

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

Attorney General Praises Senate Committee Approval of Tougher Penalties

Attorney General Tom Corbett this week praised members of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee for their approval of a bill-- [House Bill 2042](#) (Reichley-R-Berks)-- that enhances Pennsylvania's Clean Streams Law, increasing penalties for polluters who compromise the quality of the Commonwealth's waterways.

Corbett said the legislation will strengthen the ability of the Attorney General's Environmental Crimes Section to investigate and prosecute polluters. Additionally, Corbett said the increased penalties included in the bill will help prevent Pennsylvania from becoming an attractive dumping ground for polluters who face tougher penalties in neighboring states.

"We need to send a clear message to polluters that Pennsylvania is not a dumping ground for their waste," Corbett said. "These changes will enhance our efforts to investigate and prosecute environmental crimes and also ensure that the punishment fits their crime."

Corbett said current law treats most water pollution cases as third-degree misdemeanors -- the lowest level of misdemeanor offense under Pennsylvania law. The proposed legislation would make intentional violations a felony and substantially increase the penalties, to a maximum of seven years imprisonment and a \$50,000 fine.

Corbett said the current law is inadequate to effectively deter pollution, and may actually make Pennsylvania an attractive dumping ground for polluters who face much tougher penalties in neighboring states such as New Jersey, New York and Maryland.

"Pennsylvania should not be a safe haven for out-of-state polluters, who may be tempted to dump their waste here in order to escape harsher penalties in their home states," Corbett said. "These amendments bring our Clean Streams Law more closely in line with our neighbors and with federal environmental law."

Corbett said the legislation would also increase the statute of limitations for violations of the Clean Streams Law from two years to five years, giving authorities additional time to investigate pollution, identify violators and prosecute cases.

Corbett said the legislation, [House Bill 2042](#), was approved unanimously (196-0) by members of the House of Representatives in May 2006.

"I urge the full Senate to quickly bring this important bill to a vote, and send it on to the Governor for final approval," Corbett said.

A companion bill, [House Bill 2043](#) (Reichley-R-Berks) that would increase penalties for waste violations in Solid Waste Management Act, is still in the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

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Session Schedule

The Senate and House return to session October 16. This is the Senate's last scheduled week in session before the November 7 election. The House is in session both the weeks of October 16 and 23.

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On the Hill

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- How Many Light Bulbs Does It Take to Protect the Environment and Save \$30?
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- Northeast Regional Recycling Conference Will Feature PA Presenters
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- DCNR Honored for Outstanding Achievement in Greenways Preservation
- Game Commissions Acts on Priority Wildlife Projects, Acquisitions
- DEP Citizens Advisory Council Publishes Fall Newsletter
- DEP Reorganizes District Mining Office Service Areas
- Help Wanted: Project Coordinator for ALLARM, DEP Bureau Director

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

- Climate Change, Environmental Covenants Topics on This Week’s Video Blog

Feature

- Pennsylvania Birders Still Needed to Help With Atlas, *By Joe Kosack, Pennsylvania Game Commission*

Regulations

- Final Mercury Rule, Stream Redesignations Highlight EQB October 17 Agenda

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On the Hill

On the Agenda/ Senate/House Actions/Bills Introduced

There are no committee meetings next week with the General Assembly not in session. But, the Senate and House took action on these bills this week, along with introducing several bills of interest. Here's the rundown...

In the Senate...

Recycling Fee: [House Bill 1902](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) extending the \$2/ton Recycling Fee sunset date through 2012 was referred to Senate Appropriations.

Increasing Penalties: [House Bill 2042](#) (Reichley-R-Berks), that would increase penalties for water pollution under the Clean Streams Law, was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Regulatory Impacts: [House Bill 236](#) (Pickett-R-Bradford) requiring the review of regulations for their impact on small business by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission was referred to Senate Appropriations Committee.

In the House...

Environmental Covenants: [House Bill 1249](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing uniform environmental covenants provisions was amended and reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

- **Video Blog:** [Rep. Rubley discusses brownfield reuse and her legislation.](#)

Climate Change: [House Resolution 692](#) (Ross-R-Chester) directing the Committee to study and report on the methods of reducing greenhouse gas emissions was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee by a vote of 20 to 8.

- **Video Blog:** [Rep. Ross talks about the resolution and climate change.](#)

Flood Maps: [House Bill 936](#) (Hanna-D-Centre) providing for a review and update of state, county and local flood maps was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee along with a suggestion the Committee hold hearings on updating flood plain mapping.

Nuclear Plant Fees: [House Bill 6](#) (Tigue-D-Lackawanna) increasing fees on nuclear power plant facilities was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy

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Committee with the request that it be re-referred to the House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee.

PA Coal Air Quality Tax Credit: [House Bill 2771](#) (Pyle-R-Armstrong) creating the Pennsylvania Coal and Air Quality Tax Credit Program was reported from the House Transportation Committee with the request that it be referred to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Mine Families First: [House Bill 2619](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) establishing the Mine Families First Program was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

Bills Introduced

Biorefinery Zones: [House Bill 2976](#) (Good-R-Erie) establishing Keystone Biorefinery Opportunity Zones.

Air Hoses for Fuel Economy: [House Bill 2986](#) (Pistella-D-Allegheny) requiring service stations to have functioning air hoses to check tire pressure to improve fuel economy.

Pollution Reduction/Energy Efficiency: [House Bill 2990](#) (Hershey-R) establishing an energy efficiency and pollution reduction initiative and creating a Keystone Energy and Environmental Excellence Award.

Historic Preservation Grants: [House Bill 2993](#) (Tangretti-D-Westmoreland) establishing a historic preservation grant program.

New Diesel Tax Credit: [House Bill 2997](#) (Beyer-R-Monroe) providing a tax credit of up to \$5,000 for new diesel technology.

House Committee OKs Climate Change, Covenant, Nuclear Fee Bills – *Video Blog*

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee this week, on a split vote, reported out a resolution directing the Committee to study policy and technology options the state can adopt to address the issue of climate change and took action on other bills. Here's the rundown...

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- **Video Blog:** [Rep. Ross talks about the resolution and climate change.](#)
NewsClip: [Climate Study Says Pittsburgh to be One Hot Town](#)

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Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware) serves as Majority Chair of the Committee and Rep. Camille George (D-Clearfield) serves as Minority Chair.

Senate Committee Schedules Hearing on Hazardous Sites Cleanup Funding Gap

The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will hold a hearing October 16 to hear comments and alternatives for filling a \$40 million funding shortfall in the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund.

Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty is expected to testify.

Gov. Rendell and the Senate and House put in place a stopgap measure for funding the Hazardous Sites Program over the last two fiscal years by taking money from the popular Growing Greener watershed, nutrient and sediment reduction and abandoned mine reclamation programs and putting it in the HSCA Fund. But that temporary measure ends July 1, 2007 and the Fund will be out of money.

Although some replacement funding was provided for watershed and abandoned mine reclamation programs through the \$625 million Growing Greener II, that funding is also due to run out in just four years.

Add to these funding dilemmas, the fact that starting July 1, 2007, the Rendell Administration expects to start paying back the Growing Greener II bond issue with funds taken from the Growing Greener watershed, nutrient and sediment reduction and abandoned mine reclamation program.

The Committee is also looking to schedule a hearing on the status of Growing Greener funding in the next few weeks.

Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) chairs the Committee and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) is Minority Chair.

In Other News

Congress Fails to Act on Abandoned Mine Fee Reauthorization – *Video Blog*

John Dawes, of the PA AML Campaign, reported this week Congress failed to act on legislation reauthorizing the federal fee used to fund the federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program before adjourning for fall elections.

