

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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Game Commission Keeps Healthy Forest, Healthy Herd Formula for Deer Mgmt.

The Board of Game Commissioners this week gave final approval to hunting and trapping seasons and bag limits for 2007-08, including increased antlerless deer seasons in the state's three most developed Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) 2B, 5C and 5D and also set antlerless deer license allocations for all 22 WMUs.

The action this week kept in place the Commission's three-prong approach to deer management – healthy forests, healthy deer herds and reducing deer-human conflicts.



At a public hearing prior to the decision, the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau urged the Game Commission to continue concurrent seasons for buck and doe at existing levels and maintain the lengths of deer hunting season. PFB also asked the Commission to continue to rely on science as the basis for its decision-making for seasons and bag limits.

“We believe that deer seasons and bag limits need to be a constant for Game Commission staff to be able to accurately measure the full impact of the deer management plan on wildlife resources. It is important that no dramatic changes to seasons and bag limits occur, especially where deer management is concerned,” said PFB Wildlife Specialist Jeff Grove.

At the same hearing, Timothy Schaeffer, PhD, Executive Director of [Audubon Pennsylvania](#), the state office of the national Audubon Society, said, “Audubon Pennsylvania applauds Mr. Roe and the Commission for maintaining the focus on measuring and improving the habitats that deer and other wildlife need to survive, maintaining the health of the deer themselves, and reducing deer-human conflicts.”

Dr. Schaeffer pointed to [a recent study](#) by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources that showed fewer than 25 percent of 41,650 study plots in DCNR's state forests showed desirable regeneration and almost 45 percent of plots with no woody regeneration because of deer over-browsing.

“Audubon Pennsylvania believes a transparent, science-based system for managing Pennsylvania's white-tailed deer is the best way to serve the long-term interests of the people and wildlife of Pennsylvania.”

Chad Forcey, Director of Governmental Affairs for the [PA Landscape and Nursery Association](#) also provided comments to the Commission saying a new survey of damage

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caused by deer showed that 87 percent of their members thought the deer problem was worse or the same.

The survey also showed that 50 percent of their surveyed members had product losses from between \$10,000 and \$20,000 and another 10 percent had losses between \$100,000 and \$200,000 or more a year.

“Agriculture as a whole is losing \$90 million per year due to deer overpopulation, plus an estimated \$73 million per year in damages to our forests,” said Forcey. “Such losses to the Commonwealth’s number one industry cannot continue in perpetuity.”

Forcey also recommended passage of [House Bill 550](#) (Hershey-R-Chester, Caltagirone-D-Berks) that would give farmers new tools to deal with deer damaging agricultural commodities.

In an effort to balance differing public views on the direction of the state's deer management program, the Board of Game Commissioners gave final approval to a slate of 2007-08 deer seasons.

Antler restrictions will continue unchanged for the 2007-08 seasons. Specifically:

- In WMUs 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B and 2D, hunters will be required to abide by the four points on one side antler restriction;
- In all other WMUs, hunters will be required to abide by a three points on one side antler restriction; and
- Statewide, all junior license holders, disabled hunters with a permit to use a vehicle, mentored youth hunters and active duty U.S. Armed Services personnel may abide by the old antler restrictions of one antler of three or more inches in length or one antler with at least two points.

The most significant changes proposed by the Board for the 2007-08 deer seasons focus on implementing portions of the agency's Plan to Reduce Deer-Human Conflicts in Developed Areas, which was developed with public input and adopted by the agency last year. These changes are designed to increase hunter harvest in the state's three most highly developed WMUs - WMU 2B, 5C and 5D - in the state's southwestern and southeastern corners.

Among the changes given approval for WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D are:

- Archery seasons for antlerless deer will be held September 15-28, and November 12-24, in addition to the statewide season dates;
- Archery deer season for antlerless deer in WMU 2B will be December 10-22;
- Antlerless deer hunting with any legal sporting arm in WMU 2B will be December 26-January 26; and
- Antlerless deer hunting with any legal sporting arm in WMUs 5C and 5D will be December 10-22 and December 26-January 26.

