

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

November 20, 2006

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

House Leadership Races, Guide to New Members of General Assembly

The House Republican and Democratic Caucuses picked their Leadership teams this week and here's the rundown. The Senate elects its Leadership next week. Also look for the link to the Guide to New Members published by the Pennsylvanians for Effective Government.

Republicans

Speaker – John M. Perzel (Philadelphia)
Majority Leader – Sam Smith (Jefferson)
Whip – David Argall (Schuylkill)
Caucus Chair – Sandra Major (Susquehanna) (*New*)
Caucus Secretary – Jerry Stern (Blair) (*New*)
Caucus Administrator – Merle Phillips (Northumberland)
Appropriations Chair – Mario Civera (Delaware) (*New*)
Policy Chair – Mike Turzai (Allegheny) (*New*)

House Majority Leader Sam Smith (R-Jefferson) had this to say about the direction of his Caucus in the coming session, "The message from the members of the Republican Caucus is clear: It is time to stop the unrestrained state spending. Our other caucus priorities will be welfare reform, which means job growth, along with promoting personal responsibility and accountability."

Democrats

Minority Leader – Bill DeWeese (Greene)
Whip – Keith McCall (Carbon) (*New*)
Caucus Chair – Mark Cohen (Philadelphia)
Caucus Secretary – Frank Dermody (Allegheny) (*New*)
Caucus Administrator – Dan Surra (Elk) (*New*)
Appropriations Chair – Dwight Evans (Philadelphia)
Policy Chair – Todd Eachus (Luzerne) (*New*)

House Minority Leader Bill DeWeese (D-Greene) offered these thoughts, "Our leadership team is prepared to tackle issues that matter to working families across this Commonwealth – affordable health care, further property tax relief and open and accountable government. We are eager to build upon the successes we've achieved, such as increasing the minimum wage, putting into motion a billion dollars in property tax cuts,

investing billions more in economic stimulus, protecting our environment and making strides toward energy independence.”

Of course this assumes the Republicans maintain their 102-101 majority in seats in the House. There are still outstanding absentee ballots to be counted in Chester County at this writing.

As far as further action on legislation, keep an eye on the Senate Rules and Appropriation committee agendas for concurrence votes on bills. The Senate really does not want to do any “heavy lifting” before it adjourns for the year.

Pennsylvanians for Effective Government published a [Guide to New Members](#) this week complete with photos, bios and contact information.

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Session Schedule

The Senate is scheduled to be in session November 20 and 21 and the House November 20, 21 and 22 and then both are scheduled to adjourn for the year before going home for the Thanksgiving holiday.

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- Delaware Estuary Conference/Summit Coming January 22-24
- Highway/Transit Proposal Would Increase Gas, Sales, Realty Transfer Taxes
- Loans To Help Truckers Save Money, Reduce Emissions
- November 15 America Recycles Day – Learn More About Recycling, Composting
- Northeast Philadelphia Increases Recycling 29 Percent
- Great Valley School District Recognized for Switching to Biodiesel
- PA Brownfield Project Wins Phoenix Award at National Conference
- Penn State’s Hydrogen Day Explores Energy Technologies
- BP Solar to Invest \$70 Million to Expand U.S. Facility

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- Agriculture Department Searching for Invasive Plant in Allegheny County
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Feature

- Edge Density Key to Controlling Gypsy Moth Spread

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Video Blog

Trout Unlimited Members Celebrate Nearly 20 Years of Treating Acid Mine Water

Every week for nearly 20 years, members of the [Doc Fritchey Chapter of Trout Unlimited](#) in Dauphin and Lebanon counties have been adding tons of limestone to two diversion wells to treat mine drainage entering [Rausch Creek](#), a tributary to Stony Creek in Lebanon County.

Video Blog: [Rausch Creek Project](#)

And their work has paid off. In recent years they have seen streambred brook and brown trout in the stream where before even stocked trout didn't survive long.

Partners in the project include Pennsy Supply who donates the limestone and Reigel Trucking from Annville that delivers the limestone.

This was also the first diversion well project to treat acid mine drainage in the United States.

The Diversion Well Gang during the visit was: Larry Westhafer (co-chair of the Diversion Well Project), Steve Long, Gerry Miller, Chuck Hill, Dennis Coffman and Bob Pennell. Donald Thomas is the other co-chair for this project.

For more information, visit the [Doc Fritchey Chapter of Trout Unlimited](#).



Video Blog

PA Resources Council Honors Clifford L. Jones with Fox Calhoun Award

The [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) this week gave special recognition to Clifford Jones, former DER Secretary, PUC Commissioner, Secretary of Commerce and President of PA Chamber of Business and Industry for his environmental accomplishments.

Dr. Jones received the prestigious Fox Calhoun Award named for Hilda Fox and Cynthia Calhoun, the founders of PRC.

Dr. Jones' son Brad was present to accept the award on his behalf.

Video Blog: [PRC Recognizes Cliff Jones](#)

On the Hill

On the Senate/House Agenda

These environmental bills are on the House calendar and Senate committee agendas this week—

On the House Calendar: [Senate Bill 1209](#) (Waugh-R-York) establishing the Healthy Foods, Healthy Schools Program; [Senate Bill 410](#) (M.White-R-Venango) establishing the PA Center for Environmental Education; [House Bill 3007](#) (Semmel-R-Berks) limits the liability of landowners who open their property to hunting; [House Bill 2997](#) (Beyer-R-Monroe) providing a tax credit of up to \$5,000 for new diesel technology; [Senate Bill 1025](#) (Madigan-R-Bradford) to establish a Clean Vehicle Program that gives automakers two options to comply— use the California II or federal Tier II vehicle emissions standards and forming a stakeholders group; [House Bill 2067](#) (Allen-R-Schuylkill) setting limits on state spending through a constitutional amendment; [House Resolution 692](#) (Ross-R-Chester) directing the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee to study and report on the methods of reducing greenhouse gas emissions; [Senate Bill 884](#) (Brightbill-R-Lebanon) limitations on state spending; and [Senate Bill 940](#) (Waugh-R-York) would set aside up to \$200,000 per year from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Fund to reimburse Land Trusts for expenses incurred in acquiring agricultural conservation easements.

In Senate Committees: The Rules Committee meets to consider [House Bill 854](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing the Terrorism Infrastructure Disclosure Protection Act prohibiting the release of certain infrastructure records; [House Resolution 382](#) (Frankel-D-Allegheny) memorializing Congress to reauthorize the fee to support the federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund; and [Senate Bill 1104](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) making changes to the One Call Program.

Action on Senate/House Bills/Bills Introduced

The House took action on these environmental bills this week...

Windmill Farm Assessments: [Senate Bill 514](#) (Gordner-R-Columbia) amending the Tax Reform Act related to property tax assessments for windmill farms and other issues was passed by the House and returns to the Senate for concurrence.

Continuing Ed for Engineers, Land Surveyors, Geologists: [Senate Bill 655](#) (Madigan-R-Bradford) establishing continuing education requirements for individuals licensed under the Engineer, Land Surveyor and Geologists Registration Law was passed by the House and returned to the Senate for concurrence.

