

-PA ——— Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

December 24, 2007

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

Happy Holidays From Crisci Associates! Holiday Schedule

Have a wonderful holiday season from everyone here at Crisci Associates-- Tony Crisci, John Kulik, David Hess, Lauren Barr and Donna Gilder!

Please note we have server maintenance scheduled during the holidays, so email service may be interrupted from time to time.

The next *PA Environment Digest* will be published on time on December 31.

The Christmas spirit is alive and well in the Capitol thanks to the [Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers](#) and senior citizen volunteers who donated the tree and provided the decorations for the Capitol Christmas tree.



Pennsylvania is home to over 2,000 Christmas tree farms that produce 1.7 million cut trees and contribute \$13.9 million to the state's economy annually.

Video Blog: [Watch the Placement, Decoration of the Capitol Christmas Tree](#)

Watershed, Environmental Groups Need Your Help, Here Are Some Examples

The [Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team](#), a program of the non-profit Conemaugh Valley Conservancy Inc., and [Natural Biodiversity](#) are seeking help this holiday season like many non-profit environmental groups.

Funding priorities have changed at the state and national level, so budgets have been slashed for environment, education, health and human services. This leaves more of the responsibility on us – to tend to our shared backyard garden, our home, our streams, and our quality of life.



You can help by supporting groups like the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team and Natural Biodiversity we profile here. But other nonprofit groups need your help as well: watershed groups, the [PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers](#), the [Chesapeake Bay](#)

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[Foundation](#), [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#), the [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#), [Pennsylvania Audubon](#) and many more.

To find watershed groups in your area to support, visit the [Watershed Directory webpage](#) from the PA Organization for Watersheds and River.

Profiles

The Stream Team and Natural Biodiversity programs were founded in 1999 in Western Pennsylvania out of public concern for conservation and preservation of our natural resources. Over the past eight years, these programs have continued to grow and strengthen, becoming leaders, models, and mentors in environmental education and remediation bringing over two million dollars to our local communities.

Both organizations reach over 100,000 people annually and have educated over 70,000 students and citizens from inception.

Natural Biodiversity focuses on controlling various invasive plant species that plague our local communities, and supports community engagement and education at each of its twenty public control demonstration sites. The group addresses the growing concerns of habitat loss by restoring beneficial native plant habitats to serve wildlife, communities, corporations, and schools.

One of the most important components of Natural Biodiversity is education through school programs, service learning, internships, citizen workshops, Kids' Patch online and Outdoor Heritage; all of which instill environmental stewardship within the hearts, minds, and souls of our citizens including our most precious resource, children, who can make a positive difference in everyone's future.

Additionally, Natural Biodiversity plays an intricate role in engaging over 600 citizens in environmental action within local communities through several volunteer opportunities including: National Wildlife Federation Habitat Stewards, Weed Whackers, Weed Watchers, and Streambank Stewards. With these and many other programs, Natural Biodiversity strives to foster increased awareness and meaningful environmental improvement.

The Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team focuses on stream restoration, through sampling, monitoring, remediation projects, and environmental education in schools and communities. River and stream sampling activities coordinated by the Stream Team provide critical baseline and evaluation data for watershed associations, conservation districts, and other environmental partners to document the need for and impact of restoration efforts.

Together with these partners, the Stream Team seeks to reduce the devastation associated with decades of industrial degradation. Additionally, the Stream Team inspires the next generation of environmental stewards and encourages a proactive conservation ethic through its education and outreach program, which includes two Trout in the Classroom projects, Outdoor Heritage, outdoor discovery workshops, and numerous "hands-on" activities in our schools.

The Stream Team has been acknowledged as a model program and has been duplicated by similar groups throughout the Commonwealth.

Natural Biodiversity and the Stream Team are working together to organize [Outdoor Heritage 2008](#). April is Outdoor Heritage Month, and will feature a multitude of community initiatives, ranging from family Earth Day events to service-oriented National Wildlife Week habitat plantings. Many area partners will be involved, including conservation districts, public officials, watershed associations, and more.

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Outdoor Heritage, the hands-on education event for area schools, with a focus on grades 3 - 9, will take place April 24 and 25 at Summer's Best Two Weeks, Quemahoning Lake, Somerset County. Through this event, students, educators and schools will become empowered to utilize the sciences and other disciplines to explore developing solutions to some of the most pressing environmental challenges of the day.

Despite Natural Biodiversity's and the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team's excellent track records, fiscal responsibility, and momentum within their programs, these local collaborative efforts are in urgent need of your financial support!

By donating to Natural Biodiversity and the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team you will be supporting your local communities, and most importantly, you will be supporting education and outreach activities that instill our children with a sense of awe and wonder for natural resources, laying the groundwork for a new generation of stewardship.

To inquire about making a donation or volunteering your time with these groups, please call 814-532-5049.

For more information, contact Kristin Sewak, Natural Biodiversity, by sending email to: ksewak@naturalbiodiversity.org or Melissa Reckner, Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team, by sending email to: mreckner@kcstreamteam.org.

Links: [PA Senior Environment Corps Ending Due to Lack of Funding](#)
[Environmental Groups Ask for Restoration of Growing Greener Fund](#)
[Final Budget Restores Some Environmental Funding Cuts, Not Big Ones](#)
[Environmental Funding Needs Highlighted by Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#)
[More Environmental Groups Express Concern About Environmental Funding](#)
[Restore \\$100 Million in Cuts/Diversions from Environmental Programs](#)
[Appropriations Committees Hear of Environmental Funding Challenges](#)
[Groups Concerned About State Environmental Funding, Federal Cuts Hurt States](#)
[Environmental Bond Bill Passes, Existing Environmental Funding Reallocated](#)
[DEP Budget Cuts "Run Deep," Push is On for Growing Greener II](#)

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Spotlight

- Water Quality Monitoring, A Vital Link to Restoration, *By Paul O. Swartz, Executive Director, Susquehanna River Basin Commission*

Feature

- Persistence and Dedication Equal Success – REAP Farm Conservation Tax Credit Program, *By Kelly Donaldson, Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

Grants & Awards

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

On the Hill

Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to Harrisburg to open the 2008 session briefly on January 1 and return to voting session January 14.

You can watch the [Senate Floor Session](#) and [House Floor Session](#) live online.

On the Senate/House Agenda

The Senate and House floor Calendars for January—

Calendars

House (January 1): [House Resolution 506](#) (George-D-Clearfield) directing DEP and the PUC to evaluate measures to manage the transition from electricity price caps and to minimize the impact on residential customers.

Senate (January 14): [Senate Bill 497](#) (Robbins-R-Mercer) limiting the liability of landowners making property available for recreational purposes.

On the Governor’s Desk

Gov. Rendell took action on these bills this week—

Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund: [Senate Bill 1100](#) (Pileggi-R-Delaware) that would provide a dedicated source of funding for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program was signed into law by Gov. Rendell and is now Act 77. (*See separate article.*)

The bill takes \$17 million from legislative accounts to fund the program for the remainder of this fiscal year and earmarks \$40 million in revenues from the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax annually through fiscal year 2010-11.

Environmental Covenants: [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley-R-Chester), establishing uniform environmental covenants for brownfield sites was signed into law as Act 68.

Bills Introduced

Gas/Energy Prices: [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate high gas and energy prices.

Switch Grass Incentives: [Special Session Senate Bill 41](#) (Waugh-R-York) establishing incentives to plant and harvest switch grass to produce cellulosic ethanol.

Gov. Rendell Restores Gov. Casey’s Funding Source for Hazardous Sites Cleanup



Gov. Rendell this week signed Senate Bill 1100 into law, restoring the Capital Stock and Franchise business tax as the dedicated source of funding for Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program as originally proposed by Gov. Casey in 1988.

[Senate Bill 1100](#) (Pileggi-R-Delaware) provides \$17 million for the Hazardous Sites Program for the remainder of this year from the legislative accounts of all four Senate and House Caucuses. It also earmarks \$40 million out of the state Capital Stock and Franchise Tax for the following three fiscal years. The bill does not affect the commitment to phase out this tax by the end of 2010.

