

# -PA ——— Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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## Video Blog Feature - Ohio Watershed Celebration Honors Environmental Initiative



Over 800 people spent the afternoon on the Monongahela River this week learning about the improvement in Pittsburgh's water quality, local history and sites, networking and recognizing the environmental achievements of local watershed groups and companies.

There was food, music, presentations and educational programs for kids of all ages on the dock before the boat sailed and during the trip up river.

"The event's goal is to celebrate the restoration work done through public-private partnerships and to energize attendees to continue work to improve the Ohio River Watershed," said Margaret Dunn, President of the non-profit Stream Restoration, Inc.

**Video Blog:** [Margaret Dunn on the Importance of Partnership, Watershed Groups](#)

Two sets of honors were given out at the celebration, the annual environmental awards and eight grants totaling \$3,000 in a competition for the organizations bringing displays about their activities.

"The environmental awards mark the progress that individuals, government, and businesses have made in restoring our region and waterways," Dunn said. "We can see an increase in both recreational and economic development opportunities and an improved quality of life in western Pennsylvania because of the work that has been done."

Environmental awards were given to three individuals, organizations and companies:

- **DEP Deputy Secretary for Mineral Resources J. Scott Roberts.** Roberts was honored with an individual award for working tirelessly with coal companies and environmental groups to ensure former abandoned mine drainage is cleaned up and that new mining permits prevent the formation of mine drainage.
- **Growth Through Energy & Community Health (GTECH)** was honored in the business category. A non-profit business, GTECH is reclaiming a brownfield site along the Monongahela River in Hazelwood by planting grasses that can later be used to produce biofuels. The company is working in conjunction with Robot City and Carnegie Mellon University's Field Robotics Center and Steel City Biofuels.
- **Sharpsburg Borough, Allegheny County,** received the Environmental Award in the Local Government category for its work in riverfront improvements.

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Eight watershed and other environmental groups won a total of \$3,000 in grants in four different categories in the competition among displays brought on the Celebration boat tour. Here are the first and second place winners.

- **Best Overall Display:** [Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team](#) and [Sewickley Creek Watershed Association](#);
- **Best Partnership Effort:** [Cowanshannock Watershed Association](#) and [Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited](#)
- **Community Outreach and Education:** [Blackleggs Creek Watershed Association & Trout Nursery](#) and Youghiogheny River Environmental Education Center
- **Most Innovative Project:** [Wells Creek Watershed Association](#) and Neville Naturalists.

First place winners received a \$500 grant and second place winners received \$250.

The water quality in the three rivers of Pittsburgh and their surrounding watersheds have improved dramatically in the last 35 years thanks to the dedicated efforts of local and state governments, watershed groups and their many private sector partners.

**Video Blog:** [Dennis Tubbs, Fish & Boat Commission, on How Far We've Come.](#)

Providing educational activities for students of a variety of ages was a key goal of this year's Ohio River Watershed Celebration. Hear what two educational partners had to say about environmental education on the boat tour and in the Pittsburgh region.

**Video Blog:** [Joel Anne Swelthelm, Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve](#) operated by the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, talks about educational programs at the Reserve and the activities they sponsored at dock-side.

**Video Blog:** [Karl Thomas, of RiverQuest](#) (formerly Pittsburgh Voyager), talks about their on-the-river approach to environmental education that includes three different boats that soon will include the world's [first green-designed passenger vessel](#) The Explorer.

**Video Blog:** [Thurman Korns, of the Wells Creek Watershed Association](#), gives us the latest news from this Somerset County watershed group and talks about the importance of building local partnerships.

**Video Blog:** [Tim Danehy, Biomost, Inc.](#), talks about how he got interested in mine drainage treatment and is making it his life's work.

There were lots of activities, displays, presentations, a narrated tour and much more were all packed into the Ohio River Watershed Celebration. Here are just a few of the sights and sounds from the Celebrations.

**Video Blog:** [Sights and Sounds](#) of the 2007 Ohio River Watershed Celebration.

The sponsors of the 2007 Ohio River Watershed Celebration included: Principal Sponsors: Amerikohl Mining, Inc., Consol Energy, Dominion Foundation, The Pennsylvania Watershed Program (formerly the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program); Program Sponsors: American Water Works Association, BioMost, Inc., HDR Engineering, Inc., Crisci Associates, Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania American Water, Spectroscopy Society of Pittsburgh, W.K. Merriman, Inc., Washington County Conservation District and West View Water Authority.

Program and other partners for the event included: Partners: 241 Computer Services, Aquascape Wetland and Environmental Services, Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, CTI Biofuels, Environmentally Innovative Solutions, LLC, Gateway Clipper Fleet, Jane Nugent, WPPT - "Garden Party" Host, Jennings Environmental Education Center (DCNR), Kiski-Conemaugh River Basin Alliance, Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team, Mike Gallagher, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Department of

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Environmental Protection, Fish and Boat Commission, Blastie, LLC, Quality Aggregates, Inc., RiverQuest, Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition, Stream Restoration, Inc. and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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### Session Schedule

The Senate and House return to voting session on September 24.

### [PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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#### **Other News**

- Increase in Driving Causes Unexpected Increase In Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- 4 Game Commission Open Houses Remain on Deer Management – Video Blog
- Game Commission Youth Essay Contest Deadline October 31
- \$1 Million in Environmental Education Grants Awarded, New Applications Due
- Wildlands Conservancy Unveils Clean Creeks Program
- New Chesapeake Bay Report Results – Bad Water This Summer
- “Floods & Fixes” Conservation Tour in Westmoreland County October 5
- PPL Retires Two Coal-Fired Units at Martins Creek Power Plant, Credits Retired
- PA Sustainable Agriculture Assn. Sponsors Biodiesel & Compost Field Day
- Mother Earth Harvest Fair: A Celebration of Sustainable Living September 29 & 30

#### **Opinion**

- Wind Energy Vital to Pennsylvania's Economy, Environment and Public Health, *By PennFuture*

#### **Feature**

- Mill Creek Improvements Benefit Communities Downstream
- A Stream On The Rebound-- Trout in an AMD-impacted Stream? *By Andy McAllister, Watershed Coordinator and Bruce Golden, Regional Coordinator*

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

### **On the Hill**

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#### **On the Senate/House Agenda**

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The House and Senate have scheduled the following Committee meetings and hearings as well as published their voting Calendars —

### Committees

**House:** the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meeting to consider [House Bill 690](#) (Cohen-D-Philadelphia) establishing the Plug-In Hybrid Task Force, [House Bill 1374](#) (Saylor-R-York) amending the Sewage Facilities Act related to Sewage Enforcement Officers and [House Bill 1519](#) (McGeehan-D-Philadelphia) providing penalties for illegal posting of signs and depositing penalties in a new TreeVitalize Program Fund; the Game and Fisheries Committee has scheduled a hearing on legislation creating a junior fishing license in Philadelphia.

**Senate:** Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee holds two public hearings next week, one on proposed alternative fuels mandate included in [House Bill 1202](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) and [Senate Bill 789](#) (Dinniman-D-Chester) and a second on funding Hazardous Site Cleanups.

**Other:** The next Environmental Issues Forum will feature a presentation on Clean Up Our American Lands Program sponsored by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#).

### Calendars

**House:** [House Bill 1201](#) (George-D-Clearfield) making changes to Title 66 (Utility Code) consistent with Gov. Rendell's Energy Independence Proposal, including the proposed system benefit charge; [House Bill 1649](#) (Barrar-R-Chester) requiring the fluoridation of public water supplies; [House Resolution 112](#) (Mann-D-Lehigh) directing DEP to implement policies that encourage electronic waste recycling; [House Resolution 268](#) (Rohrer-R-Berks) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study Game Commission forestry and mineral development policies; [House Resolution 180](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) establishing a commission to study the Commonwealth's fragmented system of local government.

### Bills Introduced

**Flood-Prone Property:** [Senate Bill 1086](#) (Regola-R-Westmoreland) amending the Flood Control Law relating to purchase of flood-prone properties.

**Alternative Energy Tax Credit:** [Senate Bill 1089](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) providing a tax credit for alternative energy technologies.

**Alternative Energy R&D:** [Senate Bill 1090](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) Increasing the Research and Development tax credit by \$20 million to support alternative energy research and development

**Energy Rebate:** [Senate Bill 1091](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) providing for an alternative energy tax credit for individuals not to exceed \$250.

**Anti-Idling:** [Senate Bill 1095](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) setting limitations on the idling of commercial diesel vehicles.

**Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard:** [House Bill 1427](#) (Bennington-D-Allegheny) amending provisions related to energy efficiency and extending the deadline for compliance from 15 to 21 years.

### Senate/House Bills Moving

The Senate moved these bills this week—

**Mine Families First:** [House Bill 483](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) establishing the Mine Families First Program modeled on policies adopted by Gov. Schweiker during the Quecreek Mine Rescue was passed by the Senate and now goes to the Governor for his action. (*See separate article*)

The House moved these bills this week—

**Farmland Assessment for Wind Power:** [House Bill 656](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) amending the PA Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act to allow for the lease of a portion of farmland for wind power facilities was reported from the House Rules Committee.

**Exposure to Hazards:** [House Bill 763](#) (Goodman-D-Schuylkill) amending the Workers' Compensation Act to include Department of Environmental Protection employees exposed to certain hazards under the definition of "occupational disease" was reported from the House Rules Committee.

**Low-Income Energy Assistance:** [House Bill 913](#) (Vereb-R-Montgomery) amending the Low-Income Home Energy Weatherization Improvement Act requiring an evaluation of the program and making other changes was reported from the House Rules Committee.

**Appalachian Trail Act:** [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to protect the Appalachian Trail was reported from the House Rules Committee.