Following is an overview of the remaining deer seasons that were approved by the Board:

- A concurrent antlered/antlerless rifle deer season from November 26-December 8. To harvest an antlerless deer during the concurrent seasons, hunters must possess a valid, WMU-specific antlerless deer license for the unit in which they are hunting or a DMAP permit.
- A firearms antlerless deer season from October 18-20, for junior and senior license holders, Disabled Person Permit (to use a vehicle) holders, or Pennsylvania residents serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, who possess the appropriate WMU-

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specific antlerless deer license or DMAP permit. Also included are persons who have reached or will reach age 65 in the year of the application for a license and hold a valid adult license, or qualify for license and fee exemptions under section 2706 of the Game and Wildlife Code.

- A muzzleloader season for antlerless deer from October 13-20. The flintlock muzzleloader season, which is set for December 26-January 12, continues to be an antlered or antlerless season for hunters with primitive flintlock ignition firearms, provided the hunter possesses the appropriate license(s).

In other action, the Board adopted a measure to extend shooting hours for most hunting seasons, including all deer seasons, to one-half hour after sunset.

As part of the 2007-08 deer season frameworks, hunters will continue to be permitted to use crossbows statewide for hunting bear and elk and during any of the firearms deer seasons - including the regular two-week concurrent deer season, the early muzzleloader season and the late flintlock season - and in all deer seasons in WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D, which are the most urbanized areas in the state.

Statewide, hunters using crossbows during the early muzzleloader season or late flintlock season must have a muzzleloader stamp in addition to their general hunting license and appropriate WMU antlerless deer license. Late-season hunters with a muzzleloader stamp, but using a crossbow, are permitted to take an antlered deer or an antlerless deer anywhere in the state with their unused antlered deer tag, just like other late-season flintlock hunters.

In WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D, hunters planning to use a crossbow during the archery seasons must purchase an archery stamp in addition to their general hunting license and appropriate WMU antlerless deer license.

Disabled hunters must obtain a permanent or temporary disabled hunter permit to use a crossbow during the statewide early archery season outside of WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D.

The Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) that addresses landowner deer management objectives within Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) remains in place.

"DMAP provides a tool to harvest antlerless deer on specific properties to lessen deer impacts for landowners and the habitat," said Calvin W. DuBrock, Game Commission Bureau of Wildlife Management director.

In other action, the Board adopted increasing the fees for DMAP permits from \$6 for residents and \$26 for nonresidents to \$10 for residents and \$35 for nonresidents.

More details about the allocations approved by the Game Commission are available on the [Deer Management Program webpage](#).

NewsClips: [Board Shoots Down Attempts to Alter Deer Policy](#)
[Hunting Seasons Won't Change](#)
[No Changes as Deer Seasons, Bag Limits OK'd](#)
[PA Won't Reduce Deer Kill Numbers](#)
[Notebook: Deer Debate](#)
[Liability Protection Needed for Deer Hunting](#)

Links: [No to More Deer – PA Landscape & Nursery Association](#)
[Managing White-Tailed Deer – Audubon PA](#)

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Session Schedule

The Senate and House return to voting session April 23. The House will be in session 2 of the 3 weeks prior to the May 15 Primary, but the Senate will be in all three weeks before taking a break for the election.

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Online Training

- New EPA Tool to Accelerate Watershed Planning, Webcast May 2

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- Parks & Recreation Foundation Awards Dinner Set for April 24
- Presque Isle Bay Gets Environmental Boost as EPA Lifts Water Quality Impairment
- Chesapeake Bay Report Shows Degraded Waters, But Restoration Advances
- DEP Publishes Notice of Completed TMDL for Berks County Watershed
- EPA, PennVEST Recognize Mine Cleanup Work, Bristol Drinking Water Facility
- April 26 Town Meeting Set on Helping Farmers Install Conservation BMPs
- Property Management for Cleaner Streams Workshop April 25
- May 3-4 Volunteer Monitoring Summit Cancelled By DEP
- Dirt and Gravel Road Program Celebrates 10th Anniversary
- EPA, State, Environmental Groups Promote "Green Infrastructure" Solutions
- Game Commission Finalizes Wind Energy Cooperative Agreement
- Free Energy Harvest, PEDA Grant Writing Workshop April 27 in Norristown
- May 3 Workshop in Williamsport on Energy Harvest, PEDA Grant Writing
- Only Two More Communities Can Qualify for Free Solar Energy System
- Giant Eagle Store Uses 20 Percent Less Energy Than Traditional Supermarket
- 100th Annual Conference of the Air & Waste Management Association In Pittsburgh

