

— 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](#)

Rendell Year-End Interviews Highlight Alternative Fuels, Health Care Reform

Gov. Rendell's year-end interviews this week highlighted the priorities he expects to work on in 2007, including the need to do more to promote alternative fuels, health care reform and reforming the structure and way the General Assembly and government works.

Gov. Rendell said his biggest accomplishment this year was enactment of the Cover All Kids health insurance program and his biggest disappointment was the failure of the General Assembly to create his Jonas Salk Legacy Fund to promote biomedical research.

Interestingly, his second biggest disappointment was the failure of the federal government to implement its loan guarantee program for alternative energy projects, noting a planned facility in Schuylkill County that would produce diesel fuel from coal refuse has been stymied by the lack of federal action.

In fact, Gov. Rendell said reducing health care costs and promoting alternative energy sources would both be two of his biggest issues during his next four years.

Commenting on any changes coming among his Cabinet Secretaries, Rendell said he doesn't see any immediate "significant" changes.

Gov. Rendell outlined several government reform initiatives he said he would push in his second term, including:

- Merit Selection for judges;
- Adopting term limits for Senate and House members;
- Campaign finance reform;
- Reducing the size of the General Assembly; and
- Creating a citizen panel to oversee redrawing legislative districts after the 2010 Census.

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Session Schedule

The Senate released their session schedule

through June this week—

January 2, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31
February 5, 6, 7, 12, 13
March 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28
April 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 30
May 1, 2, 7, 8, 21, 22

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June 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29

The Senate and House will return for the new session on January 2, but will not do actual work until January 16 for the Senate and January 22 for the House.

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Video Blog

Washington County District Recognizes 6 With Conservation Awards

The Washington County Conservation District Board of Directors this week recognized six individuals, organizations and a retiring director during their annual conservation awards luncheon.

Conservation Farmer of the Year: Ray Furda:

Mr. Furda, who is in his 80's and has farmed all of his life, owns and operates a 285 acre beef and horse farm in Somerset Township, Washington County, and has been a conservation cooperater since October 17, 1949.

The farm is extremely well kept and is located across from a popular public golf course. Mr. Furda

installed a variety of conservation practices, including stream bank fencing, spring



Gary Stokum, District Manager, congratulates Ray Furda

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developments, tree planting, livestock crossings, warm season grasses, and a rotational grazing system.

Mr. Furda also uses a low impact method of farming to constantly maintain an excellent vegetative cover on all of his pastures, planting and harvesting only hay. This low impact method of farming greatly decreases erosion rates, sediment runoff while increasing wildlife habitat.

He participates in all of the available conservation programs through the Farm Service Agency and NRCS, including CREP, WHIP and EQIP.

Video Blog: [Mr. Furda Comments on Winning the Award](#)

Conservation Educator: Sheila Burcin.

She is the former Director of the Penn State Cooperative Extension Office who was one of the four original individuals that formed the [Washington County Watershed Alliance](#) and has served as an officer of that county wide organization since the Alliance's first days.

Sheila was also a major organizer of the [Chartiers Creek Watershed Association](#), which recently completed a Rivers Conservation Plan and other projects.

She also serves on the Steering Committee and is one of the original organizers of the Children's Groundwater Festival in Washington County. In addition to helping to obtain funding for the Festival, she organizes the schedule for the presenters and instructors.

Video Blog: [Shelia Burcin Talks About Environmental Education/Watershed Work](#)



Gary Stokum, District Manager, and County Commissioner Lawrence Maggi congratulate Sheila Burcin on Educator Award

Conservation Volunteer: Debra

Valentino: Debra and several of her neighbors came to the Conservation District over five years ago asking for help to save Canonsburg Lake. She organized the Save Canonsburg Lake Committee and has hosted many meetings at her home and at her expense for legislators, Turnpike Commission Officials, and Fish and Boat Commission representatives including the Executive Director.

Debra has been the leader in working with the District to obtain the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant to prepare the Recreational Site Master Plan for Canonsburg Lake and is the Project Manager.



Gary Stokum, District Manager, and County Commissioner Lawrence Maggi congratulate Debra Valentino on Volunteer Award

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Recently, Congressman Tim Murphy secured a \$250,000 award for the Army Corps of Engineers to prepare a Section 206 Habitat Restoration Study for Canonsburg Lake due to Debra's efforts.