The PA AML Campaign is working with citizens in other historic production states, the coal industry, UMWA, national and regional conservation and hunting/fishing groups to get Congressional action on the legislation.

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“Despite our best efforts and hard work by all the other interests we've been working with, the Senate majority leadership blocked several efforts on the Senate floor -- and an effort within the majority caucus -- and refused to consider separating AML, tax extenders, R&D credit or any provisions from the estate tax/minimum wage bill for Senate consideration,” said Dawes.

“It is important that the PA AML Campaign maintain its legislative nonpartisan focus so that AML reauthorization is a top priority for Congress when it returns for the lame duck session on November 13,” said Dawes.

“Until November 13, our AML Campaign needs to continue building broad support for AML reauthorization in 2006 and to obtain commitments from the PA Congressional delegation to finally deliver AML reauthorization in law. We will also continue to work with our broader coalition and reach out to Members of Congress from other states.

“Our Campaign should be very proud of our cohesive, cooperative efforts. To be successful in the lame duck session, we must maintain our legislative momentum.”

- **Video Blog:** [Watch Dawes' comments on AML Fund reauthorization.](#)

Link: [Job Not Done to Reauthorize Federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fee Show Your Organization's Support for Reauthorization](#)

Washington County Mine Reclamation Project Designed by DEP Wins Award

A highwall reclamation project designed by the Department of Environmental Protection won a 2006 Appalachian Regional Award from the federal Office of Surface Mining.

The Monongahela South No. 1 project involved the stabilization of a dangerous and deteriorating highwall that threatened a church and school in the City of Monongahela, Washington County.

Several automobiles were severely damaged by rock falls from the highwall during church services. The school at the site had been closed for several years due to the dangerous condition posed by the highwall.

A portion of the highwall was stabilized by cutting the slope back and the incidental extraction of coal. The remainder of the highwall was stabilized by constructing a retaining wall.

The highwall was about 40 feet high and the hillside immediately above the highwall was very steep with residential streets and homes located just above the top of the slope. Differential weathering on the exposed highwall had caused treacherous rock overhangs that eventually would break off and fall onto the driveway located behind the church and school.

The annual award competition is conducted by OSM to recognize outstanding projects implemented by state and tribal AML Programs. Eric Cavazza accepted the award on behalf of the department at the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs annual meeting last week and also presented a paper on the project.

[A technical paper on the project is available online.](#)

PA-AWRA Water Resources Conference Set for October 20

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With the theme of “[Emergency Preparedness and Response in Water Resources Management](#),” the PA Chapter of the American Water Resources Association will hold its annual conference on October 20 at the Days Inn in State College.

Conference attendees will hear presentations on a variety of emergency prepared issues associated with floods, droughts, dam safety and water quality concerns.

Visit the “[Emergency Preparedness and Response in Water Resources Management](#)” Conference website to register and for more information.

SRBC Releases Results of Morrison Cove Valley Stream Assessment, Blair, Bedford

The [Susquehanna River Basin Commission](#) this week released its findings from a comprehensive stream assessment of Morrison Cove Valley streams, Blair and Bedford counties. Overall, stream habitat and biology were in very good condition.

The valley is a 186-square-mile area located in Bedford and Blair Counties in the Juniata River Subbasin. Water quality ranked lower due to high nitrate levels in much of the valley from agricultural operations - the leading land use (55 percent). Sodium levels also were elevated in the central-west portion of the valley, possibly from highway runoff and a quarry operation.

SRBC collected and analyzed data from Morrison Cove Valley and summarized its findings in the report Juniata River Subbasin Small Watershed Study: Morrison Cove - A Water Quality and Biological Assessment, April 2005 - February 2006.

This report represents the second of a two-phase study of the Juniata watershed and is referred to as the Year-2 report. It covers the subwatersheds located entirely or partially in Morrison Cove, including Halter, Clover, Piney and Yellow Creek watersheds.

SRBC selected Morrison Cove for the Year-2 report in part because the valley's largest population center, Roaring Spring, is one of eight areas in the Susquehanna basin currently identified by SRBC as a groundwater potentially stressed area (PSA). A PSA is an area where existing or projected withdrawals or consumptive uses are anticipated to exceed long-term sustainability of the groundwater resource or cause conflicts among users.

Paul Swartz, SRBC Executive Director said, "During times of drought, the community of Roaring Spring is at risk of surface and groundwater shortages, as domestic and industrial water needs are nearly equal to the area's recharge capacity. Given the heavy reliance on groundwater, we are concerned that virtually all the flow from the large spring in Roaring Spring is consumed during droughts."

Swartz said, "These are not ideal water resource conditions for any community. Water shortages are not only a concern regarding supplies, but also the impact on water quality. Raising awareness of the area's water resources will hopefully help policy makers, water managers and the citizens of Roaring Spring make informed management decisions."

With regard to the valley's overall water quality conditions, they ranged from "higher" to "poor" with the majority being in the "middle" quality range. Of the samples taken for the Year-2 report, the best water quality was found in middle reaches of Halter Creek and the unnamed tributary flowing into Plum Creek.

The most impacted streams included Plum Creek and the headwaters of Halter Creek. Of those and other impacted streams in Morrison Cove Valley, the parameters that

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exceeded levels of concern most often were nitrate (80 percent), sodium (12 percent), conductivity (4 percent), alkalinity (3 percent) and chlorine (1 percent).

Excess nitrates in ground and surface water adversely impact the environment by increasing algal growth, depleting oxygen levels and diminishing aquatic life. Agricultural and lawn fertilizers, animal manure and malfunctioning on-lot septic systems are all potential sources of nitrate in Morrison Cove.

Elevated levels in drinking water supplies also can pose human health risks, especially to children and pregnant women. The Martinsburg area in Blair County is currently facing elevated levels in its local groundwater system.

SRBC has been conducting water quality and biological studies of the six major subbasins (West Branch Susquehanna Subbasin, Middle Susquehanna Subbasin, Lower Susquehanna Subbasin, Juniata Subbasin, Upper Susquehanna Subbasin and Chemung Subbasin) on a rotating basis since the mid-1980s. In addition to studying the entire subbasins, in 1999 SRBC began conducting companion Year-2 studies in each basin. The Year-2 studies focus on smaller watersheds.

"The Year-2 phase allows the Commission to study particular smaller watersheds in much greater detail and draw attention to them. We select watersheds either because they are areas of concern and would benefit from restoration and management activities, like the Morrison Cove Valley, or they may be pristine watersheds that should be protected for future generations," said Swartz.

[The 16-page Year-2 report will be posted online.](#)

For more information or a hard copy of the report, contact Ava Stoops, SRBC at 717-238-0423, ext. 302 or by e-mail to srbc@srbc.net.

Tour, Workshop to Showcase Schuylkill Watershed Enhancements October 12

On October 12 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., representatives from the [Schuylkill Action Network](#) will embark on a tour of three Montgomery County sites where innovative improvements in stormwater management are being constructed.

These improvements — known as best management practices— are environmental enhancements that help to reduce the quantity, and improve the quality, of stormwater runoff pollution, a major threat to water quality throughout the 2,000-square mile watershed that includes the City of Philadelphia.

The tour will leave by bus from the parking lot of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area at 140 College Drive in Pottstown, Pa. Highlights of the outing will include BMPs being installed at Norristown Farm Park, Riverbend Environmental Education Center and Brookside County Club — three projects funded in part by a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Targeted Watershed Grant awarded to the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary in 2004.