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- Wildlife for Everyone Foundation, Game Commission Announce Land Purchases
- Game Commission Awards Funding for Priority Wildlife Projects
- May 19 Native Plant Sale in York, Take a Walk on the Wildside
- DCNR Explores Innovative Soil Solutions to Boost Survival of Urban Trees
- Pennsylvania First State to Preserve 350,000 Acres of Farmland
- Earth Day Celebration Brings Agriculture to Urban Philadelphia Students
- High School Students Compete in 22nd Annual Westmoreland Envirothon
- EPA Staff Served As Teachers for Students at Upper Darby Middle School
- Help Wanted: PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers Seeks Executive Director

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

Earth Day Activities

April 22 is Earth Day, Here's a Listing of Earth Day Events from Around PA ...

[Pitch in for Earth Day](#)

[Earth Day Activities in the West](#)

[Wyoming Valley Watershed Coalition Holds Cleanup](#)

[Centre County Earth Day Events](#)

[COALS Seeks Volunteers for Cleanups April 21](#)

[Great PA Cleanup Event Registrations Pick Up in Northcentral PA](#)

[Watershed Alliance of York Seeks Volunteers for Cleanup](#)

[York Cleanup Days Set](#)

[Jim Thorpe Earth Day Celebration](#)

[Earth Day Draws Attention to Recycling at Kutztown U](#)

[Earth Day, Arbor Day Events Planned in Berks County](#)

[Cleanup Near Orviston This Weekend](#)

[Celebrate Earth Day on Tuesday at Bloomsburg](#)

[Earth Day Programs Planned in Wilkes-Barre](#)

[Litter Gitters Needed in Altoona](#)

[Big Earth Day Push Comes Tomorrow in Harrisburg Region](#)

[Earth Day Celebrations at Lehigh Gap Nature Center](#)

- [Find a Great PA Cleanup Event in Your Area](#)

Online Training

New EPA Tool to Accelerate Watershed Planning, Webcast May 2

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has released the [Watershed Plan Builder](#), an interactive, web-based tool to improve efforts by states and local communities in protecting and restoring local water resources.

The tool will help local watershed organizations develop integrated watershed plans to meet state and EPA requirements and promote water quality improvements.

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Practitioners from watershed organizations, federal and state agencies, tribes, universities and local governments will use the Watershed Plan Builder to address polluted runoff, the largest contributor to water quality problems nationwide.

Once the data are entered, the tool produces an outline of a comprehensive watershed plan tailored to a specific watershed. It features links to EPA, other federal agencies and state water programs.

The Watershed Plan Builder walks the practitioner through various watershed planning steps: watershed monitoring and assessment, community outreach, selection and application of available models, best management practices, implementation and feedback

During the next six months, the Watershed Plan Builder will be available to watershed organizations, federal and state agencies, tribes, universities and local governments to beta test the application and provide feedback. A team of experts from EPA's water programs developed the tool, with input from state, tribal and local agency experts and other local watershed practitioners.

[EPA will host a webcast](#) on the [Watershed Plan Builder](#) on May 2 from 1-2:30 p.m. EDT.

On the Hill

On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House return to session April 23, and here's what's on the agenda...

House

Calendar: [House Bill 772](#) (Hershey-R-Chester) establishing the Keystone Energy and Environmental Excellence Awards program and an energy efficiency and pollution reduction initiative, [House Bill 913](#) (Vereb-R-Montgomery) establishing the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program.

Committees: the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Bill 496](#) (George-D-Clearfield) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and [House Bill 483](#) (Bastion-R-Somerset) creating the Mine Families First Program to provide assistance to families involved in mine rescue incidents; the Game & Fisheries Committee meets to consider [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-D-Allegheny) limiting liability of landowners in connection with opening their lands for hunting and recreation; the State Government Committee meets to consider [House Bill 894](#) (Leach-D-Montgomery) authorizing additional reimbursements for school building construction which meets the LEED standards.