If Canonsburg Lake gets restored it will be primarily due to Debra's determined and endless hard work and she has done all of this while still working full time for the U.S. Postal Service.

Video Blog: [Debra Valentino Talks About the Value of Volunteer Work](#)

Conservation Organization: Vicky Michaels and the Independence Marsh Foundation: Vicky and the [Independence Marsh Foundation](#) have been an irreplaceable asset to the conservation district. If it were not for Vicky and her Marsh Foundation the JB#2 Abandoned Mine Treatment Facility would not exist. They volunteered to accept the land donation from the Sasso Estate when no one else would step up to the plate. This allowed the District to build the treatment system.



Vicky Michaels (center) and her team receive Conservation Organization Award

They have continued to assist the District with the maintenance and repair not only of the JB#2 system, but also the other two systems the District and the Raccoon Creek Watershed Association maintain. Vicky has provided the construction site supervision for both the Hamilton AMD project and the JB#2 AMD project including the present emergency repair efforts.

Vicky and her Independence Marsh Foundation have also applied for and received grants to improve the environmental study center at the Burgettstown School District campus and assisted with the Children's Groundwater Festival.

The Marsh Foundation has helped many communities with used tire cleanups using their tire shear to cut the tires up and pack them into dumpsters to be taken to landfills. The latest tire collection was held in Hanover Township, Washington County.

Video Blog: [Vicki Michaels on the Independence Marsh Foundation.](#)

Conservation Consulting Firm: Biomost and Kyle Durrett: [Biomost](#) is the Consulting Firm that completed the District's study and report on the [Raccoon Creek Restoration Project](#) that was funded by Growing Greener. The original intent of the grant was to study the Erie Mine discharge and Plum Run discharge in Burgettstown and make recommendations for how to attempt to treat these discharges.



County Commissioner Lawrence Maggi (r) congratulates Shaun Busler, Tim Danehy and Kyle Durrett on Conservation Consulting Firm Award

Kyle Durrett and Biomost looked imaginatively beyond the strict scope of

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the study and studied the various mine pools involved and how the pools interacted with one another. Kyle and Biomost also worked with Bruce Leavitt, an independent Geologist and Engineer that was looking at the interaction of mine pools through a grant from West Virginia University.

As a result of this detailed work, the Biomost team - Margaret Dunn, Tim Danehy, Shaun Busler and Cliff Denholm-- were able to propose a reclamation plan called “ELF.”

This system would collect five major mine pools in the Burgettstown area and treat close to 2,000 gallons per minute of contaminated mine water and return it to Raccoon Creek minus most of the contaminants cleaning up almost all of the major discharges in the Raccoon Creek watershed.

Biomost and Stream Restoration Inc. are now working with the District to seek grants to implement the findings in this study.

Video Blog: [Kyle Durrett Talks About the ELF Project, Interest in Environment](#)

Director Service Award: Richard

Lehman: Dick Lehman, who has been a District Director since 1999, is leaving the Board of Directors at the end of 2006.

Mr. Lehman has represented the Washington County Farm Bureau and the Washington County Cattlemen’s Association on the District Board and has been one of the most active Directors in the entire history of the district.

He has chaired the Dirt and Gravel Road Quality Assurance Board for eight years and has been our regional representative to the Ohio Basin Commission. Under his leadership, the District has completed over \$500,000 in Dirt and Gravel Road Projects.

He also led the effort to prevent the U.S.D.A. offices from moving away from the city of Washington and merge the Washington and Greene County Farm Service Agency County Committees.

In his own watershed, Mr. Lehman helped organize the Cross Creek Watershed Association. Through his leadership as chairman the Association, they completed a Watershed Assessment, Restoration and Protection Plan.

Recently the Association obtained a grant, and with the help of the Avella Boy Scout Troop, completed a bridge crossing to extend the nature trail adjacent to the Avella High School. The Association has also installed a nature center at the Cross Creek Township Senior Citizens Center and plans to assist the township to develop the first municipal park in Cross Creek Township.

Mr. Lehman has also worked between the Watershed Association and the Conservation District to obtain Growing Greener Grants to install streambank fencing, warm season grasses, and rotational grazing systems in the head waters of the Cross Creek watershed.