"Policymakers are beginning to realize that stormwater BMPs can have a real effect on water quality," said Jennifer Adkins, Schuylkill Watershed Initiative Grant coordinator with the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary. "Better water quality in the Schuylkill means enhanced habitat, recreational opportunities and drinking water for more than 1.5 million people throughout Southeastern Pa. In other words, it means a better quality of life."

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After the Stormwater BMP Tour, participants and other stakeholders will convene at Montgomery County Community College’s West Campus from 2 to 6 p.m. for a free [SAN workshop entitled “Monitoring Matters.”](#) The purpose of this meeting is to review the progress being made by SAN’s five workgroups addressing threats to water quality from abandoned mine drainage, agricultural runoff, pathogens, stormwater runoff and more.

Some attendees will also be learning the skills necessary to design effective monitoring programs for local streams. Others will participate in the development of a strategic approach to water-quality monitoring throughout the Schuylkill River Watershed.

Visitors to SAN’s tour and workshop are also invited to view “Scenes of the Schuylkill,” an art exhibition and sale currently underway at MCCC’s nearby art gallery located at 16 West High Street. The exhibit is being hosted by the SRHA and will conclude with a reception on October 27. Guests will be able to view original works of art featuring natural scenes from throughout the five-county heritage area, including the popular Schuylkill River Trail.

For additional information, directions or to register for the Stormwater BMP Tour, please contact Jennifer Adkins at 800-445-4935, extension 112. For information about SAN’s “Monitoring Matters” workshop, please contact Victoria Lawson of the Delaware River Basin Commission at 609-883-9500, extension 308, or visit www.state.nj.us/drbc . And for more details regarding the art show, please call MCCC’s West Campus Gallery at 484-945-0200.

To learn more about the SAN, please visit www.SchuylkillActionNetwork.org .

Statewide Survey of Private Well Owners Underway

The [Penn State Master Well Owner Network](#) and the Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Center are conducting the first [statewide survey of private well owners](#) across the state through the end of the year.

The purpose of the research study is to learn about the characteristics and management of private wells in the state along with homeowner opinions.

Pennsylvania is home to over one million private water wells that provide drinking water to over three million rural residents, with an additional 20,000 new water wells drilled each year.

Since all aspects of private well location, construction and management are voluntary, little is known about them and how they perform for homeowners. This makes it difficult to create educational programs to meet the needs of existing and future well owners.

Penn State University in cooperation with the [Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Center](#) is offering well-owners an opportunity to contribute through an online survey regarding private water wells. Participants must be Pennsylvania residents and at least 18 years old to complete the online survey, which should take less than 10 minutes.

Please do not fill out the survey if your water comes from a public (city) water supply or from a spring or cistern.

Questions can be directed to Stephanie Clemens at 814-865-2250.

Lancaster Watershed Groups Make Watershed Education “Float”

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Watershed groups, with the help of the Lancaster County Conservation District, carried their watershed education message to more than 50,000 people this summer and fall through a unique vehicle—a watershed float in community parades.

Funded by a PA Association of Conservation Districts Education Mini-Grant, six volunteer watershed groups in and around Northern Lancaster County participated in three fair and farm show parades in Lancaster County.



The goal was to educate community residents on basic watershed concepts like riparian buffers, stream bank fencing and that “we all live downstream.”

The groups included: [Chiques Creek Watershed Alliance](#), [Lititz Run Watershed Alliance](#), [Donegal Trout Unlimited](#), [Furnace Run/Segloch Run Watershed Alliance](#), Hammer Creek Watershed Association and Cocalico Creek Watershed Association.

As the float moved along the parade routes, watershed members handed out educational bookmarks and other materials along the way.

(Photo submitted by Matt Kofroth, Lancaster Watershed Specialist)

Briefing Set for October 18 on Codorus Watershed Projects in York County

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is inviting local officials and the public to a briefing on the Codorus Watershed Restoration Feasibility Study on October 18 at Nixon Park Nature Center.

Local officials are invited at 4:30 and the public at 6:30.

The Corps recommendations include nine major ecosystem restoration projects in Manchester, Spring Garden, Springettsbury, Springfield and York Townships and in North York Borough and York City.

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

For more information contact Genevieve Ray, Watershed Coordinator, 717-848-3320 or send email to: genray555@aol.com or York County Planning Director Felicia Dell at 717-771-9870 or send email to: fdell@ycpc.org.

Workshop on Pervious Concrete Set for October 25 in Lebanon County

The Lebanon County Conservation District, PA Aggregates and Concrete Association and other groups are sponsoring a workshop on pervious concrete at Ft. Indiantown Gap in Lebanon County on October 25 starting at 9:30.

Pervious concrete can help builders and developers meet stormwater control and energy conservation requirements for construction. The workshop will include a live demonstration of pervious concrete placement.

For more information contact the PA Aggregates and Concrete Association at 717-234-7030.

Students Build Model Green Home in Lancaster

The [NAHB Research Center](#) and the [Lancaster County Career and Technology Center](#) kicked-off construction this week on one of the first homes rated under the new [NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines](#).

Each year, students enrolled in the school's Building and Construction program build a home as an applied learning project, and complete 90 percent of the trade work.

This year, sustainable advanced building products and processes will be introduced to the curriculum for the first time, resulting in this effort to build a green home that sets a higher performance standard for Lancaster County.

The Research Center began the first phase of the project in March 2006, working with LCCTC staff and members of the local home building industry to develop the home's green and energy-efficient design. A base home design submitted by a local builder was selected which already had some energy-efficient features, such as sealed ductwork and ENERGY STAR appliances.

Then, working groups examined each of the home's systems for ways to make them greener and ramp up the efficiency. During this process, each section of the NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines was considered, including: lot design; preparation and development; resource efficiency; energy efficiency; water efficiency; indoor environmental quality; operation, management, and homeowner education; and environmental impact.

While the home's basic design and layout were not altered, several green and performance enhancing modifications were added such as rainwater harvesting; optimum value engineering; xeriscaping; whole-house ventilation; recycled metal roofing; home-run PEX plumbing system; fiber cement siding; geothermal heat pump; passive solar; low-flow faucets and fixtures; and stormwater management using low impact development techniques, to name a few.

Working groups also considered factors like green benefits, first and life-cycle costs, and ease of installation when evaluating technologies for the home to ensure the processes could be easily adopted by other builders.

With these modifications in place, the design's score under the Model Guidelines changed from one that did not warrant a Bronze rating (161 points) to one that easily achieved a Gold rating (400 total points).

The modified home design also achieved a higher score in each individual category of the Model Guidelines. To ensure the completed home would meet a wider range of green building criteria, the Research Center team also scored it against two other green home building programs where it rated extremely well.

As construction of the project's first of four homes progresses, Research Center experts will provide ongoing technical support and training on advanced products and practices for faculty and students.

Local builders, trade contractors, suppliers, and architects will also be invited to participate in training sessions with the goal of generating local advocates of sustainable building. Scheduled for completion within the next year, the home will be opened for tours during the local Parade of Homes next spring and will also be used as a laboratory to study the science of energy and alternative energy sources by other area students from middle through high school.

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Participating in the groundbreaking ceremony this week were Dr. Michael Curley, LCCTC Executive Director; Dan Desmond, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection Office of Energy and Technology Deployment; Mike Garman, President of the Lancaster Building Industry Association; and Shawn Martin, Director of Applied Technology and PATH project manager for the NAHB Research Center.

For more information, visit the [NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines webpage](#), including advanced building and technology information, visit the NAHB Research Center's ToolBase Services website at www.ToolBase.org.

- **Video:** [Souderton High School Students Build Green Home](#)

PPL Publishes Corporate Responsibility, Environmental Performance Report

PPL this week published its overall corporate responsibility report that includes a special section on its [environmental performance](#) over the last year.

