracking Fee Increase](#)
[Editorial: Hunters' Challenge of Deer Policy Makes Contradictory Claims](#)
[Gypsy Moths Defoliate 2,000 Acres in Wayne County](#)
[Audubon Taking Unusual Step to Help Manage Deer Population](#)
[Rescue Teams from Metal, Nonmetal Mines Compete](#)
[Bugs Pose Major Threat to Region's Trees](#)
[Butterfly Bliss](#)

Watershed NewsClips

[Innovative Alternative to a Dam](#)
[Information on Exceptional Value Waters Designation](#)
[Sewer Groups Will Keep Tabs on Nutrients](#)
[Elk County Has \\$1 Million in Growing Greener Dollars Available](#)
[We're Winning Battle of Presque Isle Bay Water Quality](#)
[Gob Piles Disappearing](#)

Regulations

No new regulations were published this week.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – August 27, 2005](#)

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

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection [published notice](#) of a final guidance with minor revisions on Deep Mine Safety Enforcement Procedures.

Final: DEP ID: 580-3000-002. Bureau of Deep Mine Safety Compliance and Enforcement Procedures. This document has been revised in accordance with the Department's standards to clarify what is a reasonable amount of time (no more than 180 days) to allow for correcting a violation by a compliance order rather than alternative enforcement. Effective Date: August 27.

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

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Upcoming conferences, meetings, workshops, plus links to other online calendars. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

- **August 31** – House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee informational meeting on the timber and lumbering industry in Pennsylvania.
- **August 31** – House State Government Committee hearing on [House Bill 1835](#) and [House Bill 1836](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) limiting power of eminent domain. Philadelphia
- **September 11-14** – [PA Municipal Authorities Association Annual Conference](#). Hershey.
- **September 14-15** – PA Rural Water Association “[The Professional Office](#)” Conference. Lancaster.
- **September 16** – [Westmoreland County Smart Growth Summit](#)
- **September 23** – “[Pigs, Parks & Superstores – A Conference on the Sustainability of York County.](#)”

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- **September 20** – CANCELLED – Environmental Quality Board meeting.
- **September 27** – House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee hearing on [House Bill 1249](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) Uniform Environmental Covenants.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#)

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

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

Helpful Web Links

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

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

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

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

Stories Invited

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

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

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Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)