This is the third Hazardous Sites Program funding proposal passed overwhelmingly by the Senate in the last two years. The bill restores the original funding source for the program Gov. Casey created in 1988. The program used this business tax as the primary source of funding from 1988 to 2002.

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This agreement ended the diversion of \$50 million from the Environmental Stewardship Fund (the Growing Greener I watershed protection and other programs) over the last two fiscal years to fund the Hazardous Sites Program.

Funding the Hazardous Sites Program was left undone as part of the July budget settlement when an agreement between Gov. Rendell and the Senate to fund the program using excess monies in DCNR's Keystone Parks, Recreation and Conservation Fund was opposed in the House.

As part of the final budget agreement in July, Gov. Rendell, the House and Senate agreed to find a funding solution for the Hazardous Sites Program before the end of the year, which they achieved.

As part of the mid-year budget briefing last week, Budget Secretary Michael Masch predicted the current fiscal year would end with a \$117 million surplus and that the Rendell Administration would ask for a mid-year \$40 million in supplemental funding, over and above the surplus, for the departments of Education and Public Welfare to support their programs.

The Governor said he signed the bill because Pennsylvania cannot afford to delay the continuation of the program, especially when there are many sites that could pose significant health risks to residents if they are not remediated.

However, the Governor said he signed the bill reluctantly.

"First, it does nothing to provide a stable, dedicated source of funds for hazardous site cleanup for the long term," the Governor wrote. "It is a short term fix, and in a few years' time we will face the exact same funding shortfall we have struggled with for almost my entire 5 years in office.

"I have proposed numerous methods to provide a dedicated source of funds for this program over the past several years, including my original 2004 proposal to use fees on toxic waste emissions and trash disposal. My proposals would have ensured a permanent, reliable and dedicated revenue stream for this critical program.

"Second, SB1100 is bad legislation because it seeks to spend money outside of the annual budget process without providing new revenues to cover the new spending. In my years as Governor, I have worked to assure that spending decisions are made in the context of the entire budget. If revenue is limited to only existing sources, then a decision to spend in one area is by definition a decision to cut somewhere else," he said.

NewsClips: [Editorial: Find Funding for Hazardous Sites](#)
[Editorial: Toxic Cleanup Fund Deserves Fair Share](#)

New Law Promotes Brownfields Cleanup, Reuse in Pennsylvania

Gov. Rendell this week signed [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley-R-Chester), establishing uniform environmental covenants for brownfield sites, into law as Act 68.

"Although other important environmental issues took the spotlight in this legislative session, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council wants to recognize and express our appreciation to Rep. Carole Rubley, members of the General Assembly and the Governor for enactment of legislation to further advance brownfield remediation in Pennsylvania," said Brian Hill, President and CEO of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

"Our state is already nationally recognized as a leader in brownfield redevelopment; Act 68 provides greater certainty to these efforts by addressing common

law problems associated with land use agreements for those sites. This new law will also strengthen the enforceability of environmental cleanup agreements, and help the Department of Environmental Protection ensure that such agreements contain sufficient health protections for Pennsylvanians.

“We commend Rep. Rubley for her leadership on this issue that is of critical importance to our communities and our environment.”

New Federal Energy Bill Includes Mandate for Biofuels, Energy Efficiency Standards

The federal energy bill signed into law this week requires a six-fold increase in the use of ethanol in gasoline, increases fuel efficiency standards for vehicles, sets energy efficiency standards for appliances, offers tax incentives for purchasing hybrid vehicles, phases out the use of incandescent light bulbs in favor of fluorescent and encourages green building construction.

“The new federal energy bill is a great Christmas present for everyone concerned about global warming and promoting our energy independence,” said Brian Hill, President and CEO of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council. “Increasing the use of biofuels and setting aggressive fuel efficiency standards for vehicles were two key strategies recommended in PEC’s [Climate Roadmap for Pennsylvania](#) in June.

“To meet our goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2025 in Pennsylvania, we still need to take action on nearly 40 recommendations made in the Roadmap in the areas of renewable energy, agriculture, land use, forestry, carbon sequestration and energy efficiency.

“We congratulate and thank all of the federal legislators from Pennsylvania and around the country who supported the Energy Bill.

“There is, however, still work to be done in Pennsylvania. Final action is expected on state legislation in January sponsored by Rep. Greg Vitali (D-Delaware) and Sen. Ted Erickson (R-Delaware) that requires Pennsylvania to develop a Climate Change Action plan. This is a logical follow up to the federal energy bill today.”

NewsClips: [Bush Signs Auto Fuel Economy Bill](#)
[Energy Bill Boosts Fuel-Economy Standards](#)
[Energy Bill to Save Billions](#)
[Energy Bill Fact Sheet](#)
[Platts Calls Fuel Efficiency Law a Great Win for Country](#)
[Editorial: Good Initial Step on Energy](#)

Link: [PEC Unveils Stakeholder-Drive Climate Change Roadmap](#)

Joint Conservation Committee Environmental Synopsis Now Online

The December issue of the [Environmental Synopsis](#) published by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) highlights the economic contributions of Pennsylvania’s Christmas tree growers to the state.

The Synopsis articles also cover the costs of limiting greenhouse gases, checking water well quality, a critique of Maryland’s Smart Growth Law and how green are hybrid vehicles.

The next Environmental Issues Forum sponsored by the Joint Committee will be held January 14 and will feature a presentation by Kathleen Cowles Paul, Director of the PA Center for Environmental Education.

Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) serves as Chair of the Joint Committee and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) service as Vice-Chair.

Other News

USDA Invites Sign-Up for \$20 Million in Conservation Innovation Grants

Natural Resources Conservation Service Chief Arlen Lancaster this week invited project sponsors to reply to the request for proposals for [Conservation Innovation Grants](#) in 2008.

Proposals are due February 20.

The CIG program is designed to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies.

"CIG enables NRCS to work with other public and private entities to accelerate transfer and adoption of promising technologies and conservation approaches to address some of the Nation's most pressing natural resource concerns," said Lancaster. "CIG benefits agricultural producers by providing more options for environmental enhancement."

For fiscal year 2008, up to \$20 million is available for the National CIG competition. Funds for single- or multi-year projects, not to exceed three years, will be awarded through a nationwide competitive grants process with applications accepted from all 50 States, the Caribbean Area (Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands) and the Pacific Basin Area (Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) from all eligible non-federal government or non-government organizations or individuals, including federally recognized tribes.

There are three CIG categories available in FY 2008:

- **Natural Resource Concerns Category**- Up to \$10 million available for proposals addressing one or more of the CIG natural resource concerns.
- **Technology Category**- Up to \$5 million available for proposals addressing one or more of the CIG technology categories.
- **Chesapeake Bay Watershed Category**- Up to \$5 million available for proposals addressing one or more of the CIG natural resource concerns in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will be accepting and reviewing the applications for this category. For more information, visit the [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Category webpage](#).

Applicants should explain how large a geographic area that the project would benefit. Projects may be watershed-based, regional, multi-State, or nationwide in scope. Applications should describe the use of innovative technologies or approaches, or both, to address a natural resource conservation concern(s).

Funding for CIG is made available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. All proposed CIG projects must involve EQIP-eligible producers. CIG funds that are used to provide direct or indirect payments to individuals or entities to implement structural, vegetative or management practices are subject to the \$450,000 EQIP payment limitation.

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CIG is not a research program, but rather a tool to stimulate the adoption of conservation approaches or technologies that have been studied sufficiently to indicate a high likelihood of success, and are likely candidates for eventual technology transfer.

CIG will fund projects targeting innovative on-the-ground conservation, including pilot projects and field demonstrations. Technologies and approaches that are commonly used in the geographic area covered by the application, and which are eligible for funding through EQIP, are not eligible for funding through CIG. Proposed projects must conform to the description of innovative conservation projects or activities published in the Announcement of Program Funding.

CIG funds pilot projects and conservation field trials that can last from one to three years. Grants for approved projects cannot exceed 50 percent of the total project cost. The federal contribution for a single project cannot exceed \$1 million. At least 50 percent of the total cost of the project must come from non-Federal matching funds (cash and in-kind contributions) provided by the grantee.