PPL noted they are spending \$1.6 billion on control that will nearly eliminate sulfur dioxide emissions from their five largest generating units in Pennsylvania and testing new technology to reduce mercury emissions.

In a special section on [Climate Change & Carbon Risk](#), PPL said it has identified projects that will reduce or offset greenhouse gas emissions from its operations, noting the company's generating units produced 32 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions in 2005.

PPL noted it is a member of the FutureGen Industrial Alliance, a consortium of companies working to develop zero-emission coal-fired power plants in the U.S., the Big Sky Carbon Sequestration Partnership in Montana and has undertaken a variety of alternative fuel projects.

How Many Light Bulbs Does It Take to Protect the Environment and Save \$30?

Saving \$30, and protecting the environment, is as easy as changing a light bulb. If every American household changed a single light bulb to an Energy Star bulb, it would provide enough power to light more than 2.5 million homes, while saving consumers money.

"[Change A Light, Change The World](#)," which starts this week, is an annual campaign by EPA and the Department of Energy that encourages Americans to replace a conventional bulb or fixture in the home or workplace with one that has earned the government's Energy Star label for energy efficiency. This year, the Department of Housing and Urban Development is joining the campaign to extend its reach.

Energy Star qualified bulbs and fixtures use one-third the energy of traditional models and last up to 10 times longer. In fact, consumers can save more than \$30 in utility costs over the lifetime of one bulb. Replacing the most frequently used lights at home will yield the most savings.

EPA and DOE are asking homeowners to take the "[Change a Light, Change the World](#)" pledge.

Individuals who pledged during last year's "Change a Light, Change the World" Campaign will prevent greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to nearly 3,000 vehicles and save \$2 million in energy costs.

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The less energy we use, the less energy electric utilities must generate, and less demand means fewer greenhouse gas emissions. If homeowners change just one bulb to an Energy Star qualified bulb they will prevent the release of more than 450 pounds of greenhouse gas emissions.

Americans are invited to visit the [Energy Star website](#) to join the more than 110,000 who have pledged to replace at least one light at home, and see the positive difference even small energy-saving actions at home can make.

The Philadelphia Housing Authority marked Energy Awareness Month by announcing installation of energy-saving light bulbs in thousands of apartments.

The Philadelphia Housing Authority is taking the slogan, “Change a Light, Change the World” to a whole new level. The agency announced a plan this week to replace every light bulb in every apartment that it manages with Compact fluorescent bulbs, a move that potentially could save millions of dollars in energy costs over the next several years.

Register Now for Free Industrial Energy Assessments from DOE

The U.S. Department of Energy this week opened registration on its [Save Energy Now website](#) for a second round of targeted energy assessments. DOE will offer 250 industrial pump, fan, and compressed air system assessments nationwide during 2007.

The 2007 assessments add a focus on reducing electrical energy use, in addition to reducing natural gas consumption.

Manufacturers interested in reducing natural gas or electric energy costs may register for an assessment by visiting the [Save Energy Now website](#)

Also for 2007, manufacturer eligibility requirements for have been broadened to include any manufacturer with total energy consumption exceeding one-trillion Btu's annually.

The Department of Environmental Protection encourages all Commonwealth manufacturers to take advantage of these valuable no-cost resources, and many manufacturers are already taking part.

Pennsylvania manufacturers will sponsor 13 DOE process heating and steam system assessments through 2006 and at least 11 by DOE's university-based Industrial Assessment Centers for mid-sized manufacturers.

Assessments performed during 2006 are targeting 200 of the nation's largest users of natural gas. Early results from the initiative yielded projected natural gas savings approaching \$288 million from only 154 assessments conducted through September 2006. This amounts to conserving 32 trillion Btu's of energy, enough to heat nearly 430,000 homes annually.

Savings of \$35 million have been documented from implemented assessment recommendations from only 15 plant assessment follow-up reports received to date. These numbers exclude the energy savings achieved by nearly 500 mid-size manufacturers assessed by Industrial Assessment Centers, and hundreds of small manufacturers that benefited through Save Energy Now literature and resource mailings.

There are manufacturer eligibility requirements, and a 50 percent cost share may be required of any business assessed during the 2006 that registers for a second energy system assessment in 2007. Manufacturers unsure of their total energy use and eligibility will still benefit by registering.

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An automatic referral system will direct ineligible industries to the DOE Industrial Assessment Center nearest their location.

Small industries, commercial businesses, institutions, and municipalities self-assessing energy use reduction opportunities should visit DOE's Industrial Technology Program "[Best Practices](#)" [webpage](#) to download fact sheets, case studies, energy system software tools and manuals at no cost.

These resources can also be obtained on DOE's Save Energy Now CD by contacting Richard Illig at DEP's Office of Energy & Technology Deployment at 717-772-5834.

Sustainable Energy Field Day Set for Westmoreland October 26

On October 26 the [Westmoreland County Conservation District](#) will host a "[Sustainable Energy Field Day](#)" at the Donohoe Center conservation campus in Greensburg.

At this first-ever conservation event, visitors can get the facts on wind power, solar power, and a variety of green building/remodeling approaches that can reduce the overall amount of energy your home or business.

Participants can see firsthand: a 10-kilowatt wind turbine and a 2-kilowatt solar array; a geothermal system, structural insulated panels, water saving toilets, wood from "cull" trees, recycled tires used as decking, and native landscaping; a 125-year old barn adapted and reused for conservation offices and an education center; and the first green rehabilitation of a commercial building in Westmoreland County, complete with a roof covered with green, living plants.

The all-day event is divided into two parts: workshop sessions from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in which regional experts will present the technical aspects of the green materials and alternative technologies, and an open house from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. where visitors can tour the campus and ask questions of the experts.

Participants can attend one or both parts.

The workshop sessions cover four separate tracks: Green Roof Technology, Geothermal, Adaptive Reuse and Green Building, and Wind Power and Solar Power. Participants can choose to attend two tracks.

Among the scheduled speakers are: Jorg Breuning, Green Roof Service, Ryan Snow, Green Building Alliance, Gary Sheppard, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Richard Glance, Glance & Associates, Inc. Architecture & Planning, and Bernard Linn, U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development.

The \$20 workshop cost also includes lunch, and an afternoon "Ask the Experts" session where participants can choose to talk individually with the event's morning speakers, or learn more about sustainable-energy financing and investments from representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development and the Department of Environmental Protection.



Westmoreland County Center for
Conservation Education

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Space is limited for the workshop sessions, and registration is necessary. Interested parties should call the Conservation District at 724-837-5271, ext. 210 or send email to: christie@wcdpa.com.

Vendors representing radiant floor heat, structural insulated panels, recovered iron oxide, and recycled tires will be among those on hand throughout the day.

For more information, contact the Westmoreland Conservation District at 724-837-5271 or send email to: leanne@wcdpa.com.

- **Link:** [Read More on the Westmoreland Center for Conservation Education.](#)

Seminar to Help Manufacturers Manage Energy as Resource, Cut Utility Costs

Industrial leaders interested in learning about new methods to help reduce energy usage and cuts costs are invited to the [2006 Industrial Energy Summit](#), which will be held from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. October 25, at the Erie Manufacturers' Association Conference Center, 2171 W. 38th St., Erie.

"The energy outlook for Pennsylvania has changed substantially over the last few years, and energy costs promise to remain a priority issue for industries well into the future," said Kelly Burch, northwest regional director for the Department of Environmental Protection.

"Manufacturers are paring energy costs and consumption by embracing conservation and efficiency," Burch said. "The energy summit will take them to the next level by showing them how to strategically manage energy as a resource and not just an overhead cost."