**Alternative Transportation Funding:** [House Bill 1291](#) (Geist-R-Blair) authorizing metropolitan transportation authorities to adopt alternative means of raising revenue or reducing expenses was reported from the House Rules Committee.

**Senate Passes, Sends to Governor Mine Families First Legislation**



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The Senate followed the House this week in unanimously passing [House Bill 483](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset), without changes, establishing the Mine Families First Program modeled after policies adopted by Gov. Schweiker during the [Quecreek Mine Rescue](#) in Somerset County.

This is the first state legislation passed in response to the accident that occurred in 2002. Legislation making changes to the deep mine safety law as recommended after the accident has yet to be introduced this session. In 2006 legislation was introduced to make changes and the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee held a hearing on the bill, but no action was ever taken by the House or Senate.

Under the Mine Families First Program established in House Bill 483, the Department of Environmental Protection would be required to establish a plan outlining steps to be taken by DEP and mine owners and operators during emergencies. The plan would include:

- immediate notification of mine family members in the event of a mine emergency;
- transportation to the physical location for mine families to gather and obtain information about the mine emergency and rescue efforts;
- security provisions to ensure privacy of mine families at the designated location;
- ensuring that mine families are briefed regularly, before the news media, about the progress of the emergency response;
- a mine families first liaison to serve as a 24-hour point of contact for mine families;
- coordinating the participation of nonprofit and public social service organizations that provide counseling and other social services to mine families; and
- notification and transportation of miner families to medical facilities when miners rescued from mines are given medical care.

A Mine Families First Response and Communications Advisory Council also would be created to help DEP establish the communications plan. The council would include representatives of mine owners, mine labor unions, local emergency response professionals, mental health professionals, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and two members of the public.

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

**Link:** [Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation](#)

### **House Republicans Unveil Tax-Free Energy Plan, Dems Say It's Pablum**

People who conserve energy should not be punished with higher taxes; they should be rewarded with tax credits and other incentives. That's one of the underlying premises behind the tax-free energy plan unveiled this week by the House Republican Energy Task Force.

The plan, known as "[Energy for PA](#)," would lower energy costs for consumers, create good-paying jobs and protect Pennsylvania's environment.

In his annual budget address in February, Rendell proposed a new tax on consumer electric bills to pay for nearly \$1 billion in new debt. The governor proposed spending the

money on a series of new government programs, including more than \$600 million in new corporate welfare.

“We agree on the destination, but we’ve found a better road to get us there,” said Rep. Stan Saylor (R-York), chairman of the House Republican Energy Task Force. “Government should not be in the business of punishing people who do right,” Saylor said. “The governor’s proposal would punish all Pennsylvanians – the moms and dads, grandmothers and grandfathers who are already trying to lower their energy bills by conserving energy – with a new tax on their electric bill.”

Energy for PA includes a series of tax credits aimed at encouraging private investment in Pennsylvania’s energy and conservation sectors. The plan also includes investments to develop the next generation of energy technology. Instead of a new tax, Energy for PA relies on existing state revenues.

“Our plan is designed to provide an energy strategy that encourages the free market to design solutions and opportunities to meet our state’s energy challenges that lives within our means and does not rely on any new borrowing or new taxes,” said Rep. Mike Turzai (R-Allegheny), chairman of the House Republican Policy Committee, which oversees the House Republican Energy Task Force.

Reacting to the Republican plan, Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield), chair of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, said, “The Energy for Pa.” plan is 90 percent partisan pablum and 10 percent repackaging of strategies already employed or proposed. It is not a serious attempt to help Pennsylvanians and suggests the Energy Task Force suffers from its own energy crisis.

“Tax credits deserve a modest role in energy policies and health-care coverage but they are of limited value to most Pennsylvanians and should not be touted as panaceas to problems that deserve serious attention and resources,” Rep. George said. “We can’t ‘tax-credit’ ourselves to energy independence and we shouldn’t be trying to delude people that we can.”

### **Conservation and Increased Homegrown Production**

“Just as a dollar saved is a dollar earned, the same can be said of energy,” Saylor said. “Every ounce of energy we conserve helps to drive down the cost for ratepayers across the Commonwealth.”

“People who conserve energy should not be punished with higher taxes; they should be rewarded with tax credits and other incentives,” Saylor said. “Under the governor’s proposal, the 75-year-old widow who turns down the air conditioning in the summer and the heating in the winter would be punished with a new tax on her electricity bill. The family that already has an energy-efficient refrigerator would see their tax dollars go toward a rebate for another family. Unlike the governor, most working Pennsylvanians don’t have maids and other staff who can wash their clothes for them at 3 a.m. The governor’s plan is unfair and would fail because it punishes people who are already taking steps to conserve energy.”

That is why Energy for PA includes a series of tax credits, tax exemptions and other incentives in a comprehensive program called “Conserve More, Save More” to empower Pennsylvanians to conserve more energy and save more money. The Conserve More, Save More plan includes:

- A proposal to exempt energy-efficient appliances from the state sales tax;
- A sales tax exemption for home energy-efficiency measures, such as solar paneling, doors and insulation;

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- A state income tax deduction of up to \$1,500 for energy-efficient upgrades to the taxpayer's primary residence;
- Tax credits for the construction of high-performance, "green" buildings;
- Additional funding for the state's existing weatherization program to help families make their homes more energy efficient;
- Employer tax credits for companies that invest in local energy conservation education programs or contribute to energy conservation improvements in homes, community buildings or non-profit organizations;
- Grants of up to \$5,000 to help residents pay for the construction of energy-efficient homes;
- A program designed to create incentives for utility companies to promote energy conservation and reduce load demand;
- Investment in an energy efficiency and pollution reduction information campaign; and
- Authorization for the Public Utility Commission to implement energy conservation education programs statewide.

"Our plan will empower Pennsylvanians to conserve more energy and reward them by saving them money on their utility and their tax bills," said Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango), Republican chairman of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and a member of the House Republican Energy Task Force.

In addition to these measures, House Republicans are committed to lead by example by making state and local government more energy efficient.

"Telling others to conserve energy while you're burning it left and right is pure hypocrisy," Rep. Saylor said. "House Republicans will lead by example by making government more energy efficient."

To accomplish this, Energy for PA includes a plan called "Leading by Example" to reduce energy consumption throughout government. Leading by Example includes a measure to reduce state government energy use by 10 percent by 2010. It also calls for more hybrid vehicles in the state fleet.

The plan also would ensure that all buildings that receive 50 percent of their funding from the state are built to energy-efficient, "green" standards. Finally, Leading by Example will offer grants to support the installation of energy-efficiency measures in local government buildings, including schools.

Energy for PA also includes a plan to increase Pennsylvania's homegrown energy supply in an effort to create good-paying jobs and reduce dependence on foreign energy sources. Known as "Self-Reliant PA," this program would move Pennsylvania toward energy independence.

Self-Reliant PA would increase homegrown energy production through:

- Tax credits for Pennsylvania companies engaged in producing alternative fuels, alternative-fueled vehicles or alternative energy power systems;
- Tax credits to promote the use of clean-coal technology in Pennsylvania;
- A proposal to exempt various energy-efficiency measures, including solar panel installation and geothermal systems, from the state sales tax;
- A measure to promote the planting of energy crops used in the generation of bio-based vehicle fuels on mine reclamation lands;
- Grants of up to \$5,000 to help residents pay for the construction of homes with alternative energy gathering systems, including solar panels;



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- A plan to encourage energy exploration and harvesting on state lands using the latest environmentally friendly technology; and
- Tripling funding for the existing Small Business Advantage Grant program from \$1 million to \$3 million.

“We want Pennsylvania to be more self-reliant and less dependent on foreign sources of energy,” Rep. Saylor said. “Our plan provides incentives to move our Commonwealth toward true energy independence.”

The final component of Energy for PA that is designed to create jobs is a plan known as “Enhanced Oversight.” This plan would streamline the Department of Environmental Protection permitting process for energy projects, creating new jobs while protecting the Commonwealth’s environment.

“The old and tired debate between more regulation and less regulation has no place in a 21st century debate about meeting our energy needs,” Rep. Saylor said. “What we need is not more or less, but better, more streamlined regulation to expedite projects without endangering our environment.”

### Creating New Jobs through Increased Homegrown Production, Investment in Next Generation Technologies and Regulatory Reform

In addition to the job-creating policies included in Self-Reliant PA, House Republicans unveiled two additional programs aimed at creating more good-paying jobs across the Commonwealth. “Energy for Tomorrow” would invest in programs to help Pennsylvania lead the nation in the development of the next generation of energy technologies.

Energy for Tomorrow would include:

- Funding for energy-related research at Pennsylvania colleges and universities;
- Tax credits to promote the use of new clean coal technologies in Pennsylvania;
- Energy exploration and harvesting activities on state-owned lands and
- A loan-forgiveness program for engineering students who remain in the Commonwealth after graduation. This would help combat the “brain drain” that has occurred as many gifted engineering students – who are vital to the energy sector – leave Pennsylvania each year to find good-paying jobs in other states.

“Our engineering students have the talent, skills and foresight to help develop the next generation of clean energy technologies,” Rep. Saylor said. “Our plan provides an incentive for these students to stay right here in Pennsylvania and help us become a leader in energy technology.”

House Republicans also have a plan to streamline the Department of Environmental Protection permitting process for energy projects to streamline project delivery while enhancing environmental regulatory compliance.

“One of the greatest barriers to new energy projects is the cumbersome and bureaucratic regulatory process,” Rep. Saylor said. “Energy projects – including the cleanest among them – are delayed by bureaucratic red tape. We need to streamline the process to make it more efficient and more effective at protecting our environment without unduly stalling projects.”

### Cleaning the Environment

Every aspect of Energy for PA was developed with a concentration on cleaning and protecting Pennsylvania’s environment. From energy conservation measures to help reduce pollution to investment in the next generation of clean, “green” technologies, Energy for

PA is a commonsense plan that meets the Commonwealth's responsibility to protect the environment.