Healthy Schools: [Senate Bill 1209](#) (Waugh-R-York) establishing the Healthy Foods, Healthy Schools Program was reported from House Appropriations Committee.

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Access to Land for Recreation: [House Bill 3007](#) (Semmel-R-Berks) limits the liability of landowners who open their property to hunting was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

Eating Healthy & Exercise: [House Resolution 917](#) (Scavello-R-Monroe) designating every Monday as “Healthy Lifestyle Day” was adopted by the House.

Radon Action Month: [House Resolution 918](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) designating January 2007 as “Radon Action Month” was adopted by the House.

Bills Introduced

Generator Rebate: [House Bill 3078](#) (Schroder-R-Chester) Establishing a \$500 rebate for individuals who purchase an electric generator.

GIS Day: [House Resolution 916](#) (Fairchild-R-Mifflin) designating November 15 as “Pennsylvania GIS Day.”

Environmental Issues Forum to Feature Emerging Contaminants in PA Waters

The November 20 [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee’s](#) Environmental Issues Forum will feature a presentation on emerging contaminants in Pennsylvania waters.

The guest presenter is J. Kent Crawford, Water Quality Specialist for the Pennsylvania Water Science Center of the U.S. Geological Survey, who will speak about pharmaceutical compounds and physician-prescribed antibiotics among the compounds known as “emerging contaminants.”

Crawford, who has over 30 years of experience in a variety of water quality projects, will discuss what is known about the occurrence of these contaminants in Pennsylvania streams and ground water and whether they present cause for concern.

The Forum will be held in Room 205 of the Ryan Building Harrisburg starting at noon.

In Other News

PA Resources Council Honors Cliff Jones, 5 Others with Sustainability Awards

“Sustainability: Urban and Rural” was the theme of the [Pennsylvania Resources Council’s](#) annual awards dinner this week in West Conshohocken.

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

Over 200 business, government and community leaders as well as elected officials from throughout the Commonwealth attended the dinner.

Legislators in attendance included Sen. Ted Erickson (R-Delaware), Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware), Rep. Chris Ross (R-Chester), Rep. Carole Rubley (R-Chester) and Rep. Daylin Leach (D-Montgomery)

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PRC recognized five organizations for their commitment to sustainability in the categories of community, conservation, education, energy and sustainable design/development.

The award winners were 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.

Special recognition went to Clifford Jones, former DER Secretary, PUC Commissioner, Secretary of Commerce and President of PA Chamber of Business and Industry who received the prestigious award named after two of PRC's founders – Hilda Fox and Cynthia Calhoun. Dr. Jones is being recognized for his exemplary career in environmental conservation that spans several decades. Mr. Jones' son Brad was present to accept the award on his behalf.

Video Blog: [PRC Recognizes Cliff Jones.](#)

Larry Holley, head of DEP's Division of Waste Minimization and Planning, was also recognized for his work with PRC and [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful](#) and their partners to advance recycling and anti-litter efforts in Pennsylvania.

Keynote speaker Don Welsh said the charge President Bush gave EPA was to “accelerate the pace of environmental protection while maintaining our nation's economic competitiveness” and to think critically about how EPA carries out its mission.

“In tackling these priorities we are exploring better, more innovative approaches to managing and preventing pollution in ways that gain the best outcomes for the environment,” said Welsh. He highlighted several projects underway with a variety of partners in the region—

- Philips Lighting pledged to reduce mercury in their light bulb manufacturing operations by 780 pounds a year;
- 73 Energy Star certified buildings in Pennsylvania prevent 100 million pounds of greenhouse gas emissions;
- 27 facilities in this region are participating in the [National Partnership for Environmental Priorities Program](#) to save energy and reduce pollution by over 510,000 pounds;
- The Great Valley School District and Chester County Intermediate Unit are working with EPA's Clean School Bus program to cleanup diesel emissions from their bus fleet; and
- PECO, EPA and the Energy Coordinating Agency are cooperating on a cool roofs program that teaches building owners the energy benefits of cool roofs.

“Many of these projects involve companies and people going way beyond what we could have asked them to do under some law or regulation,” said Welsh. “And they're doing it because it's the right thing for them to do for their communities and their businesses.”

Here's more on each award winner—

[Gamesa](#), a publicly traded company based in Spain that focuses its activities on technologically innovative businesses such as wind and solar energy, is a worldwide leader within the global renewable energy industry. Gamesa develops, constructs, operates and maintains wind and solar facilities throughout the world.

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Gamesa's activities within the wind energy sector started back in 1994, when wind energy was unknown to most of us as a feasible and technologically reliable source of energy. Since then a lot of wind has been blowing and continues to blow making this industry one of the fastest growing worldwide.

Gamesa has installed more than 7,000 wind turbines in places as widespread and diverse as Comodoro Rivadavia, Argentina; Inner Mongolia, China, Dixon, Illinois or Altoona, Pennsylvania.

After several years of hard investigative work, in September 2004, Gamesa chose the U.S. state where it would base its U.S. manufacturing facilities. Inspired by the leadership provided by Governor Rendell and DEP Secretary McGinty, Gamesa selected Pennsylvania. What has happened since then?

Gamesa can proudly say that we have our headquarters and east coast business development office located in Philadelphia and we have successfully launched industrial activities at our wind blades manufacturing plant in Ebensburg, Pennsylvania, and in 2005, Gov. Rendell announced the first fully integrated wind turbine plant in the U.S. now operational in Fairless Hills, Bucks County, in the U.S., where we are manufacturing the three main elements of a wind turbine, the blades, the nacelles and the towers.

As a wind energy developer, Gamesa is also moving forward and is currently building in two phases the largest wind farm in Pennsylvania. Once the construction of the Allegheny Ridge Wind Farm is completed in 2007, it will double the wind energy capacity of the state of Pennsylvania, which is now 153 MW. The Allegheny Ridge Wind Farm has a capacity of 150 MW.

Gamesa remains determined to base in Pennsylvania its business strategy for North America, increase our shareholders value while protecting the environment and supporting the sustainability of those areas where we perform our activities.

PNC Financial Service Group: The sustainability of the environment shapes the quality of life for today and future generations as well as the economy on which we all depend. Recognizing the importance of wise investments, The PNC Financial Service Group strives to integrate its day-to-day business practices with environmental responsibility.

PNC's nationally recognized commitment to environmentally friendly business practices has enabled it to lower costs, increase efficiency and productivity as well as improve the health and vitality of the communities where people live, work and play.

PNC is the only major U.S. bank to design and build environmentally friendly branches. PNC has 30 "green" branches throughout its footprint with plans for 90 more across its retail-banking region during the next few years. This includes PNC's latest green branch at 1305 Main Street in Warrington, PA, which is scheduled to open in December.

PNC Firstside Center in Pittsburgh, meanwhile, is the nation's largest corporate building to earn green building certification and the PFPC headquarters in Wilmington, Del., is the financial services industry's only Gold-level certified green building. In late 2008, Three PNC Plaza, a new mixed-use, high-rise complex in downtown Pittsburgh, will open with the latest in environmentally friendly architecture design and building materials.

More than 50 percent of each PNC Bank green branch, now based upon an innovative prototype design for enhanced efficiency, is made from recycled or green materials, such as counter tops made of pressed paper.