While NRCS will provide technical oversight for each project receiving an award, the grantee is responsible for providing the technical assistance required to successfully complete the project.

Applications should be sent to: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Conservation Innovation Grants Program; Financial Assistance Programs Division, Room 5239-S; 1400 Independence Ave, SW.; Washington, DC 20250.

For more information, visit the [Conservation Innovation Grants webpage](#).

Center for Watershed Protection Releases 2 More Restoration Manuals



In an effort to ensure that every community is equipped with the tools it needs to get started in watershed restoration, the [Center for Watershed Protection](#) is making its first two manuals of the Urban Subwatershed Restoration Manual Series available for free download.

Manual 1, An Integrated Framework to Restore Small Urban Watersheds, examines the basic concepts and techniques of urban watershed restoration, and sets forth the overall framework used to evaluate subwatershed restoration potential.

The second manual, Methods to Develop Restoration Plans for Small Urban Watersheds, outlines a practical, step-by-step approach to develop, adopt and implement a subwatershed plan in your community.

Manuals 1 and 2, released in 2005, accompany the latest manual of the series released this summer - Urban Stormwater Retrofit Practices. This 400+ page guidance is also available as a free download on the Center website.

Download these manuals by visiting the [Urban Subwatershed Restoration Manual Series website](#).

Kettle Run Farm Biodiversity Area Protected in Centre County

[ClearWater Conservancy](#) this week signed a conservation easement donated by landowner, Katherine L. Alden, protecting 112 acres of her environmentally important property in Penn Township, Centre County.

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A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a private landowner and a qualified organization, such as a land trust, that protects natural, cultural, and/or historic resources in perpetuity.

A conservation easement allows a landowner to retain ownership and use of his or her property while limiting certain uses that may be harmful to the resources being protected.

This conservation easement protects much of the Kettle Run Farm Biological Diversity Area, designated by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in the [Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory](#) 2002. The Biodiversity Area possesses multiple habitat types including old field, hemlock – northern hardwood forest, wetland, and riparian.

Of notable significance, one of the early-successional meadows contains lupine, a nitrogen-fixing purple-blue wildflower that is a larval host to Frosted Elfin butterflies, a globally rare species. Lupine is rare or uncommon in the state of Pennsylvania.

ClearWater Conservancy, working with Mrs. Alden, will develop a plan to ensure the continued presence of lupine on the property.

The area of the property covered by the conservation easement also contains 2,600 feet of Kettle Run and springs and seeps that feed it. Kettle Run enters Penns Creek (a Cold Water Fishery) below Zerby Gap. The southern border of the property has a 2,871-foot common forest boundary with Bald Eagle State Forest.

The protection of the property helps to maintain the integrity of core forest in this area.

Attorney Amos Goodall of Goodall and Yurchak, P.C., Attorneys at Law, David Sweetland and Mac Blizzard of Sweetland Engineering and Associates, Inc. and William C. Brusse P.G. generously donated many hours of their service to make this easement a reality.

ClearWater Conservancy has the responsibility to monitor and protect the area of the property covered by the conservation easement, and we thank Mrs. Alden for making a generous contribution to our Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund that ensures the capacity of ClearWater to protect the property in perpetuity.

Pennsylvania Wild Resources Symposium February 28

The Western PA Nature Center Roundtable is sponsoring the [Pennsylvania Wild Resources Symposium](#) on February 28 at the [Powdermill Nature Reserve](#) in Allegheny County.

Broaden your knowledge of Pennsylvania's native flora and fauna, learn about important research and protection programs, meet environmental education resource providers in western Pennsylvania, and inspire students to become more environmentally literate.

Sessions include: integrating herpetology into the classroom, honey bees and colony collapse disorder, restoring American Chestnut trees and on the trail of the Indiana bat.

The Symposium is sponsored by the Western PA Nature Center Roundtable, which includes: [Powdermill Nature Reserve](#), [Frick Environmental Center](#), [McKeever Environmental Education Center](#), [Rachel Carson Homestead Association](#), [Jennings Environmental Education Center](#), [Independence Marsh Foundation, Inc.](#) and the [Lutherlyn Environmental Education Program](#).

For more information, visit the [Pennsylvania Wild Resources Symposium webpage](#).

2008 International Urban Parks Conference in Pittsburgh September 21-23

The [Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy](#) is proud to be the local host for the 2008 International Urban Parks Conference, [Body and Soul: Parks and the Health of Great Cities](#), coming to Pittsburgh September 21 - 23.

This conference will put Pittsburgh's parks system on an international stage, with parks leaders and advocates from across the globe touring parks and the city during Pittsburgh's 250th birthday celebration.

Conference attendees will have the opportunity to:

- Meet innovators from around the world with a vision of urban parks as centers of health and well-being for people of all ages;
- Hear inspiring keynote addresses from environmentalist and philanthropist Teresa Heinz, human rights advocate Luis Garden Acosta, and Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder author Richard Louv;
- Participate in a series of mobile workshops in Pittsburgh's parks and take home practical information about management and restoration practices; and
- See how Pittsburgh is restoring its parks, reclaiming its rivers, and why it's been named the Greenest City in America.

Take advantage of a wide range of pre-conference activities including tours to Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater and the Olmsted-designed model industrial town, Vandergrift.

Body and Soul is a presentation of the City Parks Alliance, the National Association for Olmsted Parks, the City of Pittsburgh, and the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.

To learn more, visit the [2008 International Urban Parks Conference webpage](#).

Dept. of Agriculture Announces New Invasive Species Council Website

Producers and consumers can learn how Pennsylvania is protecting against invasive plants, animals and insects by logging on to the new [Invasive Species Council website](#), the Department of Agriculture announced.

“Invasive species can damage our state’s natural resources and economy,” said Secretary Dennis Wolff. “This new website will help citizens learn about invasive plant and animal species, and keep up-to-date on how the council is working to protect public health and safety.”

Since Gov. Rendell created the Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council in 2004, the inter-agency panel has worked cooperatively to develop and implement invasive species management plans for the Commonwealth.

Chaired by Secretary Wolff, the council is made up of agency heads responsible for the conservation of agriculture and natural resources, and the protection of public health. The council also includes public members representing agriculture and natural resource organizations, and educational institutions conducting invasive species research and outreach.

Visitors to the 2008 Pennsylvania Farm Show, scheduled for January 5-12, can learn more about the Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council by stopping at the Department of Agriculture exhibit in the Main Hall of the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex & Expo Center.

For more information on the [Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council](http://www.pennsylvania.gov/invasive-species-council), contact Melissa Bravo at 717-787-7204 or send email to: mbravo@state.pa.us

DCNR Releases Forest Pest, Disease Conditions Report for 2007

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources released its annual Pest Condition Report for 2007 detailing which areas of Pennsylvania are affected by pests like the Hemlock woolly adelgid, emerald ash borer and gypsy moths.

DCNR annually surveys about 17 million acres of public and private forestlands to determine the impact of forests pests throughout the Commonwealth.

The Report found the Hemlock woolly adelgid in 47 counties affecting 6,183 acres across the state; two more counties than last year.

The emerald ash borer was detected for the first time in Pennsylvania during 2007 in parts Allegheny and Butler counties. A quarantine area has been established for wood leaving those counties plus Beaver and Lawrence counties.

Gypsy moth defoliation increased in 2007 to a total of 681,435 acres of woodlands across the state. A total of 64,515 acres were sprayed by the state and counties to control gypsy moths in 20 counties.

The [2007 Pest Condition Report](#) is available online.

For more information on forest pests and diseases, visit [DCNR's Forest Health webpage](#).

Game Commission Proposes Rule to Create New Permit to Prevent Deer Damage

The Game Commission this week [published a proposed regulation](#) creating the Agricultural Depredation Permit Program to help limit deer browsing damage in agricultural areas.

The regulation implements the provisions of House Bill 881.

The proposal allows certain landowners to apply for permits for hunting deer that are causing agricultural crop damage. Landowners may also issue subpermits to professional hunters.

Comments on the proposed rule are due January 25.

PUC Reports Fewer Households Without Utility Service This Winter



Just as the state recovers from a weekend winter storm, the Public Utility Commission this week released the results of its annual Cold Weather Survey, which showed that about 13,762 households will enter the winter season without heat-related utility service compared to 16,051 this time last year.