Utility companies, energy consultants and manufacturers that are using new technologies and strategies to deal with energy issues will be featured speakers at the seminar.

For more information, contact DEP's Kammy Halterman by phone at 814-332-6191 or send e-mail to: khalterman@state.pa.us, or register with the Erie Manufacturers' Association by calling 814-833-3200 or visiting the [organization's website](#), before October 20.

The cost to participate in the summit is \$50.

DEP, the Erie Manufacturers' Association, National Fuel Gas Distribution Corp., Penelec and Northwestern Rural Electric Coop are co-sponsoring the daylong event.

Apply Now for 2007 Environmental Education Grants

Funding is now available to help schools, universities, nonprofit organizations and county conservation districts create or develop projects that enhance environmental education through the [2007 Environmental Education Grant Program](#).

Pre-application letters must be postmarked by December 15.

The Environmental Education Grants Program funds projects that engage students in environmental research to expand their scientific literacy and ensure a future generation of leaders who have the necessary skill and experience to recognize, comprehend and help solve the world's most difficult challenges.

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Grant amounts vary from \$2,000 for mini-grants to up to \$20,000 in areas designed specifically to cover timely and critically important topics, including the following: Sustainable energy sources, such as solar, wind, biomass and geothermal, and alternative transportation fuels;

Air quality, with a focus on improvements in transportation and electric-generation to reduce ground-level ozone, or smog; and Watersheds and wetlands, focusing on abating acid mine drainage, reducing non-point source pollution and enhancing water conservation in Pennsylvania.

The state's grant program was established by the Environmental Education Act of 1993, which mandates setting aside 5 percent of the pollution fines and penalties collected annually by DEP for environmental education in Pennsylvania.

Schools may apply for money to integrate the academic standards for environment and ecology or the standards for science and technology into formal curriculum, or to provide lessons and field experiences that include standards-based instruction. The state-mandated standards provide a roadmap for what students must know about the environment by the end of fourth, seventh, 10th and 12th grades.

The academic standards are the focus for kindergarten through 12th-grade education grants. Specific areas of instruction include watersheds and wetlands; environmental health; agriculture and society; integrated pest management; environmental laws and regulations; and humans and the environment.

Conservation groups, education organizations, colleges and universities may apply to do professional development workshops in the field of environmental education. County conservation districts also may apply to assist with environmental education efforts that relate to their mission. The districts can obtain mini-grants to provide educational resources that they then make available to educators in the area.

Since the inception of the environmental education grant program, DEP has awarded almost \$4 million in grants to support the environmental education efforts of schools, county conservation districts and other nonprofit organizations throughout Pennsylvania.

[Download an application manual](#) or request an application manual by writing to the DEP Environmental Education Grants Program, P.O. Box 2063, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063; or call 717-772-1828.

Strategies for Managing Organics in Your Community Workshops

A series of 10 workshops will be held around the state during October and November inviting local officials to learn how to recycle organic wastes in their communities using composting and other techniques.

[The workshops will be held:](#) October 25 – Allegheny County, October 26 – Lawrence County, November 1 – Chester County, November 2 – Delaware County, November 8 – Luzerne County, November 9 – Centre County, November 14 – Lancaster County, November 15 – Montgomery County, November 16 – Bucks County and November 21 – Cumberland County.

The workshops are sponsored by the [Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center](#), the [Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania](#) and the [Department of Environmental Protection](#).

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There is a fee of \$35 for the workshop or \$59 if continuing education units are requested through Penn State or PROP.

[More information and registration is available online.](#)

Northeast Regional Recycling Conference Will Feature PA Presenters

The Northeast Recycling Council [will hold its fall conference](#) on October 24 and 25 in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Featured on the conference agenda are presentations by Dr. Richard Stehouwer, from Penn State University on technologies driving the organics recycling market and Carla Castagnero of AgRecycle, Inc. on commercial organics market forces.

For more information, [visit the conference webpage.](#)

“Sustainability: Urban and Rural” Theme of PRC’s Awards Dinner November 15

“[Sustainability: Urban and Rural](#)” is the theme of the Pennsylvania Resources Council’s annual awards and fundraising dinner November 15 at the Philadelphia Marriott West in West Conshohocken.

The 2006 Honorary Dinner Chair is Denis P. O’Brien, President of PECO Energy Company and the keynote speaker will be Donald S. Welsh, Regional Administrator, U.S. EPA Region III.

In recognition of their achievements, PRC has selected leaders from across the Commonwealth to receive awards in the categories of community, conservation, education, energy and sustainable design/development.

The award winners are Swarthmore Borough for its leadership in the community; PNC Bank for its corporate leadership in conservation; Delaware Valley Green Building Council for its leadership in environmental education; Gamesa for its leadership in green energy; and, Re:Vision Architecture for its leadership in sustainable design and development.

PRC has selected Clifford Jones, former DER Secretary, PUC Commissioner, Secretary of Commerce and President of PA Chamber of Business and Industry to receive the prestigious award named after two of PRC’s founders – Hilda Fox and Cynthia Calhoun. Mr. Jones is being recognized for his exemplary career in environmental conservation that spans several decades. Mr. Jones’ son Brad will be present to accept the award on his behalf.

PRC’s Annual Awards Dinner traditionally brings together more than 200 business, government and community leaders from throughout the Commonwealth.

For 67 years, PRC has been working with such leaders to create solutions to environmental challenges and to reach out to the community through its educational and service programs. These programs serve to inform and encourage current and future leaders to take an active role in promoting sustainable living and conserving our natural resources.

Established in 1939 to reduce roadside litter and to fight illegal billboards, PRC is one of the Commonwealth’s oldest, grassroots, environmental organizations. PRC’s headquarters is in Ridley Creek State Park in suburban Philadelphia.

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It also has a regional office in Pittsburgh and has satellite operations in the Harrisburg-Lancaster-York region. PRC's programs have expanded to include resource conservation, environmental summer camps, recycling, composting, teacher workshops, watershed and air quality education, and a variety of litter prevention programs.

PRC would be pleased to invite to the dinner anyone who would like to help celebrate the achievements in sustainability that the award winners have accomplished.

For information about the dinner, contact Carol Butler at 610-353-1555 ext. 230 or visit [PRC's website](#).

DCNR Honored for Outstanding Achievement in Greenways Preservation

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources was one of four honorees to receive national recognition for outstanding achievement in greenways preservation at the [Kodak American Greenways Awards](#) this week at the National Geographic Society.

Sponsored by Eastman Kodak Company, National Geographic Society and The Conservation Fund, the awards program honors leading individuals, organizations and corporations for their vision and commitment to protecting the nation's network of open space, trails and greenways.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources was recognized for its leadership and extensive conservation record, which have served Pennsylvania and the nation as models of environmental leadership and restoration efforts.

Through its Growing Greener and [Pennsylvania Greenways initiatives](#), the commonwealth and its partners are developing an outstanding network of greenways, achieving sustainable growth, rebuilding local economies, creating livable communities and enhancing the quality of life for all.

"On behalf of the Kodak American Greenways program, I am particularly pleased to present DCNR with an award for outstanding achievement in greenway and open space preservation," said The Conservation Fund's president, Larry Selzer. "America's greenways, blueways and trails serve as lifelines connecting neighborhoods, parks and people. Thanks to the Department's leadership and the support of Eastman Kodak Company and National Geographic, we are building partnerships that will preserve a network of open space for future generations."

This network of greenways-spanning cities and suburbs, rural communities and small towns-will connect Pennsylvania's open space, natural landscape features and scenic, cultural, historic and recreation sites. DCNR's record of diverse partnerships with businesses, nonprofit groups and local and municipal government agencies marks it as a national leader in connecting core landscapes and other natural and heritage assets through a network of green- and blueways.