Using recycled and local products saves PNC approximately \$100,000 per building on construction costs and average construction time is 45 days faster than PNC's

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traditional branches. Operating costs are also reduced by nearly 45 percent with maximum of use of natural light plus the super-efficient HVAC system, which is powered by natural gas and electricity based on seasonal pricing benefits.

For customers, the open and airy environment is well-received and complemented by other features such as a concierge desk and internet café to help them bank with ease and confidence. For employees, benefits include higher satisfaction, retention and fewer absences.

PNC is working with the local chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council to help the Department of Environmental Protection and other state agencies in formulating strategies to encourage “green” development. And PNC Real Estate Finance group is ready to assist developers with financing for “green” and high efficiency projects.

Delaware Valley Green Building Council is the local chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council. Founded in 2001, the DVGBC’s mission is to advance and promote sustainable and environmentally responsible planning, design, construction and operation of the region’s buildings, landscapes, cities and communities, mindful of the legacy left for future generations.

The DVGBC is a leader in sustainable education in the Delaware Valley. Through seminars, workshops, green building tours and conference programs, the DVGBC has reached out to thousands of people in the area.

In 2005, DVGBC founded the Philadelphia Urban Sustainability Forum – a collaboration of local organizations that produce an annual series of public meetings designed to raise awareness and develop concrete strategies to address some of the most important environmental issues facing Philadelphia.

The Forum is being presented by a unique coalition of groups working to make Philadelphia the greenest, most livable city in America. The issues discussed during the first year of the forum include air, water, energy, waste, smart growth and sustainable neighborhoods, the very issues at the core of the LEED Green Building Rating System.

The DVGBC provided the leadership and vision required to bring together over fifteen diverse organizations to form the steering committee behind the forum. The collaboration includes representatives from environmental groups, local NGO’s, the City of Philadelphia, the State of Pennsylvania and the Academy of Natural Sciences.

To date, over 2,100 people have attended the free public programs that include experts from around the world. Through the collaboration with local government, the Forum has also brought outside experts on environmental and sustainability issues into City Hall to transfer knowledge and inspire local officials.

Every forum program features audience participation and input. An important feature during the upcoming Forum season will be a forum program featuring the candidates for Mayor of Philadelphia discussing their views and positions on environmental issues facing communities throughout the city with questions from the audience.

Swarthmore Borough: The Borough’s commitment to environmental issues goes back almost 40 years, when, in 1970, Borough Council determined that the burning of trash contributed to air pollution, and should be banned.

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During the same decade, well before any state mandate to do so, Swarthmoreans began to collect paper and glass for recycling. By the early 1980's, the town's Public Works Crew was collecting material curbside from every residence in the Borough.

In 1985, the Borough received its first of many awards from Delaware County for its recycling program, collecting over 300 tons of material that year. In 2006, the Borough, thanks largely to the efforts of the Recycling Committee, expects to surpass 800 tons of collected material, representing a diversion of over 25% from the waste stream.

The Borough has continuously worked to protect its natural environment. In the mid 1990's, the first of several stream bank restorations began on Little Crum Creek, in an effort to rectify years of erosion and sedimentation.

In 2004, the Borough's [Environmental Advisory Council](#) spearheaded an effort to restore a wetland adjacent to the creek in Little Crum Creek Park, and just last year a local girl scout troop worked with the Borough to create a rain garden in a section of a local tot lot.

In recognition of its continued public funding for the care and protection of street trees, the Borough was awarded its first "Tree City Award" from the Arbor Day Foundation in 1979, and has been a recipient every year since. This is due in large part to the work of the Borough's Tree Committee, which organizes street tree plantings every fall and spring.

In the 1990's, the Borough made its first foray into the use of alternative energy, purchasing wind energy to power its traffic lights. In the past several years, traffic signals have been retrofitted with more energy-efficient LED lamps.

In a further commitment to renewable energy, Borough Council is considering participating in the Pennsylvania Clean Energy Communities Campaign, which will increase the Borough's commitment to purchase 20 percent of its electricity from clean energy by the year 2010. As part of the campaign, the Borough will operate a solar system to provide partial power to Borough Hall.

RE:Vision: Architecture: "Reduce. Reuse. Recycle. Re:Vision." Re:Vision Architecture is an architecture, planning, and consulting firm that was established in 2001 to re-vision and restore the balance between natural and built environments.

With buildings consuming 40 percent of the land, water, energy, and raw materials used globally, buildings present the single largest opportunity for changing the sustainability equation. For this reason, RVA has developed a range of services to systematically remove potential barriers to sustainable development, such as a lack of funding, education, community buy-in, or high-performance design.

Architecturally, each of RVA's projects is designed to create a unique statement of possibility about development that takes less from the planet and gives more to people—more daylight, fresh air, comfort, and joy. RVA's favorite projects are those that blend age-old sustainability strategies (like passive solar design) with innovative technologies that often require education at the state and local level.

For example, RVA provided technical support for Liberty Property Trust's well-publicized efforts to install waterless urinals at One Crescent Drive and the Comcast Towers. Similarly, RVA worked with state and local code officials to allow straw bale construction in Aerzen's U.S. headquarters in Coatesville, PA; straw bale construction is particularly exciting because it creates an exceptionally energy efficient building envelope, sequesters CO₂, and supports Pennsylvania's farmers.

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RVA has been involved with many of the local buildings certified by the US Green Building Council, including the W.S. Cumby Office Building (LEED-Certified), One Crescent Drive at the Navy Yard (LEED-Platinum), and the O’Neil Development (LEED-Gold). Among their colleagues in the design and construction field, RVA has made a commitment to collaboration and sharing information about sustainable design. In particular, RVA has been very active in educating contractors about green building and helping them to become certified through the Green Advantage program.

Since RVA’s start, advocacy has been an essential part of the firm’s work and staff members contribute their time through leadership roles in various organizations that support the firm’s mission, such as, the Delaware Valley Green Building Council and the Sustainable Business Network of Philadelphia. RVA routinely speaks to school groups and community groups about sustainable design—pretty much anyone who will listen!

Chesapeake Bay’s 2006 State of the Bay Report Shows Slight Improvement

With just four years to go before the court-ordered deadline to remove the Chesapeake Bay from the nation’s dirty waters list, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s [2006 State of the Bay](#) report shows modest improvement, with the health index up two points to 29 this year, still far from the goal of 40 by 2010.

Much of the improvement was driven by Mother Nature, with near record low spring rains. Even with the improvement, the health of the Bay gets an unacceptable “D” grade.

“Despite the improvements reflected in this year’s score, the Bay remains in critical condition. Fish kills, beach closures, and dead zones are clear reminders that much more needs to be done,” said [CBF President William C. Baker](#). “Roadmaps developed by the states detail the actions that are needed to reduce pollution, but state and federal implementation has been slow, at best.”

The annual State of the Bay Report, which CBF first issued in 1998, is a comprehensive measure of the Bay’s health. For the report, CBF evaluates 13 indicators: oysters, shad, crabs, striped bass (rockfish), underwater grasses, wetlands, forested buffers, resource lands, toxics, water clarity, dissolved oxygen, and phosphorus and nitrogen pollution. CBF scientists compile and examine the best available historical and up-to-date information for each indicator and assign it an index score and letter grade.