"Winter is packing a hit this year as much of the state has already battled periods of colder-than-normal temperatures and then last weekend's mix of snow, sleet and freezing rain," said Commission

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Chairman Wendell F. Holland. "And thousands of our neighbors are regularly waging that battle without the use of their central-heating system because their electric or natural gas service has been terminated. While I am pleased to see the numbers decrease again this year, I urge all consumers who are without service to take action today to get help to restore and maintain service before winter's grip on the state becomes even more firm."

The PUC urges consumers without utility service to know their rights and obtain information about programs available to help them restore and maintain utility service. Consumers with a seriously ill resident in the household or a protection from abuse order may have additional options for service restoration.

Consumers should call their utility first to make arrangements to pay their bill. If they are unable to reach an agreement with the utility, the PUC may be able to provide assistance. The PUC can be reached toll-free at 1-800-692-7380.

Every December, the PUC releases its cold weather survey results, which assess the number of households without heat-related service entering the winter months. As part of the survey, the PUC requires natural gas and electric utilities to check residential properties where service has been shut off. Contact is attempted through both telephone calls and in-person visits to the homes.

Homes using potentially unsafe heating sources also are counted because the home is not relying on a central heating system. According to the National Fire Protection Association, potentially unsafe sources of heat include kerosene heaters, kitchen stoves or ovens, electric space heaters, fireplaces and connecting extension cords to neighbors' homes.

An additional 3,095 residences are using potentially unsafe heating sources, bringing the total homes not using a central heating system to 16,857, according to the 2007 survey. The total number was 19,745 in 2006.

The 2007 survey results also show that as of December 15:

- 3,815 residential households remain without electric service; 11,468 residences where service was terminated now appear to be vacant; and 77 households are heating with potentially unsafe heating sources. The total electric residences without safe heating are 3,892;
- 9,947 residential households that heat with natural gas are without service; 5,826 residences where service was terminated now appear to be vacant; and 3,018 households are heating with potentially unsafe heating sources. The total natural gas residences without safe heating are 12,965; and
- PGW reported that 5,552 households that heat with natural gas are without service - the highest number of all utilities. About 7,043 or 42 percent of the total off accounts that have no service live in the Philadelphia area.

In a December 11 letter sent to electric and natural gas utilities under its jurisdiction, the PUC asked the utilities to join the PUC in reaching out and educating consumers.

The Commission's "[Prepare Now](#)" outreach campaign appeals to consumers on limited or fixed incomes to call their utility about special programs such as Customer Assistance Programs and Low Income Usage Reduction Programs to help heat their homes and pay their energy bills. The letter also stresses the importance of the [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#) and the impact the program has on helping low-income consumers restore and maintain service.

Consumers on limited or fixed incomes should call their utility about special programs such as CAPs and LIURP to help heat their homes and pay their energy bills. Every major utility offers a CAP, under which qualifying low-income customers pay discounted bills. Qualification in the CAP program is based on household size and gross household income. LIURP helps consumers lower the amount of electricity or natural gas used each month. The company may install energy saving features in your home to help reduce bills.

Consumers should call their utility to inquire about such programs. If a consumer continues to have questions, they should then call the PUC toll-free at 1-800-692-7380.

In addition, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program may have funds available to help eligible customers have service restored. For more information, please contact your local County Assistance Office or contact the LIHEAP hotline at 1-866-857-7095. An informational brochure also is available.

NewsClip: [Region Homes Without Heat Up in 07](#)
[Op-Ed: How to Better Stay Warm This Winter – Shipley](#)

First Shipment of 1.5 Million Gallons of Biodiesel Made By Lake Erie Biofuels

[Lake Erie Biofuels](#) has achieved a milestone in its development by completing the loading of the Clipper Tobago with its first major shipment of biodiesel for export out of the Port of Erie.

Lake Erie Biofuels is the largest biodiesel producer in the Commonwealth with an annual capacity of 45 million gallons, and was founded by Erie entrepreneur Samuel “Pat” Black III in 2005.

This loading also represents a first in Great Lakes shipping history.

“Lake Erie Biofuels’ shipment of biofuel onboard the Clipper Tobago represents the first marine export of this new commodity from the Great Lakes through the Seaway,” said Terry Johnson, Jr., Administrator of the Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation. “I heartily congratulate Lake Erie Biofuels for their leadership role in this fast-growing, alternate energy field and eagerly look forward to handling many more exports in 2008 through this vital, binational waterway.”

PPG Sets Aggressive Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Goals



As part of its continued commitment to sustainable practices, [PPG Industries](#) has announced it has set a goal to reduce its total energy intensity by 25 percent from 2006 to 2016 and its total global greenhouse gas emissions by 10 percent from 2006 to 2011.

PPG previously committed to reducing its GHG emission intensity from sources in the United States by 18 percent by 2012 from a 2002 baseline. It achieved this mark in 2006, six years earlier than the projected date.

In addition to taking action to reduce emissions, PPG continues to improve its energy efficiency. The company has reduced its energy use by just over 1 percent annually for the last five years, saving about \$40 million overall, and meeting its new energy savings goal would realize a savings of \$15 to \$20 million a year at today's energy prices.

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Throughout its operations, PPG actively pursues initiatives that support regional sourcing, reduce the environmental impact of packaging, make products easier to recycle or dispose of, and encourage the use of alternative energy.

In addition to reducing its own energy-related costs and impacts, PPG makes products that help commercial builders and homeowners to conserve energy. PPG EcoLogical Building Solutions, a line of environmentally-progressive building products, includes a wide range of energy-efficient coated and tinted glasses for commercial and residential construction as well as Energy Star- and volatile organic compound-compliant, high-performance coatings and paints.

For example, Solarban 70XL glass by PPG can help cut energy use and significantly reduce a building's energy-related carbon dioxide emissions. Software provided by the U.S. Department of Energy showed the use of Solarban 70XL glass for dual-pane, tinted glass in a standard, window-walled, eight-story office building could reduce annual CO2 emissions by more than 500 tons, or more than 20,000 tons over the building's life cycle – equivalent to removing more than 4,000 passenger cars from the road each year.

Duranar SPF coatings by PPG help buildings weather the elements, brightening metal roofs and increasing reflection of the sun's infrared radiation. The IR reflection helps cool the building, in turn reducing air conditioning costs for commercial and residential construction and increasing comfort levels for building occupants. Duranar SPF coatings meet [Energy Star](#) reflective roof requirements.

In support of its operational and product efforts, PPG is active in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [Climate Leaders program](#) and was recently recognized by the EPA for setting new GHG emission reduction goals.

PPG is also an Energy Star Partner, supporting the joint program of the EPA and DOE by using energy-management systems to measure energy utilization throughout its processes and setting specific goals and action plans to meet energy-reduction goals. In addition, PPG is a member of the Alliance to Save Energy, a national coalition of companies that promotes energy efficiency worldwide to achieve a healthier economy, a cleaner environment and greater energy security.

Pittsburgh-based PPG is a global supplier of paints, coatings, chemicals, optical products, specialty materials, glass and fiber glass. The company employs more than 34,000 people and has 125 manufacturing facilities and equity affiliates in more than 25 countries.

EPA Denies Waiver for California Vehicle Standards, PA Joins Lawsuit

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week denied a petition from California to approve vehicle emission standards that reduce greenhouse gas emissions prompting the Rendell Administration to join other states in a lawsuit to overturn the decision.

Sen. Roger Madigan (R-Bradford), Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, and Senator Mary Jo White (R-Venango), Chairman of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee issued a statement on the ruling saying--

"We applaud the decision by the EPA to deny California's waiver request. This is a first -- but very significant -- step in stopping a potentially costly and unnecessary vehicle standard from being imposed upon Pennsylvania motorists.

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"Last session, when the Rendell Administration circumvented the General Assembly and ceded authority of our vehicle emission standards to California, we raised objections over the fact that Pennsylvania motorists would be subjected to the decisions of an unelected, unaccountable board situated in California. That concern was immediately realized upon California's formal request of the federal government to regulate carbon dioxide emissions – an emission for which there is no universally recognized standard and one that is not necessary to protect the ambient air quality of our citizens.