"Gov. Rendell has committed DCNR to an expanded mission of building and maintaining sustainable communities in our commonwealth, and we recognize the vital role that a connected system of greenways and green infrastructure woven into the design of our communities play in our mission," DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis said. "Solid partnerships with a variety of organizations including The Conservation Fund have supported our work on land conservation and stewardship activities."

Dr. David Kiser, Eastman Kodak Company's vice president of environment, health and safety, joined Selzer to present the awards at the ceremony.

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"We are extremely pleased to be a part of the American Greenways Program," said Kiser. "Helping families experience natural beauty in their own backyards is one of the most important things we can do for our children and for generations to come."

Following stream corridors, abandoned rail lines, canals or other linear landscape features, greenways preserve wildlife habitat, enhance water quality and provide opportunities for close-to-home outdoor recreation and sustainable economic development.

In addition to announcing the awards for outstanding achievement, the group presented 45 community organizations with small grants of up to \$2,500 to help develop new action-oriented greenway projects. Since 1992, the Kodak American Greenways Program, administered by The Conservation Fund, has supported nearly 600 groups across the nation.

"Greenways are America's parks for the 21st century," said Gilbert M. Grosvenor, chairman of the National Geographic Society. "With the help of companies like Kodak, a growing network is linking our city streets to parklands and other open spaces in ways that encourage us to get out of our cars and into the landscape. Publicly or privately owned, greenways represent a grand design for creating a new green infrastructure for America."

Game Commissions Acts on Priority Wildlife Projects, Acquisitions

The Pennsylvania Game Commission this week unanimously approved projects funded by State Wildlife Grants, conservation easements and additions to state game lands.

The State Wildlife Grants approved by the Commission will cost a combined \$395,107 and include:

2nd Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas: This project is producing a comprehensive database on the distribution of all nesting birds in Pennsylvania. Already in its third year, the [Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas's](#) last two seasons of field survey will be financed by this funding. The first three years of the project have been very productive and upon completion of the work, this project will generate core data to aid in implementing and refining the Game Commission's Strategic Plan, its Wildlife Action Plan and the future conservation of species of concern. (Powdermill Nature Reserve of Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Robert Mulvihill)

Identifying and Predicting High-Quality Habitat in Relation to Allegheny Woodrat Demographic Trends: This project will map high-quality Allegheny woodrat habitat and develop a model that will evaluate the viability of woodrat populations within the Chestnut and Laurel Ridges of the Allegheny Mountains in southwestern Pennsylvania. (Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Jeff L. Larkin)

Piping Plover Management and Conservation Plan: This project will identify management and conservation strategies beneficial to restoring the federally-endangered piping plover as a nesting species at Presque Isle State Park in Erie County. (Catherine Haffner)

The Commission also approved these conservation easements funded through the federal Landowner Incentive Program:

Protection of Forest and Interim Shrub/Scrub Land of Bald Eagle Ridge: This \$104,500 project aims to protect 240 acres of a large forested tract important to breeding forest interior birds through a \$104,500 conservation easement. The parcel of relatively unique habitat, also known as Important Bird Area 32, is located near State Game Lands 176 in Centre County and will provide additional protections to breeding forest interior birds. (Clearwater Conservancy)

Forest and Stream Conservation At Roaring Rocks Trust: This \$301,000 project will protect through conservation easements about 210 acres and 1.75 miles of waterway that is home to about 10 species of greatest conservation concern and teeming with biodiversity. Found on the Roaring Rocks Trust property in Bucks County, the land is home to 10 avian species of concern and represents a vital area of biodiversity in Roaring Rocks/Swamp Creek watershed. (Tinicum Conservancy)

Critical Shrub/Scrub Land and Vernal Pool Habitat: This \$77,500 project provides long-term protection to critical-important spadefoot toad habitat, including shrub/scrubland and vernal pools, by developing a management plan securing a permanent easement, and managing the site. (Berks County Conservancy)

Protection of Dry and Mesic Forest near Lackawaxen: This \$314,000 project will protect through a conservation easement 300 acres of unbroken northern hardwood forest in Pike County's Lackawaxen Township. Owned by Hillview Rod and Gun Club, the property is located adjacent to State Game Lands 116 and provides diverse woodland habitats for species of concern such as the wood thrush, broad-wing hawk, black throated green warbler and timber rattlesnake. (Delaware Highlands Conservancy).

Protection of Wet and Upland Forest and Lacustrine Habitats at Minks Pond: This \$684,000 project will protect through a conservation easement 300 acres of rolling upland forest, streams, wetlands and ponds on the Mink Pond Club property in Pike County. Adjacent to the Delaware State Forest, the property provides habitat for bald eagles, otters, timber rattlesnakes and forest interior birds. (Delaware Highlands Conservancy)

The Game Commissioners also approved two purchase options that will increase the State Game Lands system by nearly 160 acres:

Williams Township, Dauphin County, the Board approved the purchase of 46.33 acres adjoining SGL 264. The parcel provides improved access to SGL 264, and is comprised mostly of woodland. The Wiconisco Creek runs through the southern portion of the tract.

There are no reservations on the parcel. The purchase price of \$18,532 will be paid in lump sum to the Central Pennsylvania Conservancy from monies escrowed from a coal lease on SGL 264 to Ladnar Inc.

West Finley Township, Washington County, the Board approved accepting a donation of a 112-acre indenture on SGL 302 from CNX Gas Company. The parcel contains nearly 82 acres of woodland and about 30 acres of farmland, which is comprised of six tillable

acres and 24 acres reverting into early successional forest habitat. The property has a section of Enlow Fork running along the southwest portion of the tract.

CNX has reserved all coal and other minerals with the surface rights necessary to mine and remove the minerals. CNX also reserved its perpetual right to use the surface for extraction of oil, gas and minerals, and has reserved all timber for a period of three years.

DEP Citizens Advisory Council Publishes Fall Newsletter

The Citizens Advisory Council to the Department of Environmental Protection this week published its fall newsletter highlighting new members to the Council, a discussion of DEP's proposed mercury emissions reduction rule and its 2007 meeting dates.

[The fall newsletter is available online.](#)

DEP Reorganizes District Mining Office Service Areas

The Department of Environmental Protection announced the reorganization of its District Mining Offices, establishing new boundaries for three of the six field operations that oversee all surface and underground mining and blasting activities in Pennsylvania.

The reorganization transfers regulation of mining and blasting activities in eight midstate counties from the Pottsville District Mining Office in Schuylkill County, which had served 31 counties, to mining offices in Ebensburg, Cambria County, and Philipsburg, Centre County.

Underground mine safety will remain the responsibility of DEP's Bureau of Mine Safety, which has offices in Uniontown, Fayette County, and in Pottsville.

Under the reorganization, which took effect October 1, all mining and blasting activities in Adams, Cumberland, Franklin, Juniata, Mifflin and Perry counties will be regulated by the Cambria District Mining Office in Ebensburg, Cambria County.

All mining and blasting activities in Snyder and Union counties will be overseen by the Moshannon District Mining Office in Phillipsburg, Centre County.

[Find DEP Office Service Territories Online.](#)

Help Wanted: Project Coordinator for ALLARM, DEP Bureau Director

The [Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring](#) Program at Dickinson College in Carlisle is seeking candidates for the position of [Project Coordinator for ALLARM](#).

Position Responsibilities include office management, management of a quality control program for water chemistry, assisting the Director with student staff management and providing assistance to watershed groups through outreach, training, and facilitation.