"As a conservative, I firmly support conservation," Rep. Saylor said. "We have developed a comprehensive plan that will protect our water, land and air. The world we enjoy was given to us by God. It is our responsibility to Him to ensure that we protect it for the next generation to enjoy."

**Funding Energy for PA – No New Cost to Taxpayers**

Perhaps the best part of Energy for PA is – unlike the governor's proposal – there would be no new cost for Pennsylvania taxpayers. Many of the programs use tax credits, which are cost-free for taxpayers. To pay for grant programs and other portions of the plan that do require funding, House Republicans would use existing state revenue sources.

For more information, visit the [Energy for PA webpage](#).

**Links:** [Senate Republicans Introduce Alternative Energy Investment Act](#)  
[Governor Proposes Energy Independence Initiative](#)

**Reps. Taylor, Vereb Announce Bipartisan Plan to Fund Hazardous Site Cleanups**

Reps. Rick Taylor (D-Montgomery) and Mike Vereb (R-Montgomery) this week announced their joint introduction of a bill that would provide \$30 million for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund to keep removing pollutants from old industrial sites.

Under the bill—[House Bill 1810](#)-- would receive revenue from money slated to be transferred to the Rainy Day Fund to keep it available through the end of the 2007-08 fiscal year in June and give the General Assembly time to provide a new, stable source of funding for the cleanup program.

"The Hazardous Site Cleanup Fund gives Pennsylvania the versatility to respond without delay to incidents where hazardous materials or toxic chemicals endanger public health and safety," said Rep. Taylor. "Its other critically important facets include funding for investigation of illegal hazardous waste dumping and dangerous methamphetamine labs, along with cleaning and recycling contaminated industrial land known as brownfields."

The legislation proposed by Taylor and Vereb grew out of a successful bipartisan challenge in the House to a Senate proposal in July that would have taken money for HSCA out of other environmental programs, which would have greatly hampered efforts such as the Keystone Recreation Park and Conservation Fund and other environmental initiatives. As the attempted fiscal raid was turned aside, Taylor said he would pursue other legislative options to provide the cleanup funding.

The new proposal has attracted many co-sponsors from both parties, a big plus for expediting the bill through the legislative process.

"I am thrilled to be a partner in this critical legislation," said Rep. Vereb. "This would keep hazardous site cleanup operations running without interruption.

"Representative Taylor and I have sites in our districts that are in need of this continued funding, and any interruption could be harmful to our communities. But I also think our partnership on this issue shows the rest of Pennsylvania that Republicans and Democrats can indeed work together on issues that are so important to our communities and environment."

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The bill is expected to be referred to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee for consideration.

**NewsClip:** [Lawmakers Seek \\$30 M for Environmental Cleanup](#)

**Link:** [Senators Pileggi, White Propose Solution to Hazardous Sites Cleanup Funding](#)  
[Governor Proposes Waste Fee Increases for Hazardous Sites Funding](#)

### Senate Committee Hears Comments on Biofuels in First of Two Hearings

The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee this week held the first of two hearings on setting a biofuels policy for Pennsylvania, including Gov. Rendell's proposals to mandate bio- and ethanol additives to diesel fuel and gasoline.

Those presenting testimony included: Agriculture Secretary [Dennis Wolff](#) and DEP Secretary [Kathleen McGinty](#), [Matthew Ehrhart](#), Chesapeake Bay Foundation, [Joel Rotz](#), PA Farm Bureau, [Ben Wootton](#), PA Biodiesel Producers Groups and [Nathan Willcox](#), PennEnvironment.

[Secretaries McGinty and Wolff](#) presented joint testimony on the need for the United States to become less dependent on foreign sources of oil, outlined the potential jobs benefits of the Governor's Energy Independence Initiative and cast doubt on the idea that the demand for corn-based ethanol is driving up the cost of milk, meat and eggs.

The joint testimony said, "biodiesel reduces many types of air pollutants, including carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, air toxics, sulfur dioxide and particular matter." They noted, however, that "ethanol blended with gasoline does lead to some increase in VOCs and nitrogen oxides" and said an analysis by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said the increases are not significant enough to cause difficulty in meeting air quality standards.

Gov. Rendell's biofuels proposal is included in [House Bill 1202](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) and [Senate Bill 789](#) (Dinniman-D-Chester).

[Ben Wootton](#), PA Biodiesel Producers Group, said his group of six biodiesel producers have a combined capacity of 15 million gallons of biodiesel a year, but are not producing anywhere near that capacity. In fact, he told the Committee there are some producers that have halted production entirely because of the cost of grain is "fluctuating wildly" and competition from producers in 24 other states who are receiving a variety of incentives to make their fuel cost-competitive.

Wootton asked that legislation be adopted giving biodiesel producers a \$1 per gallon production incentive for three years that would effectively match the current federal incentives.

"Without it, Pennsylvania will continue to face a flood of out-of-state trucks entering the Commonwealth to distribute biodiesel produce made outside of Pennsylvania... meanwhile our in-state biodiesel industry will literally collapse within the coming months."

[Matthew Ehrhart](#), Pennsylvania Director of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, said, "The transition to alternative fuels will impact air quality, water quality, economic drivers and outcomes for numerous Pennsylvania business sectors, and the State's competitive position in the future.

"The opportunity to grow crops with a significant profit margin would be a welcome reprieve from years of marginal income. However, as has often been noted,

higher prices for corn due to an ethanol market will increase feed prices, impacting the livestock industry."

Ehrhart noted Pennsylvania farmers planted 100,000 more acres of corn this year than last in the expectation of ethanol-driven higher corn prices.

"Reports recently published by the Chesapeake Bay Commission (CBC) and the Mid- Atlantic Regional Water Quality Water Program document many of the potential problems associated with increased corn production for ethanol. The reports also document many of the solutions to those concerns, including new and well established best management practices and strategies," Ehrhart said. (*See 9/17/07 PA Environment Digest.*)

Ehrhart also said farmers may begin to feed their cattle distillers grains, a byproduct of the corn-based ethanol production process, which is much higher in nitrogen content leading to higher nitrogen runoff from manure applications if nutrient management plans are not adjusted.

"The Chesapeake Bay Commission document *Biofuels and the Bay: Getting It Right to Benefit Farms, Forests and the Chesapeake* documents that a broad variety of crops can be grown for biomass to produce cellulosic ethanol, broadening the opportunities for participation and reducing the risk of excess nutrients. The ability to utilize wood chips in this process opens the opportunities for the forest products industry as well.

"Groups such as Penn State University and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council are already exploring how to efficiently grow biomass crops on abandoned minelands, restoring the abandoned mines and generating alternative energy opportunities. I think "win-win" may be one of the most overused and abused phrases in policy discussions today – but this is a true example of the ideal.

"I urge the committee to set bold goals and provide the incentives and leadership necessary to place Pennsylvania in the forefront of biofuels research and production while safeguarding natural resources of the Commonwealth."

**Online Video:** [A video of Matthew Ehrhart's Testimony is available online.](#)

[Joe Rotz](#), PA Farm Bureau, said, "While it is no secret agriculture stands to gain from the advancement of renewable fuels, our members also support renewable fuel development as means to increase our national security by helping to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Pennsylvania Farm Bureau supports adoption of House Bill 1202 to assist in leading the Commonwealth towards energy independence."

Addressing the issue of increased corn prices driving food costs, Rotz said, "It is unlikely that the production of meat and milk has been affected by higher corn prices to date. In fact, there is little evidence that any food category has been affected by higher corn prices in any significant manner."

On the environmental impact of increased corn production, Rotz noted, "While there is no disputing the fact that corn does require higher levels of nitrogen and other inputs than many other crops, the crop can still be grown with minimal environmental impact with proper implementation of nutrient management, conservation and erosion and sedimentation plans."

Rotz noted there are no ethanol plants in operation in Pennsylvania today and said the six existing biodiesel plants are struggling to be economically viable. He supported more incentives for existing producers to subsidize biofuel production.

[Nathan Willcox](#), PennEnvironment, said his group supports production of biofuels to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, but noted what he said were several flaws in the legislation.

"PennEnvironment feels strongly that coal-to-liquids or "liquid coal" should not be part of any biofuels proposal, that there should be a global warming pollution standard for any biofuels program, and that there needs to be more of a focus on the long-term promotion of cellulosic ethanol than exists in the current legislation."

A video of the entire hearing and copies of testimony are available online at the [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee webpage](#).

The Committee will hold a second hearing on biofuels policy on September 25. Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) serves as chair of the Committee and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) serves as Minority chairman.

**NewsClips:** [Officials Say Biofuels Strengthen National Security](#)

### **Chesapeake Bay Foundation Urges U.S. Senator Casey to Fight for Clean Water**

Chesapeake Bay Foundation Pennsylvania Executive Director Matthew Ehrhart this week delivered hundreds of signed postcards to U.S. Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. to urge his strong support for increased Farm Bill funding for Pennsylvania farmers.



The postcards were signed by citizens at the Kipona Festival on the Harrisburg riverfront over Labor Day weekend. In addition, more than 400 CBF members have called Senator Casey's office to urge him to stand fast to help the region's farm families implement proven technologies that will protect agriculture and improve the health of our waterways.

Senator Casey is on the Senate Agriculture Committee, which will be considering the Farm Bill in the next few weeks.

"Pennsylvania farm families face skyrocketing costs and decreasing profits," said Ehrhart. "Nonetheless, they've proven repeatedly that they want to do the right thing to improve water quality. They need and deserve proven tools to get the job done."

"I am thrilled that so many of my constituents took the time to let me know how important the Chesapeake Bay is to them and their communities," said Senator Casey. "I am going to work to make sure that the 2007 Farm Bill includes significant investment in conservation programs like water quality enhancement and farmland protection. I will continue to make this position clear to my colleagues on the Agriculture Committee as the debate moves forward."