Bill Slosky, District Board Chair, congratulates Dick Lehman on Director Service Award

“Dick’s enthusiasm, leadership, reliability, intelligence, and extra effort will be greatly missed,” said District Executive Director Gary Stokum.

Video Blog: [Dick Lehman Highlights District, Watershed Work](#)

Photo Feature: [Washington Conservation District 2006 Conservation Award Winners](#)

On the Hill

Passing of Gov. Ray Shafer, Environmental Accomplishments Celebrated



[Gov. Ray Shafer](#) (R), who served as Pennsylvania’s Governor from 1967 to 1971 passed away this week from complications caused by a stroke.

"Ray Shafer was one of the most dedicated public servants in the commonwealth's history," said Gov. Rendell. "His dedication to the public good continued long after his service as governor and throughout his life. Less than three months ago, he successfully persuaded me to give a capitol redevelopment assistance grant to his beloved alma

mater, Allegheny College, in Meadville.

"Pennsylvania has lost one of its finest sons."

Gov. Shafer's administration is perhaps best known for reforms that were made to the Commonwealth's antiquated 1874 constitution and state government reorganization that better accommodated programs and policies that reflected the times.

Several major environmental initiatives were signed into law during Gov. Shafer’s tenure, including:

- The creation of Pennsylvania’s first modern environmental protection agency in the form of the Department of Environmental Resources;
- Passage of the Environmental Rights Amendment to the state’s Constitution which was ratified by voters in 1971;
- Project 500 which provided \$500 million to finance abandoned mine reclamation and purchase of farmland and open space;
- The first modern law - Solid Waste Management Act - regulating the disposal of waste;
- Creation of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission; and
- Passage of Act 442 to provide counties with more tools to preserve open space.

Gov. Shafer was born March 5, 1917, in New Castle, Pa.

In Other News

Congress Passes Reauthorization of Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fee

Pennsylvania will receive nearly \$1.5 billion in federal funding from an account created to help states reclaim Abandoned Mine Lands thanks to legislation passed by the U.S. Congress before it adjourned.

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The legislation was passed with the help of the entire Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation, but especially outgoing U.S. Senator Rick Santorum and Congressman John E. Peterson (R-Pleasantville).

The AML language the Congress passed will allow Pennsylvania to claim more than triple the funding it would have received over the next 10 years. In fact, starting in fiscal year 2008 and going through until 2017, state officials will receive approximately \$680 million - with further adjustments promising to yield as much as \$1.5 billion over the next 15 years.

Annual AML funding to Pennsylvania would increase from an estimated \$21.4 million in 2007, to \$31.6 million in 2008, \$52.4 million in 2010, \$60 million in 2011 to a high of \$90 million in 2013. In addition, the legislation allows states to increase its reclamation setaside from 10 percent to 30 percent for locally-sponsored mine reclamation and acid mine drainage treatment projects.

All told, the AML's new funding formula would allow state and local officials to reclaim and recover nearly all of Pennsylvania's high-priority sites a full 45 years earlier than they would have under the current arrangement.

"This is the most important economic development and environmental legislation to affect our state and other historic coal production states that has ever passed," said John Dawes, chairman of the Pennsylvania AML Campaign, a coalition of 200 conservation and watershed associations. "This is life-saving legislation that goes beyond addressing the health impacts of living near these sites," adding that more people have died in the past four years as a result of dangerous abandoned mine lands than in oft-publicized underground mining accidents.

The AML Fund was created nearly 30 years ago to finance the cleanup of hazardous abandoned mine sites across the country.

"Finally, and thankfully, we now have commonsense legislation that will go a very long way to fixing the long-standing problems of abandoned mine lands and waters across our state," said Bruce Golden, regional coordinator for the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation.

"It's a new day in Pennsylvania," he added.

NewsClips: [U.S. House Extends Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program](#)

Links: [County By County Breakdown Shows Extent of Abandoned Mine Problem in PA](#)
[Groups Rally to Support Santorum Bill to Restore Mine Reclamation Funding](#)

Video Blog: [John Dawes Talks About Reauthorizing Federal AML Fee](#)

Training to be Held on New Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual

The Department of Environmental Protection will be conducting five, two-day training sessions on the new [Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual](#), a technical reference guide of planning concepts and design standards that satisfy Pennsylvania's stormwater management requirements when properly tailored and applied locally.

