



PA Environment Digest

An Update On Environmental Issues In PA

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Winner 2009 [PAEE Business Partner](#) Of The Year Award

(Photo: Parker Dam State Park Pumpkin Carving, [PA Parks & Forests Foundation](#))

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Trout Unlimited, Fish Commission, DEP Celebrate West Branch Susquehanna Recovery

Trout Unlimited, the nation's largest coldwater conservation organization, the Fish and Boat Commission, and the Department of Environmental Protection celebrated improvements to the West Branch Susquehanna River and its many tributaries at an event Monday at Hyner View State Park.

[A 2009 Trout Unlimited study](#) shows that the overall health of the watershed is greatly improving compared to 25 years ago. Fish and insect populations have increased, and water quality and habitat have improved. Scientists collected data at 90 sites across the watershed to evaluate how abandoned mine restoration has affected the river and its tributaries.

“The West Branch Susquehanna River and many of its tributaries are showing amazing signs of recovery from severe pollution from mine drainage for nearly a century,” said Amy Wolfe, TU’s Eastern Abandoned Mine Program Director. “There is still an enormous amount of work that needs to be done to achieve full recovery, but these marked improvements prove that the investments of time and money have been well spent.”

Within the watershed, more than 1,200 stream miles are polluted with mine drainage from abandoned coal mines. TU’s study documents that in the past 25 years, the river’s acidity and level of toxic metals have significantly decreased - to levels deemed safe by the DEP - between Curwensville in Clearfield County to Renovo in Clinton County.