Right now is a prime opportunity to deliver those tools. The Federal Farm Bill, which is considered only every five years, could provide much-needed investments in conservation measures that would substantially reduce polluted runoff, infuse funds into local economies, and keep farmers farming. With crucial added resources made available through the 2007 Federal Farm Bill, Pennsylvania's agricultural producers will have not only the incentive but also the means to do more to improve water quality in local rivers, streams, as well as the Chesapeake Bay.

Thriving, well-managed farms are vital to both the long-term health of the local waterways, and to Pennsylvania's economy. In the past, the Commonwealth's farmers haven't received their fair share of funding from the Farm Bill. The 2007 Farm Bill passed

by the House of Representatives earlier this summer would provide an additional \$100 million each year in conservation funding to the region’s farmers.

“CBF thanks Senator Casey for his leadership, and encourages him to keep fighting for clean water and the region’s farmers,” Ehrhart said.

### **Hazardous Sites Cleanup Funding Topic of New Senate Committee Hearing**

The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will hold a hearing September 24 on the issue of funding Hazardous Sites Cleanups.

Sen. White has invited DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty before the Committee after Senate members expressed concern over apparently conflicting statements on when the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program would be shut down. The Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program is responsible for supporting approximately 250 DEP employees, and serves as the Commonwealth’s primary tool to respond to toxic spills and releases affecting local residents.

Senate Majority Leader Dominic Pileggi (R-Delaware) and Senator White recently [announced their intent](#) to introduce Senate Bill 1100, which will provide funding for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program.

Under the proposal, \$15 million would be transferred to the program for the current fiscal year from existing legislative accounts. Additionally, \$40 million annually would be made available for the next three fiscal years from the existing Capital Stock and Franchise Tax, the source of funding for the Hazardous Sites Program for the 12 years prior to 2002.

Senate Bill 1100 would not affect the commitment of Senate Republicans to phase out the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax by the end of 2010.

The Committee chairs are Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne).

### **Environmental Issues Forum on Anti-Dumping Program, New Newsletter Online**

The first Environmental Issues Forum of the Fall session will feature a presentation on the Cleanup Our American Lands and Streams (COALS) anti-dumping, anti-litter program.

The Forum is sponsored by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) and will be held in Room 205 of the Ryan Building on September 24 at noon.

Julie McMonagle, Director of the Northeast Regional Office of the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) will be the primary presenter at the Forum.

The September issue of the [Environmental Synopsis newsletter](#) published by the Joint Committee is now available online and features articles on environmental issues expected to come before the General Assembly this Fall, hemlock and mountain laural losses, declines in U.S. carbon emissions and Pennsylvania’s rankin in energy efficiency.

### **Other News**

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#### **Increase in Driving Causes Unexpected Increase In Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Pennsylvania needs a more aggressive approach to global warming based on a new report that shows an alarming increase in how many



miles the average person is driving, according to Brian Hill, President & CEO of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

Sprawling development patterns are a key contributor to global warming and an essential factor in combating it, according to the report released today in Washington, DC, by the Urban Land Institute, Smart Growth America and other organizations.

The Philadelphia Housing Authority's award-winning Martin Luther Kin, a "smart growth" neighborhood, served as the backdrop for comments by Hill.

"Today's report shows that the smart-growth recommendations included in PEC's [Climate Change Roadmap for Pennsylvania](#) need to be high on our priority list to overcome global warming," said Mr. Hill, noting that Philadelphia ranks third in the nation in growing vehicle miles traveled.

"The impact of smart growth is profound, not only because of the increased miles driven by so many people but also because most of those people are also spending a lot more time stuck in traffic, moving slowly if at all while the gas keeps burning. And smart growth is not just about the global environment, it's also about the livability of our communities and the economic cost with high gasoline prices," Mr. Hill said.

"We've chosen to announce the report at the Martin Luther King Plaza because this is a positive story," said Hill. "It tells how good decisions in urban settings can attract people to the cities, the towns, the boroughs and help revitalize neighborhoods in our communities. We're glad to highlight this wonderful, wonderful project that PHA has here."

The landmark report warns that if sprawling development continues, the total miles that people drive will increase 59 percent between 2005 and 2030, and carbon emissions from this increased driving will overwhelm expected gains from vehicle efficiency and low-carbon fuels.

Even with those technological improvements, vehicle emissions of carbon dioxide would be 41 percent above today's levels, well over the goal of reducing CO2 emissions to 1990 levels by 2050, according to *Growing Cooler: The Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change*.

Pennsylvanian residents are driving more than ever before, fueling increases in vehicle emissions, one of the leading sources of global warming pollution. Spread-out development or sprawl is the key factor in that rate of growth, the research team found in their report based on a comprehensive review of dozens of studies.

Annual vehicle miles traveled by all Pennsylvanians increased 51 percent from 1980 to 2005, and only part of that increase was caused by population growth. Annual VMT per driver in Pennsylvania increased 26 percent in that time period, and mileage does not consider the added impact of people stuck in slow-moving traffic.

As grim as the numbers are, Pennsylvania ranked 42nd among the 51 states and District of Columbia in increased VMT per driver.

The Philadelphia metropolitan area is one of the most problematic, ranking third among 36 metro areas in the rate of growth in vehicle miles traveled with a 51 percent increase from 1992 to 2005. This alarming growth in miles behind the wheel happened despite the slow population growth of only 2.5 percent.

Pittsburgh compared favorably with many other metro areas, ranking 27th among the 36 areas. But vehicle miles traveled increased almost 13 percent even though the population increased only 5 percent.

While demand for such smart-growth development is growing, government regulations, government spending, and transportation policies all still favor sprawling, automobile-dependent development. The ULI report recommends changes in all three areas to make green neighborhoods more available and more affordable. It also calls for including smart-growth strategies as a fundamental tenet in climate change plans at the local, state, and federal level.

“Most people are surprised to learn that the way we drive has a profound impact on Pennsylvania’s rivers and streams, and the Chesapeake Bay,” said Harry Campbell, Chesapeake Bay Foundation Pennsylvania Scientist. “The pollution that comes out of the tailpipe often finds its way into our waters. Global climate change not only threatens to alter Pennsylvania’s environment, but our health and welfare as well. The time to address these issues, including the way land use is managed and our driving habits, is now, not tomorrow.”

Mr. Hill added, “Being able to spend less time behind the wheel will benefit our health, our pocketbooks and the environment. We urge Governor Rendell and our state legislators to make smart growth a key strategy to mitigating global warming in Pennsylvania.”

The ULI report found:

On average, Americans living in compact neighborhoods where cars are not the only transportation option drive a third fewer miles than those in typical automobile-oriented places, such as subdivisions and office parks.

Real estate projections show that two-thirds of development expected to be on the ground in 2050 is not yet built, meaning that the potential for change is profound. Shifting 60 percent of new growth to compact patterns would save 53 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> annually by 2030, equivalent to a 16 percent increase in fuel economy standards.

People who move into compact, “green neighborhoods” are making as big a contribution to fighting global warming as those who buy the most efficient hybrid vehicles, but remain in car-dependent areas.

Improvements in vehicle fuel efficiency (such as hybrid cars that get more miles per gallon) and reductions in the carbon content of fuels (such as biodiesel fuels) will be overwhelmed by continuing, robust growth in the vehicle miles traveled unless aggressive smart growth initiatives are pursued.

The study represents a collaboration among leading urban planning researchers at the University of Maryland, the University of Utah, Fehr and Peers Associates, the Center for Clean Air Policy and the Urban Land Institute. Smart Growth America coordinated the multi-disciplinary team that developed the recommended policy actions and is leading a broad coalition to develop those strategies further.

More information on VMT growth report is available at the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council website](#).

**NewsClip:** [Report Recommends Cutting Urban Sprawl](#)

#### **4 Game Commission Open Houses Remain on Deer Management – Video Blog**

The Game Commission held the third in a series of seven open houses this week at the Capitol in Harrisburg to explain the state's [Deer Management Program](#) and meet interested residents closer to home.





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"Open houses provide a means for the agency to reach out and interact with hunters and other Pennsylvanians whose lives are influenced by deer," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director. "They have been used by the agency in the past and have been warmly received by residents who attend them.

"With deer seasons just around the corner, the timing is right to hold these open houses to provide the general public a convenient way to review our deer management program, which will be updated this year, and to gather public input on additional goals we're considering."

**Video Blog:** *PA Environment Digest* caught up with Game Commission [Wildlife Biologist Jeannie Tardiff](#) at the Harrisburg open house in the Capitol this week to talk about how the Commission manages the Commonwealth's deer herd.

The open houses will feature a number of "information stations" in a large room where Game Commission staff will answer questions on specific topics related to its deer management program, like each of the program measures – deer herd health, forest habitat health and more. It is designed to provide the public with more "one-on-one" time with individuals to help answer their questions. In addition, there will be a PowerPoint presentation available for viewing that provides an overview of the whole program.

There are no set times for presentations or for hearing comments.

In the 2003-07 Deer Management Plan, three goals, all identified and supported by Pennsylvanians, were established to guide the program. They were to: improve deer health, improve forest health and reduce deer-human conflicts.

Now, the agency is considering two additional goals, and is seeking public input on them at the upcoming open houses. Those additional goals are to manage deer to provide recreational opportunities; and to improve the public's knowledge and understanding of deer and the deer management program.

Roe noted that the open houses will be held in seven different locations, with six of the open houses set for a Sunday and Monday format to maximize the opportunity for those interested in attending.