The training sessions will highlight key concepts in the manual, including performance guidelines and standards, an inventory of proven BMPs, and a process for planning and applying them to construction sites.

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“This initiative will arm stormwater professionals with the tools they need to evaluate water quality impacts from uncontrolled volume and velocity, factors not usually included in past design considerations,” said Cathy Curran Myers, deputy secretary of DEP’s Office of Water Management. “Stormwater should be managed as an environmental resource to be protected, rather than as a waste to be discharged quickly and moved downstream.”

Local and state government entities, planners, land developers, contractors, consultants and others involved with planning, designing, reviewing, approving and constructing land development projects are encouraged to attend.

Training sessions are being offered from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on these dates around the state:

- January 9-10 at the Quality Inn and Conference Center, Franklin, Venango County. (Snow dates: February 27-28);
- January 11-12 at the Mountain View Inn, Greensburg, Westmoreland County. (Snow dates: March 1-2);
- February 6-7 at the Genetti Hotel, Williamsport, Lycoming County. (Snow dates: February. 8-9);
- February. 13-14 at Holiday Inn, Grantville, Lebanon County. (Snow dates to be determined);
- February. 22-23 at Valley Forge Convention Plaza, King of Prussia, Montgomery County. (Snow dates to be determined); and
- March 6-7 at Villanova University, Villanova, Delaware County. (Snow dates to be determined.)

Registration information for each training session is available from the conservation district in the county where the training is being held. Registration information for the February sessions will not be available until December 29. Registration fees vary by region.

Stormwater runoff and flooding are natural events that have helped to shape the world around us. Human activities on the landscape routinely alter natural drainage patterns. These changes enhance localized flash flooding, streambank erosion and loss of groundwater recharge where stormwater runoff is poorly managed. In addition to its physical impact on the environment, stormwater may carry a variety of pollutants.

Stormwater runoff problems can be minimized through planning, and properly constructed and maintained BMPs. Properly managed stormwater can remove pollutants, facilitate groundwater recharge through retention and infiltration, provide base flow for surface water, and maintain the stability and environmental integrity of waterways and wetlands.

By managing stormwater runoff as a valuable and reusable resource, a host of opportunities are opened that protect the environment while complementing new development.

For more information, contact Barbara Beshore, chief of the Technical Support Section in DEP’s Division of Waterways, Wetlands and Stormwater Management, at 717-772-5961 or send email to: bbeshore@state.pa.us .

For more information, visit DEP’s [Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual webpage](#). Note: a final version of DEP’s Stormwater Management Manual has not yet been published.

Change: Stormwater Conference Now Set for April 5-6 in State College

Stormwater professionals, developers, municipal officials, conservation professionals and watershed stakeholders are invited to a [statewide Stormwater Conference](#) which is now set for April 5-6 in State College. It had been scheduled for February 15-16.

This one and one half day conference will focus on issues related to implementing the DEP Stormwater BMP Manual and give participants the opportunity to learn about tools and strategies for managing stormwater.

Online registration and other information is available at the [Stormwater Conference webpage](#).

Information on exhibitor space is available by contacting 717-234-5550 or by sending email to: glehman@cbf.org .

New Monitoring Matters Newsletter Available for Citizen Water Monitors

The new issue of *Monitoring Matters* features articles on riparian forest buffers, the CREP Program, examples of great stream bank fencing projects, upcoming grant opportunities and a recap of 2006 for volunteer water monitors.

Monitoring Matters is published by the PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers, DEP and the Keystone Water Monitoring Network.

To get your copy, visit the [Monitoring Matters webpage](#).

Drop in Acid Rain Altering Appalachian Stream Water Quality

Appalachian hardwood forests may be getting a respite from acid rain but data from a long-term ecological study of stream chemistry suggests that the drop in acid rain may be changing biological activity in the ecosystem and hiking dissolved carbon dioxide in forest streams.

"These are unexpected results," says David DeWalle, professor of forest hydrology at Penn State. "Rising amounts of carbon dioxide in streams and soil could have implications for the forest ecosystem, and the carbon balance in general."

DeWalle and his colleagues have been monitoring stream water chemistry in the Appalachians since 1990. They are studying the effect of reduced sulfur emissions - required under the Clean Air Act - on the water quality of five streams in Pennsylvania.