Minimum Qualifications include a Bachelor's degree in related field; excellent written and oral communication skills; ability to work with college students and diverse volunteer constituency; ability to handle complicated tasks and projects. Experience with water quality field and laboratory equipment and watershed assessments preferred. Must be able to work some evening and weekend hours and travel with PA.

[Online applications are preferred.](#)

The **Department of Environmental Protection** is recruiting for the Director of the Bureau of Water Standards and Facility Regulation in its Harrisburg headquarters.

Applications are due November 3.

Responsibilities include overall management of water supply and wastewater management programs, review of proposed legislation, preparation of budgetary requests, and direction of specialized training and outreach services.

The successful applicant must possess nine years of professional experience in environmental protection or water management, four of which must include managerial and second-level technical supervisory experience in an environmental protection and regulatory program; and a Bachelor's degree in civil, environmental, or water resources engineering.

Annual salary range is \$74,524 to \$108,362, including a generous benefits package. Interested applicants should submit a resume and a Personal Data Sheet (available at www.hrm.state.pa.us/pds) or by calling 717-783-2021 to the Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Human Resources, P.O. Box 2357, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2357.

Video Blog

Climate Change, Environmental Covenants Topics on This Week's Video Blog

This week's PA Environment Digest Video Blog features comments on two legislative proposals—one to study options for state action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and a second proposal to establish uniform environmental covenants for brownfield cleanups.

- **Video Blog:** [Rep. Rubley discusses brownfield reuse and her legislation.](#)
- **Video Blog:** [Rep. Ross talks about his resolution on climate change.](#)

Feature

Pennsylvania Birders Still Needed to Help With Atlas

By Joe Kosack

Wildlife Conservation Education Specialist
Pennsylvania Game Commission



Surprises are surfacing in an ongoing survey - the largest ever - of wild birds that nest over the Commonwealth's more than 46,000-square-mile landscape.

The historic [2nd Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas](#) has been underway for three years now and is on course to be completed in 2008. Nearly 2,100 Pennsylvanians have volunteered to participate in this massive summer undertaking; 400 volunteers joined this year. And just in case you might be interested, more help is needed.

"We've come a long way since the atlas began in 2004, and much good has been accomplished for bird conservation and specifically the Pennsylvania Game Commission,

which manages the state's wild birds," said Dan Brauning, agency wildlife diversity program supervisor. "But, with two years to go, and some substantial holes to fill in this important work, the Atlas surely could use help from more interested individuals, particularly along the New York and Maryland borders and in the mid-state area."

Since its start, more than 300,000 breeding records have been entered by participants, who have logged more than 50,000 hours casing the Commonwealth's forests, fields and suburbs. In this fieldwork, the state has been divided into 4,937 survey blocks. Volunteers have reported observations or nesting accounts in about 70 percent of the blocks, which means no work has occurred in more than 1,100 blocks.

More than 75 breeding birds have been confirmed in many blocks, particularly surrounding urban centers such as Harrisburg, Lancaster, Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and State College, and also around recreation destinations such as Pymatuning Reservoir, Allegheny Reservoir and Raystown Lake.

Those areas of Pennsylvania that tend to be more remote and wild are where the atlas effort is in need of immediate volunteer assistance.

"We could definitely use some help in Adams, Bradford, Columbia, Fayette, Potter, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Washington and York counties," pointed out Bob Mulvihill, a field ornithologist at Carnegie Museum's Powdermill Nature Preserve, who is serving as the Atlas project coordinator. "These are areas that would be ideal for adoption by birders who may not necessarily live there. They provide beautiful scenery and great birding opportunities."

But even those not in one of the aforementioned counties can get involved with the Breeding Bird Atlas. In fact, atlas organizers are hoping to double - possibly triple - the number of people participating in the census over the next two years.

"Backyard birders are in a position to add thousands of valuable records that normally occur on their properties and this will add another dimension to the atlas," Mulvihill stressed. "We're interested in confirming the Carolina or house wren that nested in your bluebird box, the barn swallow that nested in your barn, or the whip-poor-wills that called in the night at your cabin. Over the next two years, we'd like to add as many of Pennsylvania's 2.7 million birders as we can to the atlas effort."

[Survey information can be documented on-line](#), or forms can be filled out and returned to Atlas organizer's offices. Backyard forms - primarily for casual observers, or individuals without computer access - are available by calling 724-593-6022.

More information on the project or how to participate is available on the [Breeding Bird Atlas website](#).

A special form also has been developed for Pennsylvania farmers to collect information on breeding birds such as bobolinks, meadowlarks and barn owls, species that are largely dependent on farmland.

"While bobolinks and meadowlarks are becoming more difficult to find, many of these birds are well known to those who spend countless hours outdoors working on farms in spring and summer," Mulvihill explained. "We want and need the help of farmers, so that when the atlas is completed, it will reflect the value of farmlands to Pennsylvania's bird diversity."

The robin leads the list of birds most frequently observed by atlas participants. It is followed by the song sparrow, crow, red-eyed vireo and yellowthroat.

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One of the more interesting highlights in this year's fieldwork has been confirmation of the state's first-ever breeding pair of merlins in a planted pine and spruce grove in downtown Bradford. A member of the falcon family, merlins have nested historically in Canadian boreal forests and typically are an extraordinary find for summertime Pennsylvania birders.

"It's such a surprising discovery," Brauning said. "We had no idea. Interestingly, there also was a nesting pair of merlins in an adjacent atlas block, and a third pair was nesting in Warren. Several sightings of adult merlins also were noted elsewhere in the state.

"This important discovery underscores the atlas' need for more eyes and ears to help collect information on the more than 200 wild bird species that frequent Pennsylvania during the nesting season. Birds that use urban and suburban environs are every bit as important to the atlas as those nesting on the forested slopes of the Alleghenies or the backwaters along the Lake Erie shoreline. Every record matters!"

Record numbers of the state-endangered dickcissel and sedge wren were recorded in southern Pennsylvania, as were blue grosbeaks, which have been increasing their breeding base in the Commonwealth since they were first recorded instate in the 1960s. This atlas is demonstrating a dramatic expansion of the blue grosbeaks to the north and west.

Also this year, atlas participants in select blocks - almost 100 - began surveying owls and marsh birds with nocturnal and wetland surveys. The nightshift fieldwork turned up 23 saw-whet owls, three barn owls, one short-eared owl and one long-eared owl, as well as nine whip-poor-wills and one common snipe. The wetland work uncovered 11 Virginia rails, three Sora rails, two pied-bill grebes, and a Sandhill crane.

The 2nd Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas is the most extensive survey of the state's nesting birds ever attempted. Started in 2004, the grid-based survey - which provides visitors and participants "real time" atlas tabulations on birds and blocks covered - will continue for two more years and aims to track the changes that have occurred in bird populations since the first atlas was completed in 1989.

Since that time, eagles, ospreys and peregrine falcons have expanded their breeding numbers substantially. Also of interest will be charting whether the long-term declines of many songbirds reported in the first atlas continue.

Although it follows and largely replicates the first atlas, conducted in Pennsylvania from 1983 to 1989, the second atlas also provides new levels of understanding for the state's bird populations that will help to ensure their conservation now and in the future. It is supported largely with federal State Wildlife Grant funds awarded through the Game Commission, and organized and coordinated by the Carnegie Museum of Natural History through offices at the museum's Powdermill Nature Reserve.

When finished in 2008, the second Atlas will show changes in the occurrence and distribution of the state's nesting wild birds, and promises to provide much additional information about the state's breeding birds, including their habitat preferences and abundance.