Taken together, these indicators offer an assessment of Bay health. The unspoiled Bay serves as CBF’s benchmark. That original Bay ecosystem described by Captain John Smith in the 1600s, with its extensive forests and wetlands, clear water, abundant fish and oysters, and lush growths of submerged vegetation, rates a 100 on CBF’s scale.

The improvement in the Bay’s health this year was primarily driven by reduced nitrogen and phosphorus pollution, and a corresponding decrease in the dead zone, areas of the Bay with too little oxygen to support a healthy ecosystem. Pollution from industrial sources and sewage treatment plants is gradually being reduced as a result of tightened permit limits and upgrading plants with technology to reduce pollution.

“It is too soon to tell, if this is a trend. But we do know that this improvement is illustrative of what we can expect to enjoy if our elected officials implement the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement. That will reduce the flow of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution into the Bay and its tributaries,” Baker said. “Sadly, funding and programs are in place to achieve only a little more than one-third of the region’s

commitments. That must change. The Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure, and much more must be achieved to save it.”

In Pennsylvania, nearly 4,000 miles of rivers and streams are impaired by nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment from agriculture. Farmers are under tremendous pressure to do even more to protect water quality, but with rising costs and stagnant prices they can't shoulder the burden alone. CBF is working closely with the agricultural community and government officials to secure increased funding to implement on-the-ground conservation practices on farms throughout the Commonwealth to improve the health of local rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay.

At the state level, the recently introduced legislative proposal “The [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act of Pennsylvania](#)” (REAP) would result in the largest single reduction of nitrogen to Pennsylvania's Bay watershed rivers and streams in the history of the Bay Program - 15 million pounds annually. It would provide \$450 million in transferable tax credits over the next five years to help farmers farm in a more environmentally and financially, viable way. If passed, this legislation would make available one of the largest financial commitments to water quality improvements in Pennsylvania's history.

“Farmers are important stewards of our land and water, and while programs exist to support conservation practices, these programs are under funded, and three out of four farmers are turned away,” said CBF's Pennsylvania Executive Director Matthew Ehrhart. “If passed, REAP would help our farmers play a significant role in contributing to improvements in Pennsylvania's water quality.”

CBF is also working to increase funding for farm conservation programs for the Bay region in the next federal Farm Bill, to complement increased state funding. Agricultural conservation practices are among the most cost-effective ways to reduce nitrogen pollution from entering streams, rivers, and the Bay.

Implementation of REAP, in combination with full implementation of necessary reductions from sewage treatment plants, would reduce nitrogen pollution by 17 million pounds annually.

[A copy of the State of the Bay Report is available online.](#)

Video: [Will Baker on the State of the Bay Report](#)

Issue Notebook: [Resource Enhancement & Protection Tax Credit Proposal](#)

DEP Requests Comments on Redraft of Nutrient/Sediment Trading Proposal

The Department of Environmental Protection is now accepting comments on a re-draft of the “Trading of Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Credits- Policy and Guidelines.”

Comments are due December 15.

The trading policy is designed to lower the cost of complying with nutrient reduction requirements, like in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, by creating credits for every pound of nutrients reduced that can be traded to parties that are required to reduce nutrients.

By creating this credit market, sellers of credits from cheaper nutrient reduction techniques like installing best management practices on farms can be traded to buyers who

would otherwise have to install expensive technology on wastewater treatment facilities to comply.

The net result is a lower cost of removing nutrients.

Documents posted for public comment include:

- [Trading of Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Credits- Policy and Guidelines](#)
- Appendix A- [Nutrient Criteria Specific for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#)
- Attachment 1: [Point Source Allocation Strategy](#)
- Attachment 2: [Overview of Wastewater Planning Program Procedures](#)
- Attachment 3: [Overview of the Agriculture Sector's participation in Nutrient Trading](#)

DEP will accept comments submitted to the Water Planning Office, P. O. Box 2063, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063 or by e-mail to Ann Smith at annsmith@state.pa.us.

Questions regarding this guidance document should be directed to Ann Smith at 717-772-4785 or send email to: Ann Smith at annsmith@state.pa.us.

Links: [DEP Asks for Comments on Interim Nutrient, Sediment Trading Policy](#)

Penn State Offers Free "Primer" on Water Quality Credit Trading

Water-quality specialists in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences published "[A Primer on Water Quality Credit Trading in the Mid-Atlantic Region](#)," explaining [water-quality trading programs](#).

The primer provides information needed to understand the benefits and challenges of water-quality credit trading, the mechanics of a trade and the questions that should be asked as states develop their programs.

The publication is coauthored by Charles Abdalla, associate professor of agricultural and environmental economics and Kristen Saacke Blunk, agricultural environmental policy extension associate, with Tatiana Borisova of West Virginia University and Douglas Parker of the University of Maryland.

"The audience for this publication includes farmers, citizens and local officials," Abdalla says. "These are all people who can help shape public policy by understanding trading - its potential and limits. How well does water-quality credit trading work and whose interests are being considered? The answers to these and other questions will depend on a state's policies for encouraging trading. The primer offers questions that citizens may want to ask of their public officials to understand how their state's program is developing and what options are available to participate in policy-making."

Pennsylvania's program will allow point-source dischargers such as municipal and industrial wastewater treatment plants to purchase "credits" from nonpoint sources, such as farms and other entities where precipitation and terrain influence the movement of pollutants into streams and rivers.

Initially, point sources and nonpoint sources that reduce nitrogen and phosphorous beyond the current requirements will be eligible to generate credits for sale or trade. Abdalla says buyers are likely to be point sources that can reduce pollution more cost effectively by purchasing credits generated by others.

Pennsylvania and Virginia are among the first states in the Mid-Atlantic region to institute a water-quality credit trading program.

The publication was made possible by the [Mid-Atlantic Regional Water Program](#), a collaboration among Penn State, the University of Delaware, Delaware State University,

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the University of Maryland, the University of Maryland - Eastern Shore, Virginia State University, Virginia Tech University, West Virginia University and West Virginia State University.

[Copies of the publication are available online.](#)

Single copies of "A Primer on Water Quality Credit Trading in the Mid-Atlantic Region" can be obtained by Pennsylvania residents free of charge through county Penn State Cooperative Extension offices, or by contacting the College of Agricultural Sciences Publications Distribution Center at 814-865-6713 or send e-mail to: AgPubsDist@psu.edu

Links: [First Water Quality Nutrient Credit Sale to Developer Completed](#)
[DEP Certifies First Proposals for Generating, Trading Nutrient Credits](#)

William Penn Foundation Invites Schuylkill Watershed Protection Grants

The William Penn Foundation is accepting applications for its [Schuylkill River Watershed Cluster](#) grant program. Letters of intent are due December 11.

Through this program, the Foundation awards multi-year grants to support watershed protection and policies, innovative strategic demonstration projects, and participation in collaborative, watershed efforts. Submissions by partnerships involving multiple organizations are encouraged

Seventeen projects are currently funded under this program, which began in December 2004. Organizations and institutions that receive funding under this third round will join the seventeen current projects and participate in activities of the Schuylkill Learning Community. The [Institute for Conservation Leadership](#) serves as a convener of the learning community to facilitate peer learning and collaboration.