"The decision by the EPA recognizes the significant fuel efficiency standards signed into law by President Bush, which will lead to significant emission reductions of both ozone-causing pollutants as well as carbon dioxide. The EPA appropriately recognized the wisdom of avoiding a patchwork of state standards to govern vehicle emissions.

"While Pennsylvania's vehicle emission standards are still inappropriately linked to those of California, the decision to deny the waiver request is nonetheless a significant victory for Pennsylvania's motorists and economy."

The Rendell Administration said EPA's denial does not affect the smog-related provisions Pennsylvania's Clean Vehicles Program because EPA has already approved California's similar standards. Under the program and starting with model year 2008, new cars and light trucks sold, titled and registered in Pennsylvania must be certified by the California Air Resources Board.

"We will not stand by and accept this short-sighted decision," said Gov. Rendell. "Now that American automakers must begin increasing the fuel economy of their vehicles, we have an opportunity to implement already established technology to control the greenhouse gas emissions that are threatening our planet and people. This technology is already being used in other nations, so it's time that American consumers benefit from it, as well."

The Rendell Administration announced it would join other states in a lawsuit seeking to reverse EPA's decision on the California car waiver.

NewsClips: [PA, NJ Join Suit Over EPA California Car Ruling](#)
[EPA Ruling Puts California in Bind](#)
[Editorial: California Car Emission Rules](#)

Bayer Brings International Environment and Art Competition to Pittsburgh

In an effort to help prepare today's students to become tomorrow's environmental stewards, Bayer Corporation and the [United Nations Environment Programme's](#) North American Regional Office this week announced a new [World Environment Day](#) partnership and launched the [International Children's Painting Competition](#) in Pittsburgh area schools.

The International Children's Painting Competition invites elementary and middle school students ages six to 14 from around the world to learn more about the environment and express that knowledge creatively through art.

The deadline for submissions is January 15.

The ICPC is a signature program of UNEP's annual World Environment Day activities. Established by UNEP in 1972, World Environment Day is celebrated each year on June 5 in a different global host city. The theme of World Environment Day and the International Children's Painting Competition also changes each year.

This year's theme is Climate Change: Actions We Can Take Now.

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This partnership with UNEP RONA and the ICPC also marks the newest local programming component of Bayer's national award-winning Making Science Make Sense initiative which advances science literacy across the United States through inquiry-based, hands-on science learning, employee volunteerism and public education.

"With this new partnership and by introducing the International Children's Painting Competition in our area schools, our goal is to help today's students make the important connection between science literacy and the environment, while reinforcing the notion that everyone has a responsibility when it comes to environmental and climate protection," explained Dr. Attila Molnar, President and CEO, Bayer Corporation.

Elisabeth Guilbaud-Cox, Deputy Director of UNEP's Regional Office for North America, added, "We are extremely proud and excited to be working with Bayer here in North America and commend the company for supporting an out-of-the-box approach to traditional science education that uses the arts as a way to foster the next generation of environmentalists."

The ICPC is open to all elementary and middle school students ages six to 14. Artworks must be done on either letter or legal size paper and can be done using crayons, colored pencils, watercolors, oils, etc. The style is free.

For complete entry rules and conditions, please visit the [Making Science Make Sense webpage](#).

First place winners are selected from each UNEP region including Africa; Asia and the Pacific; West Asia; Europe; Latin America and the Caribbean; and, North America. There are cash prizes involved and these winners are awarded with a fully-paid trip for themselves and their chaperones to the main WED celebrations on June 5, 2008.

This year those celebrations will take place in Wellington, New Zealand. In addition, other winners from the six UNEP regions are celebrated at special World Environment festivities held in the regional host cities.

All regional winners will be announced on Earth Day, April 22.

Making Science Make Sense is Bayer's company-wide initiative that advances science literacy through hands-on, inquiry-based science learning, employee volunteerism and public education. Currently, Bayer's Pittsburgh site is one of 12 Bayer sites around the country that operate local MSMS programs, which together feature a national volunteer corps of more than 1,000 employees.

In Pittsburgh, more than 150 employee-volunteers take an active role in improving science education in local schools through the Bayer Association for Science in Communities. Its goals are to spark and nurture children's natural curiosity, and cultivate a better understanding of what science is and what scientists do. Bayer also has transformed a portion of its 258-acre campus to be used as a Wildlife Habitat Council Corporate [Lands for Learning site](#). Local elementary school students are led by Bayer and Wildlife Habitat Council volunteers in hands-on, inquiry-based environmental learning activities.

In addition, more than a dozen years ago, Bayer created ASSET Inc. ([Achieving Student Success through Excellence in Teaching](#)), an independent non-profit organization to implement hands-on, inquiry-based science education reform.

Since July 2006, Gov. Edward Rendell has awarded \$23 million to ASSET to roll out its program to elementary schools across the state of Pennsylvania. Starting with five schools in two districts in 1994, today ASSET serves 160 school districts across 47 Pennsylvania counties and directly impacts more than 4,400 teachers and 180,000 students.

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More recently, the company in partnership with Carnegie Science Center's SciTech Initiative and Pittsburgh Filmmakers presents the [C.A.U.S.E. Challenge High School Film Festival](#). An environmental film festival, C.A.U.S.E. stands for "Creating Awareness and Understanding of our Surrounding Environment."

Link: [Bayer Plants Trees With Chartiers Valley Intermediate School Students](#)

DEP Awards \$20 Million in Recycling Program Development Grants

The Department of Environmental Protection this week awarded \$20 million in recycling development grants to 134 communities across the state.

"The more we recycle, the more natural resources we preserve and the better our environment's health," Gov. Rendell said. "And, it's important to recognize that these investments by the commonwealth come back to us in more jobs and a stronger economy."

In 2005, Pennsylvanians recycled a record 4.86 million tons of municipal waste, saving consumers and industries nearly \$263 million in disposal costs and providing businesses with materials valued at \$577 million.

The Commonwealth's recycling and reuse industry includes more than 3,200 establishments with total annual sales of \$18.4 billion. The industry employs more than 81,000 people and has an annual payroll of \$2.9 billion. Additionally, these businesses add more than \$305 million in taxes to the state treasury.

The Recycling Development and Implementation Grant Program reimburses local governments, councils of government, consortiums and solid waste authorities for the cost of municipal recycling and composting programs. Pennsylvania's recycling program, created under Act 101 of 1988, mandates recycling in the state's larger municipalities and requires counties to develop municipal waste management plans.

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

EPA Updates Regional Electronics Recycling Webpage

Region 3, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, has updated its [eCycling webpage](#) to provide comprehensive information regarding the end-of-life management of electronic products.

eCycling saves energy, prevents the emission of greenhouse gases, preserves landfill space, avoids seepage of toxic substances into groundwater, and through reuse of recycled materials, bypass the costly mining, and manufacturing processes.

In 2006, more than 14,400 tons of electronics were recycled in the region, the equivalent to preventing more than 8,800 metric tons of carbon from entering the environment.

Rendell Proclaims Coal Miners' Day, Comments on Mine Safety Legislation

Gov. Rendell recognized the contributions and sacrifices the state's coal miners have made to Pennsylvania during a ceremony this week marking December 19 as Coal Miner's Day and used the opportunity to comment on proposed deep mine safety legislation.

The legislation is a follow-up to recommendations made in the wake of the 2002 [Queecreek Mine Rescue](#) in Somerset County.

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The Governor said an agreement was reached between the administration, the legislature, labor unions and mining companies on key issues that will be incorporated into legislation intended to strengthen Pennsylvania's 130-year-old deep mine safety law.

Gov. Rendell's statement follows remarks by Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) last week when she announced she and Sen. Richard Kasunic (D-Somerset) hoped to have the 300-page deep mine safety bill done for consideration prior to the holiday, but they would be introducing it in January.

"It's important that we keep in context just what our coal miners do," said Gov. Rendell, noting the more than 51,000 mining fatalities that have occurred in Pennsylvania since 1870. "The number of mining deaths emphasizes the importance of coal mining safety.