The use of technologies, such as global positioning satellites and the internet - unavailable when data for the first Atlas was collected - are expected to improve the survey. But success in getting to the finish line and the quantity and quality of data

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collected will be directly influenced by the number of volunteers who participate, especially covering blocks in rural Pennsylvania.

Additional funding for the Atlas has been provided by the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Wild Resource Conservation Fund, and in-kind and other assistance is being provided by DCNR's bureaus of Forestry and State Parks, Pennsylvania Audubon, Pennsylvania Society for Ornithology, Penn State Cooperative Wetlands Center, Penn State Institutes of the Environment, Penn State School of Forest Resources, Powdermill Nature Reserve and Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

For more information, visit the [2nd Pennsylvania Breeding Bird Atlas website](#).
NewsClip: [DCNR Dedicates Raptor Observation Facility at Fort Washington](#)

Quick Clips

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

[Wildlands Conservancy Chief Steps Down](#)

[New Digs, New Tactics for Conservancy](#)

[Venango Collection Reaps Over 32,000 Pounds of Hazardous Waste](#)

[PA Allows Deer Bait for Hunts in Southeast Region](#)

[Struggling Over Deer](#)

[Forests Face Ecosystem Threats](#)

[Northampton County OK's Open Space Tax Break](#)

[Scrubbing Power Plants: Consumers May Get Higher Rates](#)

[Climate Study Says Pittsburgh to be One Hot Town](#)

[Editorial: Onorato Leads on Major Infrastructure Problem](#)

[Penn State Solar Decathlon Team to Build Energy Efficient Home](#)

[DEP Office Exemplifies Green Building](#)

[PA Energy Authority Announces \\$6.4 Million for Clean Energy Projects](#)

[Wind Power: Fans Opposition with Neighbors in State](#)

[High Turbines Can Be Hazard to Flying Birds](#)

[Wind Power: Municipalities Disagree on How to Tax Operations](#)

[Wind Project Proposed in Northumberland County](#)

[Editorial: Ethic of Stewardship Would Improve Energy Policy](#)

[Ethanol Fuel Selling Slowly](#)

[E85 Corridor of Fueling Stations Planning for PA](#)

[Growing Energy in Sugar Valley – Manure to Electricity](#)

[PA Company Introduces Renewable Fuel for Homeowners, Trucking Fleets](#)

[Coal Waste Plant's Pluses Top Minuses](#)

[Haverford Twp. Looks At Climate Change Plan](#)

[Preserving Greenway Plan](#)

[Monroe County Preserves 8,000 Acres](#)

[DCNR Dedicates Raptor Observation Facility at Fort Washington State Park](#)

[DEP Secretary Marks Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)

[Quecreek Foundation to Preserve Part of Sipesville Fire Hall](#)

[Kasunic Hopes Tragedy Advances Updated Mine Safety Bill](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Students Find Testing Waters Educational](#)

[Community Urges Creek Cleanup](#)

[600 Volunteers Clear 7,700 Pounds of Trash From Lake Erie Shoreline](#)

[Railroad Reports Creek Recovering After Train Derailment](#)

[Floodplain Maps Force Towns Into Tricky Waters](#)

[Cleanup Set for Kalp Discharge](#)

[Lankenau Wetland Project Considered](#)

[Legislators Push for Streambed Restoration Funds](#)

[Northumberland Council Hears About River Project](#)

[Washington County Abandoned Mine Reclamation Project Wins Award](#)

[American Rivers Launches Challenge to Designate Wild & Scenic Rivers](#)

Regulations

Final Mercury Rule, Stream Redesignations Highlight EQB October 17 Agenda

The Environmental Quality Board [will meet on October 17](#) to consider a final mercury emissions reduction rule and several other regulations. Here's the rundown...

The rulemaking package the EQB will consider on mercury includes not only the usual comment/response document, but also a special record of decision requested by members of DEP's Citizens Advisory Council to provide the technical justification for the rule.

A petition to redesignate Shermans Creek, Perry County, postponed from last month's meeting, will also be considered along with a new petition to redesignate Grinnage Run in Greene County and a final rulemaking package making changes to stream designations in Bucks, Carbon, Centre, Chester, Clearfield, Fayette, Lancaster and Warren counties.

Also on the agenda is a proposed regulation dealing with locating waste facilities close to airports drafted in response to a Department of Defense rulemaking petition.

[Handouts on each agenda item are available online.](#)

The Department of Environmental Protection, Independent Regulatory Review Commission and the State Conservation Commission all published notices related to regulation changes this week. Here's the rundown...

- The Department of Environmental Protection published notice of a [proposed revision to the Franklin County Ozone Nonattainment Plan](#) and set a public hearing.
- The Independent Regulatory Review Commission published [notice of its comments on DEP's mercury emissions control regulation](#) and a notice saying the Commission will consider DEP's California Car Vehicle Emissions Standards [at their November 2 meeting](#).

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- The State Conservation Commission published a [notice making corrections to its final nutrient management regulations](#).

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – October 7, 2006](#)

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

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection published final guidance on 2007 Environmental Education Grants and proposed guidance on disadvantage business enterprise contracting rules and guidelines for underground tank inspections ([full notice](#)). The Public Utility Commission [published a correction](#) to its policy on Acquisition of Water and Wastewater System.

Final: DEP ID: 012-5500-001. 2007 Environmental Education Grants Program Manual and Forms. The 2007 Environmental Education Grants Program Manual and Forms is a guide for eligible organizations interested in applying for the Department's Environmental Education (EE) grants program.

Draft: DEP ID: 381-5511-014. Guidance on the Utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Firms for Participation under the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Programs. This guidance provides Department staff and loan program borrowers specific information on steps to be taken to meet mandated Federal procedures for the solicitation of Minority and Women's Business enterprise firms for participation in the construction of sewage, stormwater and drinking water projects funded under the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving fund loan programs. Comments due: November 6.

Draft: DEP ID: 257-3120-003 Guidelines for Conducting Underground Storage Tank Facility Operations Inspections. The Storage Tank Regulations require periodic inspection of the operation of underground storage tank facilities. Comments due: November 6.

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

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

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

- [No Cost Internet Based Training Courses for October-November](#)
- **October 10** – [DEP Stormwater Manual Oversight Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **October 11** – House Finance Committee hearing to discuss new diesel technology tax credit. MACK Headquarters, 2100 MACK Blvd., Allentown. 9:00.
- **October 11** – **CANCELLED**. DEP Sewage Advisory Committee meeting. The next scheduled meeting is March 21, 2007.
- **October 13** - [DEP Water Resources Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **October 16** – [Joint Air & Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) Environmental Issues Forum featuring a presentation by Alison Shuler, Coordinator of the Environmental Training Center at Penn State’s Middletown Campus which houses DEP’s Small Public Water Systems Technology Center. Room 205 Ryan Building. 12:00.
- **October 17** – **RESCHEDULED to a Conference Call**. [State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater System Operators](#).
- **October 19** – **RESCHEDULED**. [DEP Environmental Justice Advisory Board](#) meeting was changed to this date from November 2. Rachel Carson Building. 9:15. Contact: Ayanna King, 717-783-5630.
- **October 19** – [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) Forestry Task Force meeting. Penn Stater Hotel, State College. 10:00.
- **October 31-November 5** – [National Historic Preservation Conference](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation. Pittsburgh.
- **November 20** – Environmental Issues Forum, [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) featuring J. Kent Crawford, USGS, to discuss the emerging contaminants project. Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **December 12** – **CANCELLED**. [Coal and Clay Mine Subsidence Insurance Board meeting](#).
- **December 14** – [Coal and Clay Mine Subsidence Insurance Board meeting](#). 14th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building, Harrisburg. 10:00.

[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

[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

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

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

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