The Foundation is supporting innovative, collaborative projects that aim to demonstrate effective approaches to issues of water quality/quantity, land conservation, smart growth, recreation, and/or revitalization in the Schuylkill River watershed. Bringing these advances to scale and sustaining them over time requires more effective local, state, and federal policies.

Through this grant making program, the Foundation is interested in supporting demonstration projects and coordination efforts that will help Schuylkill River Watershed nonprofits and their partners effectively work within a policy framework.

A subset of applicants – those who submit letters responding most directly and persuasively to the selection criteria – will be invited to submit full proposals for six-month planning or two-year full implementation grants. The selected applicants will be notified in late January. Invited applicants will then be required to submit complete proposals.

The Foundation will select five to eight proposals to be awarded either six-month planning grants or two-year full implementation grants. Planning grants will range from \$10,000 to \$30,000 for six months beginning in the spring of 2007. Full implementation grants will be up to \$300,000 per year for two years, commencing in July 2007

Visit [Schuylkill River Watershed Cluster webpage](#) for more information.

(Courtesy Watershed Weekly)

Delaware Estuary Conference/Summit Coming January 22-24

The [Delaware Estuary Science Conference](#) and the first ever Delaware Estuary Environmental Summit will both be held in Cape May, N.J from January 22-24.

The theme of the conference is "Linking Science, Management and Policy to Set Achievable Environmental Goals in the Delaware Estuary."

The conference will deal with technical issues and is directed toward the scientific and resource management community. The Environmental Summit is oriented toward non-governmental environmental organizations involved in efforts to restore systems and/or educate the public.

For more information, please visit the [Delaware Estuary Science Conference webpage](#).

Highway/Transit Proposal Would Increase Gas, Sales, Realty Transfer Taxes

The bipartisan [Transportation Funding and Reform Commission](#) issued a final report this week with recommendations that would increase fees and taxes by over \$1.6 billion to pay for critical improvements to Pennsylvania's highways and bridges and help fund public transit.

Transportation Secretary Allen D. Biehler, P.E., who chaired the commission, said, "Not only is the commission proposing a solution to ensure Pennsylvanians have a better transportation system, but it also is recommending management and financial practices for the Department of Transportation and transit agencies to make sure all investments are made wisely and efficiently and that service is improved. We want to make sure that those paying the bills get the best value for their investment for many years to come.

The commission recommended \$900 million in additional funding for highway and bridges and \$760 million in targeted public transit funding.

The fee and tax increases recommended include: 12.5 cents per gallon from the state wholesale fuel tax, increases in the driver and vehicle registration fees to raise \$150 million, increasing the Realty Transfer Tax by .89 percent, and enabling counties and municipalities to raise funds for mass transit by imposing a .25 percent local sales tax, a .2 percent earned income tax or .5 percent Realty Transfer Tax.

If the recommendations are adopted, the Commission said the average driver would pay \$7 more per month.

The new funds for public transit would mean a change in realty transfer taxes that would add about \$5 a month to a 30-year, \$150,000 mortgage.

The nine-member bipartisan commission said its 16-month long assessment confirmed "that Pennsylvania's public transportation and highway and bridge systems are in crisis, both in terms of inadequate funding for operations, capital improvements and maintenance as well as deteriorating physical conditions."

The commission also recommended that PennDOT implement highway and bridge reforms and efficiencies totaling \$120 million. These include:

- Taking the right maintenance steps at optimum intervals to extend the life of highways and bridges;
- Delivering projects that fit within the context of the community and provide cost effective improvements that address specific transportation problems within fiscal constraints;

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- Delivering projects faster by improving decision making in the early planning stages and sharing information among the agencies that review environmental and cultural resource issues;
- Taking advantage of innovative project delivery and financing options, such as design-build and public-private partnerships; and
- Linking land use and transportation. This involves integrating land use decisions and smart transportation concepts. Major capacity expansion projects would be contingent on communities having land use plans and controls to ensure the proposed project will encourage sustainable, smart growth.

The commission also urged PennDOT to develop an incentive-based funding program to encourage communities to work with planning and other partners to link land use and transportation investments.

“We believe our recommendations will produce solid business practices that will stabilize and grow transportation services,” Secretary Biehler said. “We believe such changes are in the best interest of everyone who relies on transportation for work, health and play. We can either make prudent additional investments now, or be forced to pay more tomorrow to fix these pressing transportation problems.”

In reaction to the report, Gov. Rendell said, “I want to thank all of the members of the Transportation Funding and Reform Commission and Secretary of Transportation Al Biehler, who chaired the group, for the work they have done in the last 16 months in carefully studying Pennsylvania’s transportation system and its needs.

“The members of the commissioners clearly recognized the gravity and depth of the problem the commonwealth faces.

“For a long time, Harrisburg has not addressed in any far-reaching way the state’s transportation and mass transit needs. This report provides that comprehensive look and I hope that everyone will take the findings seriously. We need to work together over the coming months to use the findings of this report to develop, enact and implement a comprehensive solution to our transportation and transit issues.”

For a copy of the report and more information visit the [Transportation Funding and Reform Commission webpage](#).

Loans To Help Truckers Save Money, Reduce Emissions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is partnering with the Small Business Administration to make loans available to purchase [SmartWay Upgrade Kits](#) to help truckers pay for fuel-saving technologies.

This loan initiative uses SBA Express Loans and partners with Bank of America, Business Loan Express, Superior Financial Group and other SBA lenders to help small trucking companies finance the purchase of SmartWay Upgrade Kits.

The kits include idle-reduction devices, low rolling resistance tires, aerodynamic equipment, and exhaust after-treatment devices. The kits can improve truck fuel efficiency by 15 percent and save more than \$8,000 in fuel costs annually, while significantly reducing emissions of soot and nitrogen oxides.

Participating lenders will provide quick approval and affordable monthly payments. Small trucking firms can borrow from \$5,000 to \$25,000, with no collateral, an easy on-line or telephone application, and flexible loan terms.

For more information, visit [EPA's SmartWay Transport Partnership Program](#) webpage.

November 15 America Recycles Day – Learn More About Recycling, Composting

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, each year our country produces almost 240 million tons of municipal solid waste equivalent to nearly 4.5 pounds of waste per person each day, most of which is recyclable.

When we recycle, we conserve energy and natural resources, reduce air and water pollution and reduce greenhouse gases. By using our resources wisely, we strengthen our environment and our economy. Thousands of products are recyclable, especially paper, yard waste, motor oil, tires, plastics, glass, batteries, building materials and obsolete electronic products.

In 2005, recycling and composting activities prevented almost 78 million tons of material from ending up in landfills and incinerators. Today, this country recycles 32 percent of its waste, a rate that has almost doubled during the past 15 years.

Durable goods (tires, appliances, and furniture) and nondurable goods (paper and clothing) account for several million tons of the solid waste stream. While most Americans are helping by separating their trash, there are many more steps you can take to make our communities cleaner, healthier places to live.