"When the legislature gets back in January, new legislation strengthening Pennsylvania's mine safety law, which has not been updated since 1961, will be introduced. It is my hope that this legislation will be enacted swiftly. It is good and groundbreaking legislation because it establishes so many important things and puts the responsibility for mine safety where it belongs."

Among other things, the Governor said, the bill would make the mine owner or operator primarily responsible for safety at the mine, and would create a seven-member Mine Safety Board with the authority to write regulations, making it easier to implement 21st century safety technologies rather than be hampered by 19th century legislation.

The proposed bill would also enact more stringent requirements for verifying underground mine maps and for establishing barriers between new mines and abandoned mines. This provision would put into law a rule adopted in the wake of the 2002 Quecreek accident.

"It's important for our miners and their families to know that even while this legislation has been debated, the administration has taken some important steps to ensure the safety of our miners," said Gov. Rendell.

The Governor highlighted the following improvements made to Pennsylvania's mining operations since 2003:

- Requiring safety officials to review every mine permit application and say "No" if they think unsafe conditions may exist;
- Implementing stringent new requirements to validate and verify underground mine maps before new mining can take place;
- Increasing the distance between planned mining and abandoned mines from 200 to 500 feet to provide an extra measure of security so miners don't accidentally breach an abandoned mine pool, as happened at Quecreek;
- Replacing outdated equipment that was more than 30 years old with 48 new, self-contained breathing units at a cost of \$415,000 for use by underground mine rescue teams. The units are housed at three mine rescue stations Cambria, Fayette and Schuylkill counties; and
- Developing and implementing training for managing mine inundation, as well as continuing education programs for mining professionals, mine managers and mine inspectors.

This week's commemoration marked the 100th anniversary of Pennsylvania's deadliest mine accident. A dust and gas explosion in the Darr Mine in Westmoreland County on December 19, 1907, killed 239 miners.

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December 1907 is the deadliest month in United States mining history; 3,242 miners were killed in accidents that month, including 1,514 in Pennsylvania. Since 1870, the number of coal miners who have [died in Pennsylvania mines](#) totals 51,509.

NewsClip: [Legislators Appear Close to Passing Mine Safety Bill](#)

DEP Publishes Schedule of Board and Advisory Committee Meetings for 2008

The Department of Environmental Protection this week published a schedule of meetings by its boards and advisory committees for 2008.

[The schedule is available online.](#)

Apply Now for 2008 Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council Membership

The [Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council](#) is accepting applications for team membership for 2008.

The technical teams provide a forum for information exchange and technology transfer among states and other parties, and ultimately capture this value in ITRC documents, internet-based and classroom training courses, and other products. Current team members must reapply.

ITRC reaches out to diverse members of the environmental community and welcomes participants from state and federal agencies, industries, consultants, site owners, technology vendors, public interest groups, universities, and tribes. For employees of industries and associations, your organization must be a member of ITRC's Industry Affiliates Program.

Examples of technology evaluated [are available online.](#)

More more information on how your company can join the IAP, visit the [Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council webpage.](#)

Help Wanted: Fish & Boat Commission, PA Environmental Council

The Fish & Boat Commission is seeking candidates to fill the position of Director of Policy, Planning and Communications and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council is looking for a Director of Conservation and Community Planning. Details below....

Fish & Boat Commission: The primary function of the Director of Policy, Planning and Communications is to plan, direct and coordinate advanced policy, legislative and program analysis and development work for aquatic resource projects of broad scope and statewide significance.

This position is responsible to direct the agency's communication, legislative, conservation and strategic initiatives and work projects. It will research, formulate and provide advice on aquatic resource and conservation policy.

Applications must be received by January 4. [The complete announcement is available online.](#)

PA Environmental Council: The Director of Conservation and Community Planning provides assistance to communities, non-profit groups and state agencies in the practical application of sustainable land development practices.

The Director is responsible for guiding community organizations, program planning, promoting Environmental Advisory Councils, project development, funding and monitoring activities. The conservation and interpretation of the cultural landscape within the boundaries of the Laurel Highlands Initiative, Allegheny County Riverfronts, and York County will be the primary focus of the activity, though the Director's expertise will be tapped by PEC in other regions of the state.

Resumes and questions can be directed to: [PA Environmental Council](#), 130 Locust St., Suite 200, Harrisburg, PA 17101 or call 717-230-8044.

Spotlight

Water Quality Monitoring, A Vital Link to Restoration

**By Paul O. Swartz, Executive Director
Susquehanna River Basin Commission**



Whether you live in the New York, Pennsylvania or Maryland portion of the Susquehanna River Basin, you have likely read recent news stories or editorials regarding the pending 2010 deadline by which the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and certain tidal areas must be improved enough to be removed from the list of impaired waters.

Failure to meet the deadline could expose all the states in the Chesapeake Watershed to legally binding cleanup requirements.

There is ongoing debate regarding what has to be done within each sector – point and non-point sources – that contributes to the nutrient and sediment loadings to the Bay. And while the [Susquehanna River Basin Commission](#) is not involved in this debate from a regulatory standpoint, we do provide an invaluable service that helps determine how much pollution is going to the Bay from the Susquehanna watershed and what are the likely hotspots and sources.

That service is water quality monitoring.

Good monitoring consists of using approved methodologies, collecting data, preferably over a long period, carefully recording and analyzing the data, following protocols for quality assurance and quality control, coming to proper conclusions based on sound science and then releasing the findings to agencies, policy makers and the public.

Monitoring data are often used to support restoration projects for impaired waterways and to encourage the protection of good quality, pristine waterways so they stay that way for future generations.

For the past 23 years, SRBC has been a leading source for water quality data. As a federal-interstate watershed agency, we are also uniquely qualified to conduct monitoring programs without regard to political boundaries. While we are routinely involved in a variety of monitoring programs, I draw your attention to our three core programs: nutrient and sediment monitoring, interstate streams monitoring and the subbasin survey program.

The data generated through SRBC's nutrient and sediment monitoring program tell us the amount of total nitrogen, total phosphorus and suspended sediments from the

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Susquehanna River going into the Chesapeake Bay and throughout the Susquehanna watershed continues to decline overall. This assessment of improving trends could not be possible but for the years of careful data collection and analyses by SRBC.

Water quality monitoring in the Susquehanna watershed is vitally important because it allows SRBC and other water quality managers in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay Program to determine trends, helps them target restoration work to where it is most needed, and helps document real progress in the Bay restoration effort.

For more information on SRBC's [Nutrient and Sediment Monitoring program webpage](#).

Our second long-term monitoring program involves interstate streams. SRBC is the only agency that annually monitors all rivers and streams that cross and sometimes re-cross state boundaries. Monitoring interstate streams helps identify whether certain pollutants are coming from an upstream or downstream state.

Starting this year, SRBC posted its latest interstate streams findings on the web site in the form of an interactive tool. I invite you to [visit the site](#) and learn the condition of the basin's interstate streams.

Third, the subbasin survey program helps document changes in stream quality over time in each of the six major subbasins of the Susquehanna River Basin.

On a rotating basis, SRBC assesses water quality, biological conditions and physical habitat in each subbasin, as well as identifies major pollution sources and determines the number of stream miles that are impaired.

The program involves conducting a point-in-time (or snap-shot) assessment throughout a targeted subbasin followed by a more detailed assessment of a select subwatershed with the subbasin.

SRBC is grateful to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for funding these extremely critical monitoring programs since 1984. The federal government and the three states in the Susquehanna watershed – New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland – look to our monitoring data to determine if their management programs are working or whether greater resources need to be directed to a particular region to prevent further degradation of water quality. The data are also available to watershed groups and other interested parties.

Our team of qualified aquatic ecologists, biologists, water quality specialists and environmental technicians are trained in the latest monitoring techniques and work to generate and provide the highest quality data. Their work often takes them to the farthest reaches of our vast watershed – a 27,510-square-mile area with more than 48,000 miles of waterways.

For more information on SRBC's monitoring programs, visit the [Fact Sheets webpage](#) and scroll to Water Quality and select Monitoring the Quality of the Susquehanna River Basin.