The scheduled days and hours for six of the open houses are Sundays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Mondays from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. The schedule for the open houses is as follows:

- **Southwest Region: September 30 and October 1**, at the Youngwood Volunteer Hose Co. #1 Building, Youngwood, which is along U.S. Route 119 between Greensburg and New Stanton, in Westmoreland County. Directions: The facility is at the intersection of Chestnut and Second streets in Youngwood.
- **Southcentral Region: October 14 and 15**, at the Blair County Convention Center in Altoona. Directions: The facility is at 1 Convention Center Drive, Altoona, PA 16602. Take I-99 North to Altoona, and get off at the Plank Road Exit. Turn south onto Plank Road, and proceed for about one-half mile and turn left onto Convention Center Boulevard. At the first stoplight, make a left onto Convention Center Drive.
- **Northwest Region: October 21 and 22**, at the Rocky Grove Fire Hall, 29 Wood Street, Franklin, Venango County. Directions: Take Route 417 North from Franklin, make right at blinking light; fire hall is on the left.
- **Northcentral Region: October 28 and 29**, at the Little League Recreation Room at Little League Headquarters, South Williamsport, Lycoming County. Directions: The facility is along U.S. Route 15, just 18 miles north of I-80. Traveling on Route 220 at

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the Market Street Bridge in Williamsport, take U.S. 15 South into South Williamsport, travel about two miles, and the recreation room is on the left.

The open houses and the outreach information they will provide to the public were developed by a Deer Communications Working Group that was proposed by the Deer Management Section and created by Roe in late April.

"This group has worked hard to identify Pennsylvania's and the Game Commission's deer management educational and outreach needs, and develop the displays, brochures, workshops and website information, that will help deliver that important message to the public and fellow employees," Roe said. "We encourage Pennsylvanians to take time to visit one of these open houses."

The Game Commission recognizes that the public's comprehension of deer management and changes to the agency's deer program is essential to manage deer progressively and effectively. While this outreach/educational effort targets all Pennsylvanians, there is considerable focus on hunting, primarily because hunters have helped the agency manage Pennsylvania's deer population for more than 100 years.

"Hunters have partnered with the Game Commission to manage wildlife since the agency's inception," Roe said. "Their financial contributions help support Pennsylvania's wildlife management programs and their efforts afield have helped to keep our deer populations in check. Hunters matter a great deal to the Game Commission and Pennsylvania."

For more information, visit the agency's [Deer Management Program webpage](#).

**Links:** [Video Blog-Too Many Deer Damaging Forest Ecosystems, Agriculture DCNR Study of Forest Vegetation Shows Deer Exacting Heavy Toll](#)  
[Deer Population Growth, Development Caused Dramatic Increase in Lyme Disease](#)

### **Game Commission Youth Essay Contest Deadline October 31**

Young hunters ages 12 to 16 from throughout Pennsylvania are reminded all entries for the Game Commission's Hunter Education [Youth Essay Contest](#) must be postmarked no later than October 31.

The theme for this year's contest is: "Why is Hunting a Timeless Tradition?" The prize list features the grand-prize winner receiving a scholarship to the Safari Club International's Apprentice Hunter Program at the Indianhead Ranch in Del Rio, Texas, during the summer of 2008. The scholarship is provided by the Pennsylvania chapters of Safari Club International (SCI).

The grand-prize winning essay also will be published in the agency's Pennsylvania Game News magazine. Previous grand-prize winners will not be eligible for this year's grand prize.

The first-prize winner will receive a \$500 Dick's Sporting Goods gift card; second prize will receive a \$300 Dick's Sporting Goods gift card; and the third-prize winner will receive a \$200 Dick's Sporting Goods gift card. The fourth-prize winner will receive a Sightron 10x42 binocular. All entries receive a Game Commission "Working Together for Wildlife" embroidered patch.

For guidelines and more information, visit the [Youth Eassy Contest announcement](#).

### **\$1 Million in Environmental Education Grants Awarded, New Applications Due**

The Department of Environmental Protection this week announced the award of more than \$1 million in [Environmental Education grants](#) to fund 128 projects by Pennsylvania schools, universities, non-profit groups and county conservation districts that promote environmental education.

DEP will begin accepting applications for the next round of grants October 1.

Administered through the Department of Environmental Protection's environmental education grant program, the money is used to increase environmental literacy among students and adults alike.

Grant amounts vary from \$857 to \$20,000 for projects that range from creative, hands-on lessons for students and teacher training programs to ecological education for residents. Examples include a vocational-technical school providing training on alternative transportation fuels to conducting field trips to learn about acid mine drainage and local water quality issues.

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

The program was established by the Environmental Education Act of 1993, which mandates that 5 percent of all pollution fines and penalties collected annually by DEP be set aside for environmental education.

Since the inception of the environmental education grant program, DEP has awarded more than \$5 million in grants to support the environmental education efforts of schools, county conservation districts and other nonprofit organizations throughout Pennsylvania.

For more information on the program and the next grant round, visit DEP's [Environmental Education Grants webpage](#).

### **Wildlands Conservancy Unveils Clean Creeks Program**

Wildlands Conservancy recently unveiled their [Clean Creeks Trash Cleanup website](#) to enable community groups from around the Lehigh Valley to organize their own successful cleanup.

The Clean Creeks webpages give guidance and recognition to groups that register their cleanups through the web site. Once registered, Wildlands Conservancy will provide technical assistance, free gloves, and trash bags.

"Imagine walking along the canal path or Trout Creek Parkway enjoying a view of the creeks unblemished by litter," said Dani-Ella Betz, Rivers Conservationist with Wildlands Conservancy. "We know it is possible. Over the years, hundreds of volunteers have already helped remove trash, creating a place that is cleaner and safer for all to enjoy."

To help make organizing a cleanup easier, the Clean Creeks web pages highlight specific litter hot spots and provide group leaders with helpful details regarding these suggested sites. There are step-by-step instructions, checklists and resources to help groups conduct safe, fun and effective cleanups.

Wildlands Conservancy has been spearheading trash cleanup events since 1998, with hundreds of volunteers removing countless bags of trash from the Lehigh River watershed. The Clean Creeks web pages were made possible through a grant from the Environmental Fund of Pennsylvania.

For more information, visit the [Clean Creeks Trash Cleanup website](#).

## New Chesapeake Bay Report Results – Bad Water This Summer

A new Chesapeake Bay Foundation report, [Bad Waters: Dead Zones, Algal Blooms, and Fish Kills](#) in the Chesapeake Bay Region in 2007, documents this summer's bad water events, and finds the resiliency of aquatic systems throughout the region stressed, underscoring the need to act quickly.

This summer millions of fish were sick or killed, from the Susquehanna River in the north, to Baltimore's Inner Harbor, and to the Potomac, James, and Shenandoah river systems in the south. Harmful algal blooms sucked the oxygen out of the water from Baltimore to Hampton Roads, lasted for months in the Potomac River, and in some cases produced toxins that killed fish and other aquatic life.

In late August, the area in the Bay's mainstem devoid of oxygen was the fifth largest since the Chesapeake Bay Program began keeping records in 1985.

The vast majority of the Bay and its rivers and streams do not meet the simple, fundamental goal that the Clean Water Act mandates--that waterways provide "for the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, and wildlife, and recreation in and on the water." In 2000, the Bay states and federal government committed to achieving that standard and restoring the Bay by 2010.

"The tragedy is that while Bay scientists have identified the actions necessary to restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay, and identified the costs of the most effective strategies, elected officials have only provided one-third of the necessary funding," said CBF President William C. Baker. "With only three years to go, Governors Kaine, O'Malley, and Rendell, as well as the federal government, must act now to provide programs and funding to reduce pollution and comply with the law. We are not looking at problems in need of solutions, but solutions in need of funding."

Even more troubling than the dead zones, fish kills, and algal blooms, evidence shows that while the amount of pollution entering the Bay has remained relatively unchanged, the size of the "dead zone" is increasing.

Scientists believe that the Bay's ecosystem is becoming more and more unbalanced, and speculate that water quality in some of our rivers and the Chesapeake Bay is reaching a tipping point—that water quality conditions have deteriorated to the point that fish are now susceptible to infections that they could withstand under "normal" conditions.

This loss of resiliency can be reversed, and CBF believes that if state and federal elected officials work aggressively, funding and programs can be in place by 2010 to achieve healthy and restored rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay.

Pennsylvania, with the largest portion of the Bay watershed, must reduce the most nitrogen pollution, 41 million pounds annually. Current programs and funding will reduce pollution by about 17 million pounds.

With bipartisan support, the legislature passed and the Governor signed legislation providing transferable tax credits for farmers and businesses to install conservation practices that reduce water pollution.

The [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act](#) (REAP), as originally proposed at \$450 million over 10 years, would have achieved about half the additional reductions necessary. As enacted it will provide \$10 million in tax credits per year. While the enactment of the program is a huge success, REAP needs to receive the full amount requested.

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“Getting REAP passed in this fiscal climate was a tremendous victory for CBF, the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, and all of the agricultural, watershed, and sportsmen’s groups who partnered together to pass this important legislation,” said Matthew Ehrhart, CBF Pennsylvania Executive Director. “We will go back to work to get the program up to full funding.”

The Virginia goal is to reduce nitrogen pollution by 27 million pounds annually. In recent years the Governor and the state legislature have made great strides in addressing nitrogen pollution from sewage treatment plants, earmarking more than \$500 million for plant upgrades. With funding and programs currently in place, the Commonwealth expects to achieve a reduction of approximately 12 million pounds of nitrogen pollution.

But such progress will be undone if Virginia fails to address stormwater runoff from urban, suburban and rural lands. To bring Virginia closer to achieving its pollution reduction goals, CBF calls on Governor Kaine to implement the state’s river cleanup plans and to fully fund cost-share programs that help the farm community reduce runoff. Farmers are willing to do their share but need state assistance to implement proven soil and water conservation programs.