Here is how each of us can make a difference by routinely reducing, re-using and recycling materials at home and throughout our communities--and encouraging our neighbors to do the same:

- Buy recycled products. When we buy recycled products, we create an economic incentive for recyclable materials to be collected, manufactured, and marketed as new products;
- Purchase durable, long lasting goods;
- Re-use items by repairing them, donating them to charity and community groups, or selling them also reduces waste;
- Use a product more than once, either for the same purpose or for a different purpose. Reusing, when possible, is preferable to recycling because the item does not need to be reprocessed before it can be used again;
- Reduce your packaging: buy bulk or concentrated products when you can;
- Another form of recycling is composting. Composting is the controlled biological decomposition of organic matter, such as food and yard wastes, into humus, a soil-like material; and
- Composting is nature's way of recycling organic wastes into new soil used in vegetable and flower gardens, landscaping, and many other applications.

[Visit EPA Region 3's Reduce, Reuse and Recycle webpage.](#)

NewsClip: [Editorial: America Recycles Day](#)

Link: [America Recycles Day](#)

Northeast Philadelphia Increases Recycling 29 Percent

To help celebrate [America Recycles Day](#) the [Philadelphia Recycling Office](#) announced an increase in recycling tonnage in Northeast Philadelphia by nearly 29 percent since the summertime launch of the City's new single stream recycling collection method.

The Recycling Office reports more than 870 additional tons of recyclable materials (the weight of approximately 174 conventional yellow school buses) were collected from Northeast Philadelphia residences from July through September than during the same time period in 2005.

“Our single stream recycling collection method is proving to be quite a success,” stated City of Philadelphia Streets Commissioner Clarena I.W. Tolson. “It is our hope that recycling tonnage in the Northeast Philadelphia area continues to increase as we look forward to expanding this innovative way to divert even more recyclable material from our waste stream throughout the city.”

Beginning July 10, 2006, 123,000 Northeast Philadelphia households were able to collect recyclables into a single collection container for regular curbside collection and began adding flattened cardboard along with #1 and #2 plastic containers.

For more information regarding recycling, please contact the City of Philadelphia Streets Department's recycling hotline at 215-685-RECY(CLE)/215-685-7329 or by visiting recyclingPAYS.phila.gov.

Great Valley School District Recognized for Switching to Biodiesel

Are school districts doing enough to protect children from hazardous school bus engine fumes? One Chester County school district has taken action to make sure its students are protected from the dangers of diesel – at no cost to the district.

Officials at the Great Valley School District have partnered with [The Energy Cooperative of Philadelphia](#) and the Department of Environmental Protection to switch the district's bus fleet to a blend of B20 biodiesel fuel -- the first Pennsylvania school district to do so.

The National Resources Defense Council says children who take the bus can be exposed to more than four times the amount of toxic diesel exhaust than classmates who arrive in a car. This exposure could result in lung damage, respiratory problems, allergies, exacerbation of asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, and increased risk of lung cancer.

Biodiesel is a cleaner, biodegradable, and nontoxic alternative fuel derived from renewable domestic resources. It can be used as a pure fuel or blended with petroleum such as in the popular B20 blend—20 percent biodiesel with 80 percent petroleum diesel.

By using B20, Great Valley reduces health risks to children by lowering the levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) and nitrated polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (nPAH) in emissions, which have been identified as potential cancer causing compounds. Besides reducing the cancer risk, biodiesel also has other important air quality impacts.

Compared to conventional low sulfur diesel, the B20 blend will reduce annual air pollution by approximately 1,919 pounds of carbon monoxide (a poisonous gas), 173 pounds of particulate matter (soot), 227 pounds of hydrocarbons (contributor to smog), 119 pounds of sulfur dioxide (major component of acid rain), and 435,267 pounds of carbon dioxide (a cause of global warming).

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Since biodiesel is made in the United States from renewable resources like vegetable oils, it reduces reliance on foreign oil and increases America's energy security. Biodiesel can easily be used in any diesel vehicle. Great Valley's Supervisor of Transportation, Michael Detwiler, Sr., said, "With the expertise of The Energy Cooperative, our team didn't need to do any prep work or retrofitting to make the transition. The buses ran on diesel one day, and then on biodiesel the next day. By operating our buses on B20, we are able to reduce the pollution that is often emitted from school buses."

Switching to this premium fuel didn't cost the school district a penny more. Earlier this year, the district received a \$28,340 Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant from the Department of Environmental Protection to offset the fuel's slightly higher price. The grant is available to any school district, municipality, and nonprofit, and is intended to provide Pennsylvania with cleaner air quality and to reduce dependency on foreign energy sources.

"We applaud Great Valley's leadership and are proud to have supported their transition to biodiesel," said Energy Cooperative Director of Operations Nadia Adawi. "We encourage other school districts and municipalities to take advantage of the Alternative Fuel Incentive Grant opportunity. As a full-service biodiesel distributor, The Energy Cooperative stands ready to help others make the switch to biodiesel simply and seamlessly - from navigating through grant requirements to technical considerations to delivering the fuel."

To learn more visit [The Energy Cooperative](#) or call 215-413-2122.

PA Brownfield Project Wins Phoenix Award at National Conference

The Bethlehem Commerce Center land recycling project in Northampton County won the People's Choice Award and the Region 3 overall 2006 Phoenix Award during the Phoenix Awards Ceremony at the Brownfields 2006 conference held this week in Boston.

The People's Choice Award goes to the project that received the most votes from the 7,000 conference attendees, and the overall award goes to the outstanding land recycling project in each of the federal Environmental Protection Agency's 10 regions.

The Bethlehem Commerce Center Project is an ambitious redevelopment of the former Bethlehem Steel site in Northampton County. This site was named the first Brownfield Action Team site by Gov. Rendell in August 2004, and barely two years later several business and hundreds of employees are now located on this site.

Eventually, the mix of commercial, office, manufacturing and warehousing businesses planned for this 1,600-acre development will employ 6,000 workers with an annual payroll of \$210 million. Altogether, BAT has assisted 32 projects in 22 counties to redevelop more than 4,500 acres of brownfields, creating and retaining as many as 35,000 jobs.

Under the state's land recycling program, the state has cleaned up 2,194 contaminated and abandoned industrial sites, creating or retaining as many as 76,000 jobs since 1995.

The Phoenix Awards, created in 1997, honors individuals and groups working to solve critical environmental challenges of transforming blighted and contaminated areas into productive new uses.

Link: [Former Bethlehem Steel Site to be Converted into Business Park](#)

Penn State's Hydrogen Day Explores Energy Technologies

Hydrogen energy and hydrogen fuel cell technologies were highlighted at Penn State's [2006 Hydrogen Day](#) on November 14 at the Nittany Lion Inn at University Park.

The one-day event, which featured sustainable energy endeavors, included poster sessions, panel sessions and keynote speakers from industry and academia.

For more information and links to background information on the energy potential of hydrogen, visit the [2006 Hydrogen Day webpage](#).

BP Solar to Invest \$70 Million to Expand U.S. Facility

[BP Solar](#) this week unveiled its plans for a \$70 million expansion project at its North American headquarters in Frederick, MD. The expansion will result in nearly doubling the facility's current casting and sizing capacity to approximately 150 MegaWatts.