"These streams are as pristine as you can get, and we have been sampling them nearly every month over the past 15 years," he says.

Some expected changes in stream chemistry are already showing. Water quality in the streams is gradually improving from the reduced sulfur emissions, and researchers are also seeing less nitrogen from the atmosphere and in the streams.

"This reduction in nitrogen deposition is yet to be seen in many parts of New England," DeWalle says. "We are probably seeing it earlier than others because we are pretty close to the sources of these emissions."

There have also been some unexpected changes. DeWalle and his Penn State colleagues Bryan Swistock, extension specialist, and Anthony Buda and Sarah MacDougall, graduate students, say they are recording rising amounts of dissolved carbon dioxide in all five streams.

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DeWalle, whose work is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, thinks that by reducing pollutants emitted to the atmosphere, we are creating a different set of conditions for organisms in the soil. The rising dissolved carbon dioxide in the streams, he suggests, might be traced to increased respiration by these organisms.

He explains that organic matter broken down by these organisms generates byproducts such as carbon dioxide, water and residual dissolved organic matter. The increased respiration, he adds, may be gradually increasing soil carbon dioxide and reducing the amount of residual organic matter. As the organisms break down more of the organic matter, there is less of it leaving as dissolved organic matter in stream water.

"There have been some experiments where they added nitrogen to the soil and saw a reduction in soil respiration. We have of course, reduced the nitrogen, and indicators of stream chemistry suggest that this may have caused the opposite reaction and stepped up the respiration," says DeWalle.

Though the stream chemistry data suggests increased respiration in the soil, researchers caution that the hypothesis needs to be tested with experiments that mimic reduced amounts of nitrogen in the atmosphere.

Penn State researchers are already seeing increasing amounts of silica and sodium in streams which may be from the weathering of minerals and sandstone bedrock, caused presumably by the increased carbonic acid in soil and groundwater.

"If you have higher carbon dioxide in the soil, you get more carbonic acid in the groundwater, which increases the weathering of minerals. You would not normally expect weathering rates to increase with reduced acid rain," DeWalle told attendees at the American Geophysical Union conference today (December 12) in San Francisco.

Appalachian forests play a crucial role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem, and support thousands of jobs through the hardwood industry.

"This area is a region bigger than Pennsylvania, where we see declines in both sulfur and nitrogen emissions. Although that is a positive thing, it is having an influence, it appears, on the forest ecosystem. Higher amounts of carbon dioxide in the soil means more of it ultimately may be emitted back to the atmosphere as a greenhouse gas," adds the Penn State researcher.

Contact Dr. DeWalle by calling 814-865-4415 or sending email to: d9d@psu.edu .

Link: [Pennsylvania's Acid Rain Monitoring Network](#)

DEP Recognizes Several Winners of the 2005 Environmental Excellence Awards

In several events across the state this week, the Department of Environmental Protection recognized winners of the 2005 Governor Awards for Environmental Excellence, which were awarded in 2006.

Here's a rundown on the award winners recognized:

- **Scrubgrass Generating Company** received the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence for a mine reclamation project that has transformed a formerly abandoned mine site in Clearfield County into an environmentally viable property that's capable of supporting diverse vegetation, wildlife and aquatic species. ([full story](#))
- **Conestoga Wood Specialties Corp.**, a leading cabinet component manufacturer, received the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence for practicing source reduction and pollution prevention activities at its Pennsylvania facilities. ([full story](#))

- **Southern York County Library** received the Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence for cutting energy use, reducing waste and using innovative technology in the construction and operation of its new library. ([full story](#))
NewsClip: [Governor’s Award Given to Company Operating in Westover](#)

First Tenants Move Into Westmoreland’s GreenForge Building

After four long years of standing empty, a former business- incubator building along the Donohoe Road in Greensburg, Westmoreland County, is again becoming a vital part of the community as its first new tenants – the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Development organization – settle in.

The occupancy is a major accomplishment in a two-year-long effort by a group of nonprofit partners to transform this nondescript 1980s-era cinderblock structure into distinctive, contemporary office space and a model of green-building rehabilitation.