“The need for significant, consistent funding to meet our water quality goals is well understood and increasingly urgent,” said Ann F. Jennings, CBF Virginia Executive Director. “Governor Kaine and the General Assembly have the opportunity to provide funding that is necessary to both sustain our farm economy and leave a legacy of clean water for future generations of Virginians.”

Maryland must reduce nitrogen pollution by 20 million pounds annually, and has programs and funding in place to achieve roughly half of that goal. A large portion of that success is due to the “flush fee,” which provides dedicated funding to reduce pollution from sewage treatment plants. To close the gap, the O’Malley administration must develop a “Green Fund,”--a dedicated funding source that would provide a minimum of \$100 million per year to implement more of Maryland’s Tributary Strategies, the roadmap to restoration that Bay scientists have developed.

“The condition of Maryland’s rivers and the Bay evidence the need for bold action and leadership.” said Kim Coble, CBF Maryland Executive Director. “Now is the time for Governor O’Malley and the General Assembly to implement the funding and programs necessary to restore the Bay. If not now.....when?”

State funding must be matched by Congress in the federal Farm Bill. The House version of the Farm Bill, passed earlier this summer, contains approximately \$100 million per year in conservation funding, thanks to the good work of a broad bipartisan coalition of the region’s Congressional delegation. Now it is up to Senators Robert Casey, Arlen Specter, and the region’s Senate delegation to fight for increased funding in the Senate.

“These investments in clean water pale in comparison to the economic benefits of a restored Bay for our children and future generations,” Baker said. “Clean water is not a luxury; it is a right and the law requires it.”

For more information, visit the [CBF Bad Waters webpage](#).

### **“Floods & Fixes” Conservation Tour in Westmoreland County October 5**

On October 5, the [Westmoreland Conservation District](#) will sponsor a day-long bus tour with the theme, “Floods & Fixes.”

The event will take participants to sites in Greensburg and Murrysville that include both flood-prone areas and places that have installed innovative ways to capture, divert, and infiltrate stormwater.

Storms this past spring and summer caused flooding problems for communities, businesses, and homeowners throughout Western Pennsylvania. And although no one has yet found a way to control how much rain falls, there are things that can be done to manage rainfall in a way that lessens the likelihood and severity of flooding.

From rain barrels connected to home downspouts to manmade ponds that hold and slowly release rainwater, stormwater management comes in many shapes and sizes. But it all shares the same purpose – to keep rain close to where it falls, reducing how much runs off after a storm. And less runoff means less flooding.

An added benefit of the stormwater-management measures is that they also help reduce water pollution.

Stops on the tour include: the Murrysville Public Works Building, which features a sediment-control structure on a detention pond and control measures that prevent road-salt piles from contaminating Haymaker Run; Marquis Place, a residential development that features a minimum amount of paving and an innovative pond that keeps a permanent level of water at all times; a new parking lot in the City of Greensburg that uses landscaping, infiltration pavers, and large buried chambers to significantly reduce runoff; and the GreenForge building, which features the first green roof in Westmoreland County.

Financial and other support for this tour is provided by the [Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts](#), through a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The tour boards and concludes at the Lamplighter Restaurant in Delmont. It is open to the public, but space is limited and registration is required. Interested individuals should contact the Westmoreland Conservation District at 724-837-5271 by September 28. Cost is \$15, and includes a continental breakfast and lunch.

### **PPL Retires Two Coal-Fired Units at Martins Creek Power Plant, Credits Retired**

After more than half a century of generating electricity, two coal-fired units at PPL's [Martins Creek power plant](#) in Northampton County, Pa., shut down permanently on September 14.

PPL is donating 70 percent of the units' sulfur dioxide emission allowances and 70 percent of the nitrogen oxides emission allowances and emission reduction credits to the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#). The allowances will not be sold or transferred to other generating units. Fossil fuel power plants receive emission allowances from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under provisions of the Clean Air Act.

"Built during the economic boom after World War II, these units have reliably produced electricity for the region's homes and businesses for more than 50 years," said Dennis J. Murphy, vice president and chief operating officer for Eastern Fossil and Hydro in PPL Generation.

When they were built in the 1950s, they were PPL's largest generating units, each capable of producing 150 megawatts. When shut down for the last time, they were PPL's smallest coal-fired generators but still generated enough power to supply about 240,000 homes a year.

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Their retirement is part of a voluntary agreement reached in 2003 between PPL and environmental agencies in Pennsylvania and New Jersey to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions.

Another environmental benefit of the shutdown will be an annual reduction in carbon dioxide emissions of about 1 million tons.

After the coal-fired generating units are retired, PPL also will be closing a coal ash disposal basin that was repaired after a major release of water and ash in August 2005. Detailed studies conducted since that release have found no evidence of short-term or long-term adverse effects on plant and animal life in the nearby Delaware River, and no adverse effects on human health or recreation. The conclusions are undergoing review by state and federal environmental agencies.

Murphy said PPL will be preparing a closure plan for the ash basin and will present that plan to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. After approval of the plan, PPL will reclaim the land so that it may be used for other purposes in the future.

The Martins Creek power plant is located on the border of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, about 10 miles north of Easton, Pa. PPL operates two other generating units there, which can run on natural gas or oil. Adjacent to the Martins Creek plant is PPL's newest generating facility, Lower Mount Bethel Energy, with advanced environmental controls that make it one of the cleanest natural gas power plants in the country.

"PPL continues to meet the region's growing need for electricity in environmentally responsible ways," Murphy said. "For example, we are investing about \$1.5 billion in environmental controls that will reduce emissions from our other coal-fired plants in Pennsylvania, and we will spend at least \$100 million over the next five years to develop renewable energy projects."

PPL has developed landfill methane and solar energy projects in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and purchases 50 megawatts of electricity generated by wind energy projects in Pennsylvania.

PPL will continue to operate the 215-acre [environmental preserve at Martins Creek](#), which includes wooded hiking trails, wildflower fields, a boat launch and a picnic pavilion. PPL also will continue to schedule free public educational programs at Martins Creek on energy, nature and the environment.

**NewsClip:** [PPL Retires Two Coal-Fired Units at Martins Creek Power Plant](#)

### PA Sustainable Agriculture Assn. Sponsors Biodiesel & Compost Field Day

The [Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture](#) will sponsor a "Bio-Diesel & Compost on the Farm" field day at [Briar Patch Organic Farms](#) in Mifflinburg, Pa.

The field day, which runs from 1:00-5:30 p.m., costs \$10 for PASA and PROP members and \$15 for all others.

Briar Patch Organic Farms consists of 335 acres of PA Certified Organic crop land. During the first half of this afternoon tour, Preston Boop will share his experiences making and using compost on a farm-scale. Preston has been composting municipal yard waste and manures since 1990. The composting site improvements includes: hardened surface with 3

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percent slope, surface water retention pond, and a vegetative bio-filter strip. A tractor drawn windrow turner is used to aerate compost.

The second half of this tour will focus on the unique bio-diesel production site at Briar Patch Organic Farms. This project was started to provide fuel for the farming/composting operation.

Participants will get a general overview of the chemical process through which used fryer oil is converted to bio-diesel in an eighty gallon water heater. The operation collects and converts about 180 gallons of fryer oil to bio-diesel per week and the resulting fuel is used in tractors, skid loaders, fork lifts, and home heating furnaces.

Special guest Matt Steiman will be on hand to provide information about the bio-diesel production process, as well as different models for production. Matt is the biodiesel project supervisor for Dickinson College and coordinator of the Wilson College biodiesel education program for farmers. He has been making biodiesel fuel from waste fryer oil since 2003, for use in farm equipment and other diesel machinery. Matt enjoys teaching about biodiesel, with a special interest in promoting safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible production.

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

### **Mother Earth Harvest Fair: A Celebration of Sustainable Living September 29 & 30**

The [Mother Earth Harvest Fair](#): A Celebration of Sustainable Living will be presented by Spoutwood Farm of Glen Rock, Pa on September 29 & 30 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Inspiration for the fun-filled event came from the highly acclaimed Common Ground Country Fair produced for 30 years by the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association.

In 2005, over 2000 people attended the first Mother Earth Harvest Fair in Glen Rock.

The Fair celebrates healthy people working for and enjoying a healthy planet. Partly we pay tribute to the simple traditions, the fun and values of harvest festivals of the past where apples are pressed into cider, garden and farm bounty is proudly displayed, and the animals used to plow our fields or to clothe and nourish us are lavishly appreciated.

In the spirit of good old-fashioned fun the Fair will feature country dancing, lots of music, harvest craft activities for kids, good food for all tastes and natural and folk crafts to marvel and delight.

More than a nostalgic glance backwards, however, MEHF is a vision-in-progress of sustainable living for a sustainable future for Earth and her inhabitants:

- Farming which cares for people's health and vitality as well as that of the Earth;
- New low impact building technologies;
- Renewable and Natural energy forms such as solar, wind and biodiesel;
- Native wisdoms for living in harmony with Nature;
- Strategies to protect and restore native plants and watersheds; and
- New techniques and products to keep ourselves, our homes and our animals healthy in mind, body, and spirit.

Speakers and more than 75 informative exhibits from organizations and vendors will be featured in the festival areas.

For more information, visit the [Mother Earth Harvest Fair webpage](#).



## Opinion

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# Wind Energy Vital to Pennsylvania’s Economy, Environment and Public Health

By  
PennFuture

Citizens for Pennsylvania’s Future wrote [this letter to members](#) of the General Assembly this week on the issue of wind power in Pennsylvania.

As the Pennsylvania legislature is set to begin its Special Session on Energy, Citizens for Pennsylvania’s Future (PennFuture) today released a letter to all legislators showing that wind energy development is vital to Pennsylvania’s economy, environment and public health, and urging elected officials to base their votes on good information.