"This is a significant investment in a world-class and well-established business," said Bob Malone, chairman and president of BP America. "This expansion will keep us in command of a growing industry by meeting future demand and providing innovative products to the market."

The expansion plans call for the construction of 140,000 square feet of new building space allowing the company to nearly double its casting, sizing, and wafering manufacturing capacity. Plans also include the relocation and integration of local warehousing and shipping facilities to the current site.

According to Lee Edwards, BP Solar CEO, "In addition to expanding our manufacturing capacity, our plans are to upgrade the interior of the existing facilities and to use sustainable building techniques such as a roof garden, bio-retention, extensive water recycling and the utilization of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) design components such as energy efficient lighting, heating and cooling."

Other planned improvements include additional office and meeting space, more daylight access to office and manufacturing facilities, an auditorium, and solar and environmental educational stations which will be available for tours and school groups.

BP Solar is a key business within BP Alternative Energy and a global company with over 2200 employees focused on harnessing the sun's energy to produce solar electricity. This includes the design, manufacture and marketing of quality solar electric systems for a wide range of applications in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors.

With over 30 years of experience and installations in over 160 countries, BP Solar is one of the world's largest solar companies and has manufacturing facilities in the U.S., Spain, India and Australia. BP Solar is part of BP, one of the world's leading energy companies.

To learn more, visit the [BP Solar North America webpage](#).

Agriculture Department Searching for Invasive Plant in Allegheny County

Allegheny County residents were asked by the Department of Agriculture this week to [report any locations](#) where Kudzu is growing under a pilot program to eradicate the invasive weed.

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Introduced from Asia, Kudzu is a climbing vine identified by alternating leaves, purple flowers and fuzzy brown seed pods which appear in the fall. Kudzu was added to the state's noxious weed list in 1989.

"Kudzu grows over and around other plants, creating a problem for property owners. The weed can also carry a destructive fungus known as Soybean Rust, which can be devastating to crops," said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. "I urge Allegheny County residents to call the Department of Agriculture and report any findings of Kudzu so we can enhance our pilot program and aggressively treat the affected areas."

Findings of Kudzu should be reported to the department's toll-free hotline, 1-877-464-9333. For more information on Kudzu and other noxious weeds, visit the [Animal and Plant Health webpage](#).

PA's Fresh Food and Supermarket Initiative Wins EPA Smart Growth Award

The Commonwealth's [Fresh Food Financing Initiative](#) has won the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [2006 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement](#), which is given to public sector entities that, among other things, make investments to strengthen communities and promote balanced, regional development.

Since its inception in early 2004, 11 supermarkets have been funded throughout the state, generating investments of at least \$46 million and creating or preserving more than 1,432 jobs.

"Over the last four years, we have worked hard each day to strengthen our cities and towns, promote economic development, and improve the quality of life for our residents," said Gov. Rendell. "The Fresh Food Financing Initiative is just one way we're accomplishing this.

"By investing our resources in this innovative program, new supermarkets and grocery stores are opening in urban and rural communities - areas that are often underserved. More stores mean more job opportunities and better access to quality foods that encourage a more nutritious, healthy lifestyle."

The initiative is the nation's first, state-level program aimed at attracting supermarket development in underserved rural and urban communities. It is designed to serve the financing needs of supermarket developers in communities where infrastructure costs and credit needs are not met by conventional financial institutions.

To help supermarkets and grocery stores move into underserved areas, the initiative analyzes market conditions, leverages capital, and encourages public policy to stimulate development.

The program is managed through a partnership between the Department of Community and Economic Development and three nonprofit organizations - The Food Trust, The Reinvestment Fund, and the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition.

Pennsylvania has invested \$30 million in the Fresh Food Financing Initiative, with matching funds from The Reinvestment Fund and other public and private sources. The Food Trust connects supermarket operators, developers, and communities with the available financial and technical resources, while GPUAC works to enhance contracting opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses.

For more information, visit the [Fresh Food Financing Initiative webpage](#) or call The Food Trust at 215-568-0830.

Penn State's Philadelphia Environmental Risks Program Receives EPA Grant

[Penn State](#) was one of sixteen project sponsors to share \$2.7 million in grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to continue progress on solving local health and environmental issues.

The [Community Action for a Renewed Environment grants](#) address a wide variety of environmental health issues in both rural and urban areas.

Penn State University received a Level II CARE cooperative agreement grant to develop [IPM management practice](#) recommendations and policies at the national, regional, state and local levels. Philadelphia neighborhoods targeted for this project are located in low income areas.

These communities were selected because they contain a large percentage of family households with significant populations of elderly and children less than 18 years of age. Houses in these communities were built between 1940 and 1960. Residents in these communities are vulnerable to pest and pesticide exposures.

The goal of this two year, Level II risk-reduction project, is to measurably reduce the negative environmental and public health impacts by pesticides on the selected community. It is expected to result in a significant reduction of human exposure to pesticide pollutants in the home, air and water.

Critical topics include pesticide contamination issues in multiple environments and simple steps to reduce these exposures. The major effort is to educate the community in using specific, effective, affordable and less toxic IPM solutions to address pest problems.

Specific goals are: raise awareness and understanding of pest infestation causes and pest and pesticide risks to personal and environmental health; reduce personal pesticide risks and releases into the environment though increasing residents' ability to apply less toxic IPM solutions; and create educational materials for families, health professionals, educators, and housing entities on prevention of pesticide contamination.

The IPM program formed a three year-old community-based partnership--Philadelphia School and Community IPM Partnership—which include: The Nurse Family, Philadelphia Health Management Corporation, Children Hospital of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Water Department, Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education, and Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

For more information visit the [Penn State project description](#).

Feature

Edge Density Key to Controlling Gypsy Moth Spread

Controlling population peaks on the edges of the [gypsy moth](#) range may help to slow their invasion into virgin territory, according to a team of researchers.

"Slowing the spread of the gypsy moth is a priority in forest management in the U.S.," says Ottar Bjornstad, associate professor of entomology and biology, Penn State. "Understanding the underlying patterns in the spread of invasive species is important for successful management."

The accidental release of the gypsy moth in 1869 in Massachusetts has led to an infestation covering more than 386,000 square miles of the U.S. Northeast. Native to Europe and Asia, gypsy moths are currently found from Maine to North Carolina and west

into Wisconsin where they defoliate trees and occasionally, cause extensive damage to northern deciduous forests.

"We analyzed historical data on the spread of the gypsy moth in the U.S. and found that its invasion has been characterized by regular periods of rapid spread interspersed between periods of little expansion," says Bjornstad. "This is the first identification of pulsed invasions for an invading species."

Bjornstad; Derek M. Johnson, Department of Biology, University of Louisiana, and Andrew M. Liebhold and Patrick C. Tobin, U.S. Forest Service, used historical, county-level quarantine records as well as forest service data from more than 100,000 pheromone traps set along the expanding gypsy moth population front for their theoretical model. The pheromone trap data were collected from 1988 to 2004.

They used a theoretical model to show how an interaction between negative population growth at low densities - "the Allee effect" - and the existence of a few satellite seed colonies created by human transfer of the insects over long distances, explain the invasion pulses, the researchers explain in the November 16 *Nature* magazine.