They’ve given the building a striking new roof line featuring a two-story glass arch entryway, a coat of lively yellow paint, and host of conservation materials, and a new name -- GreenForge -- to reflect its dual goal of being a home for nonprofit agencies dedicated to conservation and rural development.

U.S.D.A. Rural Development’s second-floor, 1,900-square-foot office in GreenForge increases the agency’s previous space by more than one-third, giving it much-needed room to better manage its growing number of programs, which range from helping communities create jobs to extending utility infrastructure.

It also allows the organization to be just steps away from its “sister” agencies – USDA’s Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service – in the adjacent Donohoe Center building.

“The GreenForge location also gives us a new working advantage – the opportunity to have daily interaction with some new agencies and organizations,” explained Rural Development Manager Sandra Ridenour. Other tenants scheduled to move into the building over the next two months include: the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, a group of that works to clean up land and water damaged by past coal-mining practices in 24 counties in western Pennsylvania; and Outside In, an organization that helps troubled teenagers acquire new skills and positive attitudes so they can live life to the fullest.

“This location is emerging as a ‘conservation campus,’” explained Greg Phillips, district manager/CEO of the Westmoreland Conservation District, whose organization is a lead partner in the GreenForge project along with the Westmoreland Industrial Development Corporation Inc., and the Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation.

“In 1994, the county built Donohoe Center here to serve the public as a one-stop agriculture and conservation center...in 2002, the Westmoreland Conservation District raised more than \$1.5 million in public and private funds to move a local barn behind Donohoe Center and adapt it for reuse as a conservation education center...and now, in 2006, we are adding a GreenForge – the first green rehabilitation of a commercial building in Westmoreland County – to the mix.”

The Westmoreland County Parks Building and the 65-acre Ann Rudd Saxman Nature Park also are nearby.

GreenForge includes a number of conservation features, such as: a 9,000-square-foot green roof (a roof planted with vegetation to absorb rainwater, reduce pollution, and

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help insulate the building from summer sun), a geothermal heating and cooling system (an environmentally friendly, low-impact and low-cost way to use the earth's energy to provide comfort instead of using non-renewable fossil fuels), naturally lit and naturally ventilated space (including new, energy-efficient windows), and native landscaping.

Overall, GreenForge's commitment to conservation will create more comfortable space for its tenants and have the potential to save them money by moderating the building's use of energy, which means more stable heating, cooling, and electric costs.

"We will be tracking the effectiveness of the various systems," Phillips said. The Conservation District plans to use the data it gathers and the building's conservation features as demonstrations in its community education program. "Our goal is to help people learn more about how to save energy and create more sustainable buildings." USDA's Rural Development agency will retain its current telephone numbers and email addresses in its new GreenForge location.

Links: [Westmoreland Plants First Green Roof](#)
[Ribbon Cut on Westmoreland's First Green Building](#)
[Westmoreland Campus Expanding to Include GreenForge](#)

Students Invited to Apply for 2007 Environmental Community Service Award

Middle and high schools in the Delaware Valley are encouraged to apply for the Second Annual [Environmental Community Service Award](#).

The deadline to apply is February 23. Winners will be announced just prior to Earth Day, April 22.

The goal of the award is to raise awareness of environmental concerns and to encourage middle and high schools in the Delaware Valley to participate in a community service project that will enhance and improve the quality of life in their community.

The judges of this educational competition are representatives from The Franklin Institute, the Academy of Natural Sciences, from Pennsylvania and New Jersey's departments of Environmental Protection and Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control.

The award is sponsored by Wawa, NBC 10 and Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox, LLP.

The application can be submitted to publicrelations@wawa.com (providing it is sent from an official school e-mail address). It can also be mailed to Wawa, Public Relations Department, 260 Baltimore Pike, Wawa, PA 19063. It must be signed by a school official.

For more information, schools can call Wawa's Customer Call Center at 1-800-444-9292 or visit the [Environmental Community Service Award webpage](#).