“If we are to build an energy future for Pennsylvania, we must take advantage of all resources – especially renewable energy such as wind, and energy efficiency,” said John Hanger, president and CEO of PennFuture. “We cannot let our need for clean and affordable energy be blocked by a search for a mythical perfect technology. With global warming already destroying the arctic, one million Pennsylvanians with respiratory problems at risk of illness and even death, our forests destroyed by acid rain, and our fish and other wildlife poisoned with mercury, we must act now to replace our outdated and dangerous coal-fired power plants. And wind energy must be available to help make that happen.

“There is no perfect form of energy, but wind power comes closest to being perfect,” continued Hanger. “And wind energy is already delivering for Pennsylvania’s economy, environment and public health in a variety of ways.”

In the letter to legislators, Hanger detailed the benefits wind energy has already provided to the state, including:

More than 1,000 Pennsylvanians are already employed in Pennsylvania’s wind industry. Gamesa, a wind turbine manufacturer, shortly will be hiring another 300 Pennsylvanians. That is just the beginning of the many good paying jobs wind power is bringing now to Pennsylvania.

Electricity from Pennsylvania’s wind farms increases electricity supply and helps keep electric market prices affordable and avoids pollution that would be caused by burning fossil fuels to make the electricity wind now already does.

Electricity from Pennsylvania’s wind farms creates no air pollution. Wind energy emits no mercury that is poisoning birds, fish and working its way into the human food chain, no soot that kills 2,000 Pennsylvanians each year and belches from coal plants, no arsenic, no smog causing pollution that sickens and kills humans, and no global warming

pollution that is causing dangerous climate change that will destroy Pennsylvania's existing forests.

Every kilowatt-hour of zero pollution electricity produced at a wind farm is a kilowatt-hour that will not be produced by traditional dirty generation sources that cause massive environmental damage. Supply and demand for electricity must constantly be kept in balance and so every kilowatt-hour produced by a wind farm is instantly consumed and avoids the need for that kilowatt-hour coming from another dirty plant.

Traditional sources of energy like coal-burning power plants pollute every hour of the year that they run. Some opponents of wind wish to focus just on a few peak hours of the year and ignore the enormous environmental damage done during 99 percent of the hours of the year when electricity demand is not at peak levels.

Wind energy helps Pennsylvania reduce our contributions to the global warming problem; Pennsylvania ranks third worst in the nation for production of heat-trapping gases that cause global warming, as much as 105 countries combined. That equates to a full 1 percent of the world's total global warming pollution.

Wind energy also requires no mining, blowing up mountain tops, and burying hundreds of miles of streams, as coal production does.

Wind power uses no water in production, while coal and nuclear plants consume huge amounts of water and cause major damage to rivers and aquatic life.

Wind power creates no dangerous coal ash or radioactive waste that must be stored, as do coal and nuclear plants.

Wind energy has no fuel costs. Investing in wind energy now means that costs will never escalate in the years ahead, no matter what. The same cannot be said for traditional sources of energy in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania's forest, wildlife, and water resources are enhanced and protected by wind energy production, since it does not result in pollution. Each and every wind project proposed in Pennsylvania is reviewed thoroughly by four state regulatory agencies, applying guidelines that were designed specifically for the Commonwealth, using the best science from all sources. These reviews are conducted for two years prior to the construction of a wind project.

Many wind energy companies have voluntarily agreed to the nation's most rigorous set of project review guidelines and requirements developed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Pennsylvania is a model for the U.S. in this regard.

Wind farms enhance tourism and create much-needed annual revenue for rural landowners, and do not decrease property average property values, according to research conducted by Lawrence Berkley Laboratories using Pennsylvania and New York data.

"Unfortunately, some well meaning but totally misinformed activists have launched a campaign against wind energy," continued Hanger. "But we cannot let the Commonwealth's progress on job growth, environmental protection and public health and safety be sacrificed. We must move Pennsylvania's clean energy future forward."

## **Feature**

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### **Mill Creek Improvements Benefit Communities Downstream**

One of Westmoreland County’s natural treasures, [Mill Creek](#), recently got even better after some much-needed improvements to stabilize its streambank and slow the amount of sediment entering this exceptional waterway.



This important tributary of the Loyalhanna Creek that supplies drinking water for some residents of Ligonier Township and affects water quality in Latrobe, New Alexandria, and communities downstream, was identified by the Westmoreland County Commissioners last fall as one of 21 separate conservation projects to be funded under the state’s Growing Greener II County Environmental Initiative.

It is the first stream-stabilization project to be completed under that initiative, which also includes funding for new trails and recreation areas, farmland and open space preservation, and other projects to improve the quality of life in Westmoreland County.

Mill Creek is one of the last remaining high-quality recreational resources in the Ligonier Valley, according to an extensive report prepared in 2004 by the Forbes Trail Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

The group’s 2004 conservation plan for the watershed identified the creek’s outstanding qualities – its pristine beginnings in Laurel Mountain and the fact that it is a viable fishery for nearly its entire length. “Mill Creek is one of the last remaining high-quality recreational resources in the Ligonier Valley,” the report determined.

Trout Unlimited also noted Mill Creek’s few but significant trouble spots, including the site where Hannas Run enters the stream just below the community of Oak Grove. Here, the report said, bank erosion is perhaps “the most severe of any area in the entire watershed,” and deemed this site the “number one priority” for remediation.

When the flow of Hannas Run struck the eastern side of Mill Creek, there wasn’t much to stop it. The lack of streamside trees and vegetation, along with Mill Creek’s six-foot-high, almost-vertical banks of soft, loamy soil, meant this site was extremely vulnerable to erosion, with the loose soil polluting the stream and degrading water quality from this point on. The severe erosion from this site was carried downstream, and was a major contributor to the high volume of sediment that regularly builds up where Mill Creek crosses Route 30, just west of Ligonier -- an area that frequently has to be dredged to prevent flooding.

To solve the problem, the [Westmoreland Conservation District](#), the [Forbes Trail Chapter of Trout Unlimited](#), the [Loyalhanna Watershed Association](#), the [Western Pennsylvania Conservancy](#), the [Youth Conservation Corps](#), the Fish and Boat Commission, Outside In, the Boys Brigade Camp Association, and the local landowners joined forces and took a cue from nature.

“A large log had fallen into the stream against the east bank of Mill Creek and was helping to deflect the force of Hannas Run. So we added eight more like it – configuring these nine logs in groups of three, and anchoring them at an angle that would deflect the flow of the water from Hannas Run,” explained Rob Cronauer, watershed specialist for the Westmoreland Conservation District. This is one of the first times this “log deflector” approach has been used to improve a stream in Westmoreland County.

The remediation team also added a large mass of tree roots and 100 tons of stone to take the force of the water flowing in from Hannas Run, and planted 100 live willow

branch cuttings to help stabilize the vulnerable, 200-foot section of Mill Creek’s streambank, which they also re-graded to reduce the severity of its slope.

James Schmidt, who with his wife, Twila, owns a cottage along Mill Creek, observed the work in progress. “On a Thursday morning, [the work group] converged in the vicinity of our back yard. When they left on Friday, it was a new place. It was a tremendous accomplishment in a short amount of time. We are grateful to all who worked there, and for the funds that helped to make this project a success,” he wrote in a letter to Westmoreland County Commission Chairman Tom Balya.

This fall, the work group hopes to put the finishing touches on the job by planting 20 six-foot-high young trees to bring even more stability to the streambank.

The Westmoreland County Board of Commissioners, working with the Westmoreland Conservation District last fall, identified five other water-quality projects to be done for streams in the county -- in Allegheny Township, New Kensington, Mount Pleasant Township, Derry Township, and Donegal Township.

“The projects we identified for funding in Westmoreland County address many of the concerns our residents told us were important to them when we did the county’s comprehensive plan,” said Commissioner Chairman Tom Balya, who also serves on the Board of Directors of the Westmoreland Conservation District. “These improvements will benefit all of us – our quality of life, our environment and our economy.”

## Feature

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### A Stream On The Rebound-- Trout in an AMD-impacted Stream?

by

Andy McAllister, Watershed Coordinator

and

Bruce Golden, Regional Coordinator

The editors of [Abandoned Mine Posts](#) (AMP) recently caught up with Mark Killar, Director of Watershed Services with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and asked about the possibility of trout living in AMD-impacted streams.



**AMP:** [Redstone Creek](#) in Fayette County is a stream that runs orange for many miles from huge abandoned mine discharges, yet we’re aware of reports of rainbow trout being caught there. Could that be? Is it a fluke or are they fish that someone dumped into the creek?

**Killar:** This kind of scenario has been observed in other streams that receive net alkaline Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) from abandoned deep mines. As you may be aware, these discharges often contain high amounts of alkalinity due to the limestone layer located above the flooded portion of the mine(s). Although the discharges look ugly because they contain lots of iron and turn the stream orange, they don’t contain acid or aluminum, the two deadly killers of fish and life in the stream. Because fish aren’t affected that much by iron, they can survive in these net alkaline iron polluted streams.

**AMP:** So, some discharges aren't as toxic as others? Is it possible that some of these discharges could actually help fish populations?

**Killar:** Well, one thing that helps out trout in particular is the 50 degree water temperature of the mine water. Especially at low stream flows, the mine discharges have a positive effect on the stream by keeping the water temperature down because they often can make up a significant portion of the stream flow when the streams are usually flowing low. Cooler water means the stream can hold more oxygen, which the trout like and need. Besides that, people wouldn't normally think there are trout in the orange water so they don't fish there and the trout get a chance to grow.

**AMP:** You said that "fish aren't affected that much by iron". Does that mean we should simply not be concerned about water that's just polluted by iron then?