The gypsy moth adult is flightless and usually only spreads a short distance beyond infestation boundaries. External colonies occur when moths hitch a ride on vehicles or other items relocated by people. Without an Allee effect, these colonies would establish, but because gypsy moths exhibit an Allee effect, the low populations are insufficient for establishment of permanent populations.

This is also true at the edges of the population area. If the population density is low, the Allee effect prevents growth across the boundaries. The model showed that no pulsed expansion exists for populations unaffected by the Allee effect. However, when it is a factor, not only does pulsed expansion occur, but it mimics the historic pulses of the gypsy moth population from 1960 to 2002 found in the quarantine records.

Currently, the containment program for gypsy moths aims at controlling outbreaks outside the current population boundaries. The researchers suggest that "the invasion might also be slowed by suppressing outbreaks near the invasion front (within the populated area), to reduce the number of dispersers to below the donor threshold." This would decrease edge populations and prevent the periodic surges of growth that expand the territory.

Other invading species may also exhibit pulsed spreading. If researchers can determine that the Allee effect is in place, than this same plan of containment might aid in controlling a variety of pests.

The National Research Initiative of the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service supported this research.

For more information, contact Dr. Bjornstad is at 814-863-2983 or send email to: onb1@psu.edu .

Link: [College of Agricultural Sciences Gypsy Moth Fact Sheet.](#)

Quick Clips

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

[At War With the Deer
Task Force Focusing on Invasive Pig Population](#)

[Heating Bills Can Be Lower in Warmer Winter](#)
[States Secure Energy Conservation Agreement With U.S. DOE](#)
[Clarion University Installs First Solar Energy system](#)
[Corn Prices Hit 10-Year High Due to Ethanol Demand](#)
[Editorial: New Appliance Standards Should Bring Energy Savings](#)
[Editorial: Officials – Growth, Rural Nature Compatible](#)
[Op-Ed: PA Must Stop Wasting Land](#)
[Gang Scrawl Sprawl](#)
[Shohola Adopts Conservation Design](#)
[Environmental Activist Decides to Redirect His Energy](#)
[\\$5.5 Million in Recycling Grants Awarded by DEP](#)
[Recycling A Priority Despite Financial Hurdles](#)
[Recycling A Success in Polk Township](#)
[Western PA Conservancy CEO Moves On](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[4 Bushkill Tracts Targeted for Preservation](#)
[Bradford County Conservation Districts Celebrates 50 Years](#)
[Lackawanna River Group to Observe GIS Day](#)
[Editorial: Local Efforts Help Clean Up Bay Watershed](#)
[PA Lawmakers Pressed on Abandoned Mine Legislation](#)
[Editorial: Bay's Progress Should Spur More](#)
[Editorial: Local Efforts Help Clean Up Bay Watershed](#)
[PA Hosted Potomac Source Water Protection Partnership](#)

Regulations

DEP Mercury Emissions Reduction Plan Narrowly OK'd, DEP Hints At Alternative

The Independent Regulatory Review Commission voted 3 to 2 this week to approve a [final regulation to reduce mercury emissions](#) from coal-fired power plants proposed by the Department of Environmental Protection, setting the stage for additional review of the regulation by the General Assembly.

In response to a question from IRRC Commissioner Arthur Coccodrilli, however, DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty said for the first time she would have no hesitation supporting a labor-business coalition proposal to reduce mercury emissions by 90 percent by 2015 on every power plant in Pennsylvania and allow interstate trading of emission allowances to meet the additional mercury reductions needed to comply with the overall federal mercury emissions cap, if the plan could be approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Secretary McGinty said she had indications from EPA they would not approve a plan that limited the trading of allowances, but said Pennsylvania could adopt a proposal that limited the pool of allowances to be traded.

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Former DEP Chief Counsel Terry Bossert, offering comments on behalf of PPL, agreed the details of the labor-business coalition proposal in fact limited the pool of allowances and was not prohibited by EPA's regulation or federal law.

Secretary McGinty's commitment to support the compromise proposal and to come back later to amend the regulation if EPA approves, satisfied Commission Coccodrilli who then voted in favor of the regulation.

Secretary McGinty gave no timetable for seeking EPA approval of the compromise approach.

"This is a landmark victory for environmental protection and public health in Pennsylvania," Gov. Rendell said. "We cannot accept that our state is laden with more toxic mercury pollution than nearly anywhere else in the nation and do nothing about it. The state-specific plan will change that by keeping our residents safe and the environment clean, and enhancing efforts to attract new investment to our commonwealth with the promise of a higher quality of life."

Reacting to the IRRC approval of DEP's regulation, Douglas L. Biden, President of the Electric Power Generating Association said, "EPGA is disappointed in the IRRC's approval of the DEP mercury reduction plan because we do not believe it serves the best interests of Pennsylvania in terms of jobs, the cost of electricity or electric reliability.

"The issue was not whether to reduce mercury emissions, but how to do it.

"A labor-business coalition proposed a bipartisan alternative that goes beyond the federal Clean Air Mercury Rule by requiring the installation of state-recommended mercury emissions control technology on every coal-fired power plant in Pennsylvania to reduce emissions by 80 percent by 2010 and 90 percent by 2015; the same deadlines and reductions required by DEP.

"Any further reductions required to meet the more stringent federal mercury emissions cap could then be achieved through market-based emissions allowance trading, similar to the allowance pool created by DEP to make these additional reductions.

"Compared to the DEP rule, the labor-business alternative would cost significantly less, threaten fewer jobs, and better position Pennsylvania to attract future clean coal generating capacity to meet growing electricity demand, without any difference in environmental impact to the state."

For more information on reducing mercury emissions from power plants, visit www.PaEnergyNews.com.

NewsClips: [Stiff State Mercury Rules OK'd](#)
[Regulatory Panel OKs Mercury Measure](#)
[Mercury Cuts at PA Power Plants Clear Major Hurdle](#)
[State OKs tough Rules on Emission of Mercury](#)
[Plan for Big Mercury Cuts Advances](#)

Issue Notebook: [PA Mercury Emissions Update](#)

The Department of Environmental Protection also published notice of [proposed changes to Radiological Health](#) regulations for comment notice of a [December 19 public hearing](#) on a revised ozone implementation plan for Greene County and a second [December 19 public hearing](#) on a similar plan for the Reading area.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – November 18, 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 a [proposed plan for regulating erosion and sediment from oil and gas operations](#) asking for public comments.

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

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- **November 20** – Senate Rules Committee meets to consider [House Bill 854](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing the Terrorism Infrastructure Disclosure Protection Act prohibiting the release of certain infrastructure records; [House Resolution 382](#) (Frankel-D-Allegheny) memorializing Congress to reauthorize the fee to support the federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund; and [Senate Bill 1104](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) making changes to the One Call Program. Rules Committee Room. Off the Floor.
- **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.
- **November 21** – **CANCELLED** – Environmental Quality Board meeting.
- **December 1** – [State Planning Board meeting](#). Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 a.m.
- **December 4** – DEP [Cleanup Standards Scientific Advisory Board](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **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.
- **December 19** - [DEP public hearing](#) on Greene County Ozone Implementation Plan.
- **December 19** – [DEP public hearing](#) on Ozone Implementation Plan for Reading.

[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 .

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