Link: [PA Senior Environment Corps Ending Due to Lack of Funding](#)

Feature

Persistence and Dedication Equal Success – REAP Farm Conservation Tax Credit Program

**By Kelly Donaldson
Chesapeake Bay Foundation**



Lamonte Garber has brought a wealth of international experience to his position as Senior Agricultural Consultant for CBF. A native Pennsylvanian, he's been the catalyst for the success of new legislation that will help farmers across the state use practices on their lands that will improve water quality.

Lamonte talked with us about his background and his pride in CBF's role in passing the [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act \(REAP\)](#).

Q: Where did you grow up and was environmental awareness a part of your childhood?

A: I grew up in Lititz, PA a small town in Lancaster County that is now seeing a lot of growth. Interestingly, Lititz and its adjacent township, Warwick, have made stream restoration a central goal for the community. Residents and officials have rallied around Lititz Run and Santo Domingo Creek by implementing all kinds of stream and riparian improvements. It is inspiring to visit my old stomping grounds and see the creek I used to fish in BETTER shape than when I left.

I've been interested in the environment for as long as I can remember. It started out as a strong interest in wildlife - first sea life and then birds. I loved going to Hawk Mountain in Kempton, PA to watch all those hawks ride the thermals.

We camped as a family and this usually involved fishing. My Dad was an Iowa farm boy but he always longed to be on the sea. He would get excited when we'd approach our destinations and start to smell the salty air. I think he was a mariner at heart, but was born in the heartland.

I also specifically remember one TV ad that had a big impact on me. It featured images of trash and dirty rivers followed by a picture of an American Indian with tears in his eyes. One of those things that lodges in your head.

Q: What did you dream about doing as a career?

A: I always assumed I would find work around environmental protection. When asked in 9th grade what I wanted to be when I grew up, I said "forest ranger," picturing myself out in the woods by myself all day. I think I realized over time that I needed more human contact than that.

By the time I reached college, my interests started to blend environment and agriculture. I took a year off from college and lived on a farm in Vermont and I was hooked. I transferred to Penn State's College of Agriculture and from that point on this has been my focus - trying to find ways for agriculture, nature and people to coexist.

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Q: I've heard that you studied in Africa. Where were you and what was your experience like?

A: While a student at Penn State, I participated in an exchange program that led me to study at the University of Nairobi. It was mainly a chance to travel while studying and I was interested in international and agricultural development, so Africa was an obvious choice. I love African music and that drew me in that direction too.

The environment of Kenya was astonishing; savannahs, mountains, ocean, forests, desert. I got lost while hiking in a viper-rich dry forest - but my trusty compass got me out! People tend to think of safaris and wildlife when they think of Kenya but I found the people even more interesting - very diverse and distinct cultures. Outsiders tend to recognize the Masai people but they're just one of many. Pennsylvania farmers might be interested to know that Masai mythology has it that God gave all the cattle of the world to them and someday they'll get them back!

I also traveled to Zaire (now Congo) and hiked up the mountains to see a troupe of mountain gorillas. One of them was sprawled across the trail and as I was leaving she gently reached out and touched my face. What a moment.

Interestingly, it was during my experiences in Africa that I discovered that I really loved the environment of North America and Pennsylvania, and felt this was "my home," much more than before I traveled.

Q: What was your first agriculturally-related job position?

A: My very first job was stocking produce at a local market in Lititz. The store was built on a hill, so every time someone dropped the produce it rolled to the checkout line! They rebuilt the store and this time it's level.

I drove truck for the wheat harvest (OK, KS, WY, ND) during my first summer home from school. Big sky, beautiful stars, but really, really nothing to do but read and listen to music. A great way to save money is to have absolutely nothing to spend on.

Other farm experiences happened in college. I visited cocoa farms with agronomists in Haiti, as part of a study abroad program at Goshen College. At Penn State I got a job as a "student farm manager" at Penn State's Circleville Farm.

I also met a lifelong friend at Penn State--Tim Bowser. He had a germ of an idea that truly blossomed. After attending an organic farming conference at an Atlantic City Casino (yes, you could cut the irony with a knife) he said to me something like "why is it that Pennsylvania has no organization that represents organic farmers and alternative ag?"

He and some friends organized a conference and a steering committee which grew into a thriving statewide organization--the PA Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA). Their winter farming conference is NOT to be missed! He left PASA some years ago and is now about to open a brewpub restaurant just down the street from the PASA office in Millheim, PA.

Q: When did you start working with CBF, in what capacity, and what do you do now?

A: After returning from Kenya in '87 I saw a small ad about a job opening for an agricultural specialist for CBF. For some reason they gave me the job and I stayed for ten

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years, full time. Currently, I am working part-time for CBF. I love the work and the REAP initiative has been especially rewarding.

Q: How did you first get involved in the REAP legislation?

A: The idea for the REAP tax credit program began organically. Several CBF staff, myself, and David Hess (past Secretary of PA's Department of Environmental Protection), were brainstorming around the CBF conference table, trying to determine what would best help farmers improve their farms while cleaning up our waters. Everyone recognized that PA needed more funding for conservation practices, but policymakers weren't interested in a new government subsidy program. Thus the idea of using tax credits was hatched.

We found some friendly allies in the PA General Assembly, especially Jerry Stern from the Altoona area and Noah Wenger from Lancaster (recently retired). They saw the opportunity here and helped us build support.

The PA Farm Bureau was also key--without them we would not have this program. I have to give them a lot of credit having some faith in what we were trying to do; the history of farm and environmental groups is not one of collaboration. That's putting it mildly. So as much as I am excited about the program, I feel the way it came about was just as important as the product. I think it represents something we can build on.

Q: Why are you so passionate about the program? What do you hope it will accomplish?

A: REAP is a new approach to agricultural conservation funding. Not only does it bring more dollars to the table to help farmers afford these improvements, it will hopefully bring new participants into the mix. It provides an opportunity for businesses and taxpayers to help fund environmental change on the farm. Tax credits are the vehicle to help facilitate this.

For too long society has looked at agriculture as something farmers do instead of something we all participate in. If you eat food, you have a role in the food system. And our demand for cheap food is part of the problem - we don't pay farmers to protect the environment, we pay them to produce food in mass quantities, and we don't pay them very much for doing so. The burgeoning "Buy Fresh Buy Local" movement is in part a recognition that this has to change, that consumers need to support the kind of farming that they want with their pocketbooks. REAP tax credits are hopefully one tool, a bridge, which will help us get to a better place where the market place is actually playing more of a positive role in keeping farmers on the land and the planet healthy.

Q: What was the 'best moment' in the whole process?

A: No question - when a beautiful Holstein cow named "Blessing" and her human caretakers, the Miller family, made their way to the capitol as part of a REAP event. That cow stood there patiently while folks made speeches about REAP. Bringing the farm to Harrisburg felt like the defining moment of our project.

Everyone who was involved all the PA staff, our legislative sponsors and the coalition of supporting groups worked very hard on this campaign. It was a real celebration when word came down that REAP passed.

Q: What's next?

A: Outreach, and a lot of attention to detail to make sure that everyone in the farm community, and conservationists and businesses understand and participate in the REAP program to the extent they're able. Since REAP passed, the staff at the State Conservation Commission have risen to the challenge and just a few week's ago finished the guidelines for the program. They deserve a lot of credit for getting this program ready for the launch. We're doing all we can to help them out.

For more information about the program or for information about attending the educational meetings, contact program administrator Mary Bender at 717-787-8821 or send e-mail to: mabender@state.pa.us , or visit the [REAP webpage](#).