PCEE December Environmental Education Connections Newsletter Online

The December issue of [EE Connections newsletter](#) from the [Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education](#) is now available online. The highlights from this month's issue include—

General News: Agricultural Research Grants Awarded, Green Building Manufacturing, World's Largest Developer of Solar Products comes to Pennsylvania, State Park Improvements Under Way, Pennsylvania's Major Energy Conservation Agreement, Pennsylvania's Fresh Food Initiative Wins National Award, New Signs Help Educate Visitors in Pennsylvania Wilds, Call for Presentations Announced, Chesapeake Bay Shows Slight Improvement

K-12 News: Marketplace for the Mind, School of the Future, Teaching Sustainable, Agriculture in the Classroom, Abandoned Mine Drainage Education, Environmental Poster Contest, Quiet Creek Herb Farm and School of Country Living, Igniting Creative Energy Challenge, Energy Hog Challenge

Higher Education: Biomass Energy Center, Environmental Education Courses – Online, Sustainability Education Master's Degree, Online Master's Degree Information Session My Campus is Greener than Yours, RecycleMania Competition

Professional Development: Penn State's Smoke School, Delaware Estuary Science Conference, NAAEE Professional Development Series, Astronomy from the Ground Up

Grants/Awards: Meaningful Watershed School Mini-Grant, Energy Star Awards, Sustainable Farming Grants, 2007 Young Eco-Hero Awards, 2007 National Wetlands Awards

To get your own copy, send an email to: info@pcee.org or visit the [EE Connections sign-up webpage](#).

Pennsylvania Preserves 6,854 More Acres of Farmland

The Farmland Preservation Board this week announced the preservation of 6,854 more acres of farmland on 69 farms.

The farms were located in Adams, Beaver, Berks, Butler, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Erie, Franklin, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Lycoming, Mercer, Northumberland, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Union, Wayne and York counties.

The Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program was developed 18 years ago to help slow the loss of prime farmland to non-agricultural uses. The program enables state, county and local governments to purchase conservation easements (also called development rights) from owners of quality farmland.

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

Feature

Allegheny-Butler Senior Environment Corps Protects Pine Creek Watershed

A team of senior volunteers, under the umbrella of the Allegheny-Butler Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps is playing a major role in assessing, protecting, and restoring

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the Pine Creek Watershed. The watershed covers 67.3 square miles and parts of 14 municipalities.

It all started three years ago when Mary Wilson, a member of the Pine Creek Watershed Assessment Steering Committee, realized that she could use the help of the Allegheny-Butler PaSEC program being directed by Marilyn Kraitchman, the volunteer coordinator of the Vintage Senior Center. The program now is hosted through the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Because grant funding was less than anticipated for the Pine Creek assessment, Mary approached Marilyn about forming a partnership to have the assessment done by volunteers. Marilyn had developed multi-generational teams of volunteers to perform water quality monitoring in other watersheds in Allegheny and Butler counties and her vision fit perfectly with the Pine Creek project.

Mary then launched a campaign to recruit residents from the Pine Creek Watershed to volunteer for the program. Marilyn and her assistants developed an extensive strategy for training the volunteers through both classroom and field workshops. There were so many volunteers interested in participating in the water quality monitoring assessment, that they had to be trained in two stages.

Their partnership and the hard work of their volunteers resulted in the Pine Creek Watershed Assessment, Protection, and Restoration Plan that was completed in March 2005. The success of the program also has led to a partnership among Pine Creek, EPA and DEP to develop a model program for seniors and other volunteers to monitor watersheds for bacteria. The project begins this fall.

Senior volunteers continue to conduct chemical analyses of the watershed and are launching a Riparian and Channel Assessment Study, as well. The vast majority of volunteers are still actively engaged in the program.

“The success of the original project with the Allegheny-Butler PaSEC, and the professional approach to the initial training of volunteers by Marilyn Kraitchman, is enabling the Pine Creek Watershed to expand its work in ways it could not have done otherwise,” Wilson said. “The seniors live and work in the communities served by the watershed and they are excellent ambassadors for promoting watershed protection. It allows us to work with limited funds and fully engage the public in the project because the seniors live in the communities around the watershed.”

In 1997, Pennsylvania was the first state to establish a Statewide Senior Environment Corps under a partnership among DEP, the Department of Aging, and the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement. EASI established the Senior Environment Corps concept in the belief that older Americans have the talent, time and experience to tackle some of the most important environmental concerns in their communities.

Today, PaSECs cover 51 counties throughout the Commonwealth and EASI is the largest senior environmental action network in the world.