Senate

Calendar: [Senate Bill 76](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) establishing the Home Energy Assistance Act to provide matching public funds to hardship funds contributed by stockholders, employees and ratepayers of home energy providers, [Senate Bill 105](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) authorizing the Environmental Quality Board to retain independent legal advice, [Senate Bill 176](#) (Pippy-R-Allegheny) authorizing the use of public funds to pay for the repair of

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lateral sewer lines, [Senate Bill 354](#) (MJWhite-R-Venango) prohibiting the Environmental Quality Board from accepting rulemaking petitions to regulate substances not authorized by current state or federal law.

Committees: the Public Health and Welfare Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 352](#) (Robbins-R-Mercer) providing additional funds for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, the Transportation Committee holds a public hearing on transportation funding options, the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee holds a listening session in Berks County.

Other Meetings: the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee holds a meeting of the Forestry Task Force in State College.

Bills Introduced

Several more environmental bills were introduced this week...

Elk Damage Fund: [House Bill 1078](#) (Hanna-D-Clinton) establishing a program to pay claims for damages caused by elk.

Anti-Idling: [House Bill 1113](#) (Gabig-R-Cumberland) providing for idling restrictions on commercial diesel vehicles.

Lyme Disease: [House Resolution 227](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) designating May as “Lyme Disease Awareness Month”

House Environmental Committee Moves Brownfield Covenants Bill

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee this week reported out [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) that establishes a uniform environmental covenant for brownfield sites.

The Committee held [House Bill 297](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) which would create a right of first refusal for surface rights owners before the sale of mineral rights for more work.

The Committee is chaired by Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) and Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

Senate Committee Moves on Energy Assistance, Rulemaking Petitions, More

The [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee](#) this week reported out several pieces of environmental legislation without changes—

- [Senate Bill 76](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) establishing the Home Energy Assistance Act to provide matching public funds to hardship funds contributed by stockholders, employees and ratepayers of home energy providers and is on the Senate Calendar for action;

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- [Senate Bill 105](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) authorizing the Environmental Quality Board to retain independent legal advice and is on the Senate Calendar for action;
- [Senate Bill 176](#) (Pippy-R-Allegheny) authorizing the use of public funds to pay for the repair of lateral sewer lines and is on the Senate Calendar for action;
- [Senate Bill 354](#) (MJWhite-R-Venango) prohibiting the Environmental Quality Board from accepting rulemaking petitions to regulate substances not authorized by current state or federal law and is on the Senate Calendar for action; and
- [Senate Resolution 79](#) (Rafferty-R-Montgomery) designating April 22, 2007 as Earth Day Pennsylvania and was adopted by the full Senate.

The Committee is chaired by Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne).

Other Senate/House Bills Moving

Here's a quick rundown on other bills moving this week...

Coal Miner Stamp: [House Resolution 197](#) (McCall-D-Carbon) urging the U.S. Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp honoring coal miners was passed by the House.

Overnight Facilities: [House Resolution 164](#) (Haluska-D-Cambria) directing the Tourism and Recreational Development Committee to evaluate and make recommendations for establishing overnight facilities in State Parks was adopted by the House.

Energy Efficiency/Awards: [House Bill 772](#) (Hershey-R-Chester) establishing the Keystone Energy and Environmental Excellence Awards program and an energy efficiency and pollution reduction initiative was reported from House Appropriations Committee with a request to re-refer it to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and is on the House Calendar for action.

Weatherization Assistance: [House Bill 913](#) (Vereb-R-Montgomery) establishing the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program was reported from House Appropriations Committee with a request to re-refer it to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and is on the House Calendar for action.

House Environmental Committee To Consider Mine Safety, Reactor Fees Bills

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets this week to consider bills to create the Mine Families First Program and to increase fees on nuclear power plants, including:

- [House Bill 496](#) (George-D-Clearfield) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transport escorts; and
- [House Bill 483](#) (Bastion-R-Somerset) creating the Mine Families First Program to provide assistance to families involved in mine rescue incidents

The Committee is chaired by Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) and Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

Other News

Finalists for Philadelphia Sustainability Awards Announced

Nineteen finalists for the first ever [Philadelphia Sustainability Awards](#) were announced this week to honor progress towards becoming a sustainable region.