**Killar:** A study was done on [Sewickley Creek](#) some years ago (which also has several large alkaline deep mine discharges on it) and to the surprise of the person doing the study several nice brown trout turned up in a little orange tributary to the stream. It was a very small stream that looked ugly as heck, but again, didn't have acid or aluminum being dumped into it from the mine discharge. Upon further study, it turned out the fish only had minnows in their stomachs and no aquatic insects, which makes sense in that the heavy coating of iron on the bottom of the stream significantly reduces the number of aquatic insects because it smothers out their habitat.

The big question is "What the heck are the minnows eating to keep them alive?" One theory is they come from the smaller unpolluted tributaries or are washed into the unpolluted sections from upstream.

A similar situation happened on [Loyalhanna Creek](#) near Latrobe where again large net alkaline deep mine discharges polluted it and turned the stream orange. One local fisherman had a secret spot he would fish (in the orange portion of the stream) and would catch some pretty large fish. Again, it was likely that few fishermen would consider fishing in that portion of the stream so the fish had lots of time to grow big.

Visit the [Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's website](#) for information about conservation activities in the Western part of Pennsylvania.

A listing of watershed groups in [Western Pennsylvania is available online](#).

*(Reprinted from Abandoned Mine Posts, [Western Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#).)*

## **Quick Clips**

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

[Editorial: Regional Recycling Efforts May Be Faltering](#)  
[Editorial: Increasing Costs of Recycling Are Eroding Its Value](#)  
[FreeCycle Turns Trash Into Treasure](#)

[Local Group Works to Clean Up the Poconos](#)  
[Grant Boosts Outdoor Classroom](#)  
[Editorial: Legislature Urged to Restore Funding for Pollution Cleanup](#)  
[Lining Our Streets With Trees](#)  
[Editorial: Ignoring Climate Change](#)  
[Cutting Carbon Dioxide Emissions](#)  
[Montco Wants Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduced](#)  
[Op-Ed: A Realistic Plan to Slow Climate Change, UMW](#)  
[Nether Prov Eyes Energy Credits](#)  
[Mary Bender Heads Resource Enhancement and Protection Program](#)  
[EAC Plans as Schuylkill Wins Kudos Over Energy](#)  
[Battle Looms for Rendell, GOP on Energy Plan](#)  
[Editorial: Energy, Transportation, Open Records Fall Session Priorities](#)  
[Battle Brews Over Plans for Turbines](#)  
[Factory Town Gives Support to Gamesa](#)  
[Rendell Powers Up for Session’s Tough Sell](#)  
[Governor, Legislature Set to Battle Over Energy Plans](#)  
[McGinty Touts Rendell Energy Plan in Exton](#)  
[Editorial: Energy Conservation, Efficiency Should Top List of Priorities](#)  
[Op-Ed: PA Needs Energy Strategy That Grows Economy, Strengthens Security – Rendell](#)  
[Energy Session Begins in Legislature](#)  
[Harrisburg Focuses on Energy Conservation](#)  
[GOP Has Own PA Energy Proposal](#)  
[GOP Unveils State Energy Plan](#)  
[GOP Unveils Own Energy Plan](#)  
[Hutchinson Unveils Energy Proposal](#)  
[Battle Looms for Rendell, GOP on Energy Plan](#)  
[Legislators Open Special Session for Energy Initiatives](#)  
[Rendell Seeks Support for Energy Issues](#)  
[Wind Turbine Foes Make a Flap](#)  
[Wind Battle Heating Up](#)  
[Legislation on Building Wind Farms Encouraged](#)  
[The Power of Wind](#)  
[Working on Efforts for Clean, Renewable Energy](#)  
[Editorial: Alternative Energy Sources Without a Tax Hike](#)  
[Op-Ed: Let’s Make Pennsylvania Energy Independent- Rep. DePasquale](#)  
[Hydroelectric Plants Still Feed the Power Grid](#)  
[Hydroelectric Operators Work Hard to Keep It Clean](#)  
[Exploring Energy Choices](#)  
[Solar Energy Company to Alight in Schuylkill](#)  
[CMU Solar Housing a Contender](#)  
[A Sunny Outlook, Solar Energy Can Save Money](#)  
[Cumberland Buses to Use Biodiesel](#)  
[Ethanol Addiction Drives Up Taxes and Food Costs](#)  
[Corn Fuels Energy Debate](#)  
[Pigs Produce Power](#)  
[Northampton Power Plant Adds Tires to Fuel](#)

[Car Wash Would Use Wind Turbines as Energy Source](#)  
[New Meter Might Help Students Save Energy](#)  
[Programs Can Help Residents Save Energy](#)  
[Penn State Researchers Turn Water Into Energy](#)  
[DCNR Considers Lifting Moratorium on Oil and Gas Leasing](#)  
[Editorial: Opportunity Knocks, Natural Areas as a Community Investment](#)  
[Flagstaff Hiking-Biking Trail Proposed](#)  
[Cyclists Put Welcome Spin on Great Allegheny Passage](#)  
[Outdoors: National Holiday Celebrates Access to Wild Places](#)

## **Watershed NewsClips**

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

[Cameron County Stream Projects Planned](#)  
[Growing Greener Monies Available in Wyoming County](#)  
[River Islands Lose Ground to Dredging, Commercial Traffic](#)  
[Temperature, Acidity of Water Matter Greatly to Fish](#)  
[Healthy Mussels, Healthy River](#)  
[Middle Spring Creek Fish Surveyed](#)  
[Researchers Find State's First River Darter in the Ohio River](#)  
[PA Nurturing Green Roofs to Manage Stormwater](#)  
[A Real Leafy Roof](#)  
[Taking Nature Into Their Own Hands at Coast Day](#)  
[Officials Discuss Fishway Near Raftsman Dam](#)  
[State DEP Compiles Draft Watershed Atlas](#)  
[Susquehanna River Trail Bounds Forward](#)  
[DEP to Plug 150 Abandoned Oil and Gas Wells](#)  
[Drying Out: Local Water Situation Critical](#)

## **Regulations**

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The Environmental Quality Board [published proposed changes](#) to state Safe Drinking Water regulations for comment.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – September 22, 2007](#)

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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The Public Utility Commission [published notice of a correction](#) to the default service and retail electric markets statement of policy.

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

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

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- **September 24** –Gov. Rendell’s formal address to open the Special Session on Energy. 1:00.
- **September 24** –Environmental Issues Forum Presentation on Clean Up Our American Lands Program sponsored by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#). Room 205 Ryan Building. 12:00.
- **September 24** – **NEW**. Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee hearing on funding Hazardous Site Cleanups. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 1:30.
- **September 25** – Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee public hearing on proposed alternative fuels mandate included in [House Bill 1202](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) and [Senate Bill 789](#) (Dinniman-D-Chester). Room 8 E-B, Capitol East Wing. 9:30.
- **September 25** – **NEW**. House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meeting to consider [House Bill 690](#) (Cohen-D-Philadelphia) establishing the Plug-In Hybrid Task Force, [House Bill 1374](#) (Saylor-R-York) amending the Sewage Facilities Act related to Sewage Enforcement Officers, [House Bill 1519](#) (McGeehan-D-Philadelphia) providing penalties for illegal posting of signs and depositing penalties in a new TreeVitalize Program Fund. G-50 Irvis Building. 9:00.
- **September 25** – DEP Critical Water Planning Area Subcommittee, [State Water Resources Committee](#) meeting. 10th floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Office Building. 10:00.
- **September 26** –[Delaware River Basin Commission public hearing](#) on multi-jurisdictional use of Delaware River Basin. 25 State Police Drive, West Trenton, NJ. 10:15
- **September 26** –[DCNR Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building, Harrisburg. 10:00.
- **September 27** –House Game and Fisheries Committee hearing on legislation creating a junior fishing license. Hub Cira Centre, 2929 Arch St., Philadelphia 7:00.
- **October 3** – **NEW**. House Local Government Committee information meeting on [House Bill 1525](#) (Steil-R-Bucks) providing for greenways, stormwater and other green infrastructure improvements and [House Bill 1787](#) (McIlvain-Smithe-D-Montgomery) amending the Municipalities Planning Code related to curative amendments. Room 205 Ryan Building. 9:30.
- **October 3** –**CANCELLED**. [DEP Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board](#).



## PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

- **October 4** –Joint Legislative Air & Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee hearing on electronic waste recycling. Room 8E-A, East Wing. 9:00.
- **October 10-11** – [DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting on on October 10 from 7-9 p.m. and October 11 from 9:30 to 12 p.m. at the Best Western Inn.
- **October 13** – Schuylkill River Festival. Pottstown. Contact: Carolyn Brunschwyler, Montgomery County Community College, 610-718-1847, or send email to: [cbrunsch@mc3.edu](mailto:cbrunsch@mc3.edu)
- **October 16** – **CANCELLED**. [DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting on October 16 was cancelled in favor of a regional meeting in Bedford on October 10 from 7-9 p.m. and October 11 from 9:30 to 12 p.m. at the Best Western Inn.
- **October 16** –[DEP Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 206 Bureau of Laboratories building, 2575 Interstate Dr., Harrisburg. 10:00.
- **October 23** – DEP [Nonpoint Source Liaison Workshop](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building, Harrisburg. 10:00. Contact: Steven Lathrop, 717-772-5618 or send email to: [slathrop@state.pa.us](mailto:slathrop@state.pa.us) .
- **October 25** –Sewage Task Force, [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#). Penn Stater Conference Hotel, State College. 10:00.
- **October 25** – [DEP Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board](#) meeting. DEP Cambria District Mining Office, Ebensburg.
- **October 27** – [Global Warming: Rising to the Challenge by Acting Locally](#). Gwynedd Mercy College, Gwynedd Valley, Montgomery County. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **November 1** –DEP [Low-Level Waste Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **February 22-23** – 2008 [Keystone Coldwater Conference](#). State College.

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

### [Watershed Events](#) (courtesy [PA Organization for Watersheds & Rivers](#))

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

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

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

## Helpful Web Links

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### [PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

[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

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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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