Grants & Awards

This section gives you a heads up on upcoming deadlines for grants and financial assistance as well as nominations for awards and other recognition programs. **NEW** means from last week—

- **December 31** – Fish & Boat Commission [Sportfishing/Aquatic Ed Grants](#)
- **December 31**— [Nominations for Green Chemistry Challenge Awards](#)
- **January 1** – Environ. Concerns [Schoolyard Wetland Habitat Grants](#)
- **January 4** – [PA Conservation Corps Grants](#)
- **January 15**—**NEW**. [International Children's Painting Competition](#)
- **January 15**— [National Wetlands Awards Program Nominations](#)
- **February 1** – PA Land Trust Assn. [Government Leadership Award Nominations](#).
- **February 8** – [PA American Water Watershed Art Contest](#)
- **February 19** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **February 20**—**NEW**. [USDA Conservation Innovation Grants](#)
- **February 22**— [Allegheny County Global Warming Poster Contest](#)
- **March 31** – PAEP [Karl Mason Environmental Award](#).
- **April 2** – [WREN Water Resources Education Project Grants](#)

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

Quick Clips

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

- The Department of Environmental Protection this week published a schedule of meetings by its boards and advisory committees for 2008. [The schedule is available online](#).

[Environmental Projects Supported by Pittsburgh 250 Celebration Groups Celebrate 250th Projects With Grants](#)

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[Paul Zeph Fights to Protect Susquehanna Water Gap](#)
[Environmental Steward Retires from County’s Planning Commission](#)

[Op-Ed: Defining Climate Change, It Is the Issue of Our Time – Brian Hill](#)

[Op-Ed: Climbing Down on Climate Change](#)

[Report Targets PA’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#)

[Tote Up Your Carbon Footprint](#)

[EPA Says 17 States Can’t Set Emission Rules for Cars](#)

[Editorial: Why We Should Protect the Trees](#)

[Energy House CCTI Partners with PPL for Training](#)

[US Gypsum Ready to Recycle PPL Scrubber Sludge by Spring](#)

[PPL Gets \\$40 Million in Financing for Montour Plant](#)

[Green By Way of Accident](#)

[How Green Is Your County? Montgomery](#)

[Groups Debate Allegheny National Forest Protection](#)

[North Hills Schools, Businesses Commit to Going Green](#)

[North Hills Students Take Part in Shoe Recycling Program](#)

[Picture Dim for Recycling TVs, Computers, Electronics](#)

[Varied Habitat Saved Within State College](#)

[Ecologist Lauds Venango County Land Holders for Good Stewardship](#)

[Bethlehem Greenway Plan Hits a Red Light](#)

[Wintry Bird Counters Spot 28 Species](#)

[Christmas Counters Wing It in Western PA](#)

[National Aviary Branches Out With Addition of Sloth](#)

[Sparks Flying Over PA’s Energy Future](#)

[Editorial: State Should Subsidize Innovation, Not Energy Projects Underway](#)

[Experts Explore Ethanol Viability](#)

[Ethanol Not a Hit at Gas Stations](#)

[Energy Analysis Will Help Adams County](#)

[Two Somerset Windfarms to Go Online](#)

[Tioga County Planners Give Preliminary Approval for Wind Farm](#)

[Microwaved Tires: Fuel of the Future?](#)

[Editorial: Statewide Wind Farm Siting Processing](#)

[PPL to Apply for Third Reactor at PA Nuclear Plant](#)

[Editorial: Case Can Be Made for New Nuclear Power Plants](#)

[Deer-Vehicle Collisions Common in PA](#)

[Unhappy Hunters Speaking Up, Call for Changes](#)

[Gathering Data on Deer Has an Ugly Side](#)

[NJ Files Suit Over PA Power Plant Emissions](#)

[Editorial: Find Funding for Hazardous Sites](#)

[Editorial: Toxic Cleanup Fund Deserves Fair Share](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Paul Zeph Fights to Protect Susquehanna Water Gap](#)

[Federal Mine Cleanup Money OK'd](#)

[US Senate OKs River Forecasting Money](#)

[Bay Wastewater Mandate Requires 10% Increase in Sewer, Water Fees](#)

[Op-Ed: Agriculture Pollution Remains Major Concern](#)

[Editorial: Endless Manure](#)

[Little Lehigh in Poor Shape](#)

[Editorial: Little Lehigh Report is Alarming](#)

[Report: Delaware Reservoirs Could Have Lowered Floodwaters by 6 Feet](#)

[Ethanol Production Comes With Concerns](#)

[Corn Crop Threatens Sea Life](#)

Regulations

EQB Approves Clean Air Interstate Rule, Increased Radiological Health Fees

The [Environmental Quality Board](#) this week approved the Clean Air Interstate Rule that will reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions and proposed increases in radon and radiological health fees. Details below...

Final Clean Air Interstate Rule adopts the rules necessary for the implementation and enforcement of the federal Clean Air Interstate Rule that requires 28 states, including Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia to adopt control measures to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide or nitrogen oxide or both, that significantly contribute to nonattainment of the PM_{2.5} and eight-hour ozone NAAQS in downwind states.

This final rulemaking establishes a program to limit NO_x and SO₂ emissions from electric generating units of 25 megawatts or greater. The regulations extend existing NO_x emission permit limits for certain boilers, stationary combustion turbines, stationary internal combustion engines and Portland cement kilns.

The rulemaking also establishes three CAIR trading programs, which cover annual NO_x emissions, ozone season NO_x emissions and annual SO₂ emissions, respectively. The rulemaking provides for the allocation of NO_x allowances to certain renewable energy and energy efficiency units and to cogeneration units that did not receive SO₂ allowances under the Federal Acid Rain Program. The CAIR NO_x trading programs will supercede the existing NO_x Budget Trading Program in Chapter 145, Subchapter A and the CAIR Federal Implementation Plan.

Proposed Radiological Health and Radon Certification Fees package would increase fees associated with the registration of radiation-producing machines; radiation-producing machine service providers; accelerator licenses and radioactive material licenses, as well as the hourly rate professional fee associated with certain full cost recovery licenses. The rulemaking also addresses application fees for the certification of radon services.

The draft proposed rulemaking was presented to the Radiation Protection Advisory Committee at its meeting on August 21. The RPAC suggested that the department consider adjusting fees according to inflation and to phase-in and/or scale the fee structure relative to business size for the radon fees in Chapter 240. The department prefers to provide the EQB with a written analysis of the adequacy of the fees at least once every three years.

Final Radiological Health Rule changes update 25 Pa Code, Chapter 215 (General Provisions); Chapter 221 (X-rays in the Healing Arts); Chapter 225 (Radiation Safety Requirements for Industrial Radiographic Operations); Chapter 230 (Packaging and Transportation of Radioactive Material) and Chapter 240 (Radon Certification).

The amendments update references to guidance and standards for radon testing and mitigation, restore a written reporting requirement concerning department notification of incidents involving the malfunction of shielded room radiography equipment and remove the requirement for notarization of radon service permit applications.

Additional changes are also included to clarify requirements for X-ray use in the healing arts as well as the assessment of civil penalties to recover abatement costs incurred by the department. The amendments also clarify the healing-arts screening requirements for facilities operating under the federal Mammography Quality Act Standards.

For more information on the EQB meeting, contact DEP Regulatory Coordinator Michele Tate at 717-783-8727 or send email to: mtate@state.pa.us .

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

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

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Game Commission provided notice it was adding the [northern flying squirrel](#) to the endangered species list. The State Board for Certification of Sewage Enforcement Officers [published its 2008](#) Precertification Academy and examination schedule.

[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. **NEW** indicates new from last week. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

- **January 14**—**NEW**. Environmental Issues Forum featuring Kathleen Cowles Paul, Director of the [PA Center for Environmental Education](#). Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **February 22-23** – 2008 [Keystone Coldwater Conference](#). State College.
- **February 26**—**NEW**. [PA Chamber Energy Summit](#). Harrisburg Hilton.

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- **February 28**—**NEW**. [Pennsylvania Wild Resources Symposium](#). [Powdermill Nature Reserve](#). Pittsburgh.
- **February 28-March 2**—**NEW**. [PA Assn. of Environmental Educators Conference](#). Antiochian Village Camp and Conference Center near Ligonier, Pa.
- **March 28**— Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference and Shad Symposium. Holiday Inn, Fogelsville.
- **May 13-15**—**NEW**. [PA Water/Wastewater Association](#) annual conference. Valley Forge.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

You can watch the [Senate Floor Session](#) and [House Floor Session](#) live online.

Helpful Web Links

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

[Daily NewsClips](#) [Daily DEP Update](#) [GreenTreks Network](#)

[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@CrisciAssociates.com or go to www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com .

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