For more information visit the [PA Senior Environment Corps webpage](#).
(Originally Published in the DEP Update)

Quick Clips

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

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

[Editorial: DEP Should Follow Dutch Teens Ingenuity on Energy Savings](#)
[Rendell, 2 Others Push Renewable Energy](#)
[Farmers Pin Profit Hopes on Ethanol Plant](#)
[Region Discovers New Opportunities Through Alternative Energy](#)
[Green Energy Urged for Pottstown](#)
[Biologist Questions Fervor of Wind Power Advocates](#)
[Wind Turbines Raise Concern About Bird, Bat Kills](#)
[Editorial: Wind Farm Tax Law Ends Confusion](#)
[Congress Extends Renewable Energy Tax Incentives](#)
[Grid Limitations Increase Prices for Electricity](#)
[Panel Debates Future of Land](#)
[Editorial: Open Space Strategy Needed Now in Northampton](#)
[Space to Enjoy Nature Grows](#)
[Rail Trail Groups Honored](#)
[Bike Trail Now Connects to Maryland](#)
[Bedminster Adds 21 Acre Parcel to Open Space Program](#)
[Marlborough Officials Approve Open Space Deal](#)
[Court Dismisses 2 Challenges to Local Farming Restrictions](#)
[PA Brownfield Spending Unknown](#)
[Allegheny County Park to Add 65 Acres of Brownfield Land](#)
[2006 Deer Harvest Grows](#)
[DEP Merges Program to Remove Mercury Switches From Cars](#)
[Dentist Reduces Waste, Radiation Exposure](#)
[Wilds Initiative Aims to Boost Parks' Appeal](#)
[Eco-Conscious Consumers Pay to Ease Global Warming Guilt](#)
[Special Event Affects Water Birds](#)
[Many Reasons to Stay Home From Hunt](#)
[Former Senator Kury Offers Perspective on Today's Harrisburg](#)
[Minor Earthquake Near Reading](#)
[MSHA Chief Says Sago Answers Lacking](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Innovative Agricultural Proposal Gathers Momentum](#)
[Biologists Hope to Increase Paddle Fish Population](#)
[Philadelphia Water Department Program Praised](#)
[Perkiomen Watershed Group Wants You to Love Your Stormwater](#)
[Editorial: Developing the Waterfront](#)
[Editorial Page: Share Views on Delaware Waterfront](#)
[Patience Thin Over Dredging, Rendell Says](#)
[Hazleton Will Use River Dredge to Fill in Mines](#)
[Auction to Benefit Fisherman's Cove Preservation](#)

Regulations

The Public Utility Commission published the final rulemaking covering [net metering](#) and [interconnection standards](#) under the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards. The Fish and Boat Commission published notice of [proposed changes to the list of Class A Wild Trout Waters](#).

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – December 16, 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 notice correcting an earlier final guidance document](#) on continuous air monitoring as well as a final policy on treatment of groundwater.

Final: DEP ID: 274-0300-001 Continuous Source Monitoring Manual, Revision No. 8 This Manual, referenced in 25 Pa. Code § 139.102 (relating to references), contains design specifications, performance specifications, performance test procedures, data storage and reporting requirements, quality assurance criteria and administrative procedures for requesting Department approval of continuous source monitoring systems required under the Department's rules and regulations.

Final: DEP ID: *274-0300-005 Applicability Determination for Continuous Source Monitoring Manual Revision No. 8 *Please Note: The previous version of this guidance entitled "Applicability Determination for Continuous Source Monitoring Manual Revision No. 7" was assigned the following identification number: #274-0300-004. This Manual outlines the procedures and schedule to be utilized by source owners and operators to comply with the requirements of 25 Pa. Code § 139.102(3) (relating to references), which are identified and described in the Department's Continuous Source Monitoring Manual-- Revision No. 8 (Manual) (DEP ID #274-0300-001).

Final: DEP ID: 383-2100-109 Treatment of Groundwater Under the Direct Influence of Surface Water (GUDI) Sources at Noncommunity Water Systems and Small Community Water Systems. This guidance establishes alternate disinfection treatment design standards that may be used by noncommunity water systems and small community water systems that provide treatment of groundwater under the direct influence of surface water (GUDI) sources.

[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](#)

- [New No-Cost Internet Training Courses Offered](#)
- **December 19** – **CANCELLED**. [Environmental Quality Board meeting](#).
- **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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