The winners will be announced April 26 at the Academy of Natural Sciences.

“The Philadelphia region is already a leader in sustainability nationwide,” said Spencer Finch, Director of Sustainable Communities for the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, the lead organization coordinating the program. “We just don’t do enough talking about it. That’s why the Core Partners behind the Awards came together – to bring these amazing stories out to the public and hopefully fuel new ideas on how we can do even better in the future.”

The awards program is being coordinated by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, City of Philadelphia, Delaware Valley Green Building Council, PennFuture, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, The Reinvestment Fund, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, American Institute of Architects, and the Academy of Natural Sciences. The William Penn Foundation and The Reinvestment Fund have generously funded this project. The HUB Circa Centre sponsored the Juror session.

The 19 Finalists include:

- **Blooming Glen Farm** – Provides communities with organic produce through a community-supported-agriculture farm in Perkasio;
- **Delaware Valley Earth Force:** Community Action and Problem Solving Program – Challenges youth to solve environmental challenges through investigations, interviews with experts and cost benefit balancing;
- **The Engineering and Design Institute at the Philadelphia University** – Provides support and education for the green building movement in the region;
- **Greensgrow Philadelphia** – Urban farm on a formerly abandoned site that provides fresh produce to Philadelphia restaurants;
- **Jackie O’Neil’s Zero Energy Home** – Prototype home designed and built to produce as much energy as it consumes;
- **Judy Wicks**, founder of the White Dog Café and Foundation – Purchases local food and renewable energy, and promotes sustainable business practices;
- **Liberty Property Trust** – Leading the way to sustainable development through involvement in several of the region’s noted green buildings;
- **Philadelphia Eagles’ Go Green Program** – The first NFL team to implement an environmental program, largely through recycling and purchasing renewable energy
- **Philadelphia Fry-O-Diesel** – Working to create biodiesel using waste greases from restaurant traps;
- **PhillyCarShare** – Provides low-emission vehicles to drivers, reducing fuel consumption and carbon emissions;
- **Police Forensic Science Center** – Installed efficient systems such as heating, cooling and electricity, and manages stormwater on site;

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- **Re:Vision Architecture** – Provides guidance and professional services for the region’s green building projects;
- **RecycleBank** – Motivates recycling in participating neighborhoods by crediting household recyclables with “RecycleBank dollars,” redeemable at local retailers;
- **SCA America** – Paper products company that relocated to a LEED-certified, transit accessible headquarters at the Cira Centre;
- **The Food Trust** – Connects regional farmers to farm markets in Philadelphia neighborhoods;
- **Upper Dublin Township** – Implements sustainable practices such as renewable energy purchases, open space preservation and recycling;
- **Wissahickon Charter School** – Teaches about sustainable environmental practices and encourages student participation in projects like solar power harnessing and alternative fuel manufacturing;
- **Whole Foods Markets** – Incorporates sustainable practices such as purchasing renewable energy credits, recycling and composting; and
- **Women’s Environmental and Health Network** – Works with healthcare facilities in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh to reduce mercury use, prevent pollution and educate healthcare workers.

A panel of five jurors convened to deliberate and decide on the finalists. Meeting at Philadelphia’s only “green” event space, the Hub Cira Centre, jurors combed through 53 nominations before electing the 19 finalists.

Jurors included: Sam Assefa, Director of Policy for Chicago’s Department of Planning and Development; Carlton Brown, Co-Founder and Chief Operating Officer, Full Spectrum LLC in New York, NY; Jack Cherry, Director of Corporate Global Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) & Sustainable Development Process Systems for the Rohm and Haas Company; Rebecca Flora, Executive Director of the Green Building Alliance (GBA) in Pittsburgh, PA; and Sandy Wiggins, Founder and Principal, Consilience LLC and Chair of the US Green Building Council.

More information on the finalists and all nominees can be found online at the [Philadelphia Sustainability Awards website](#) . The site also features information about the concept of sustainability, the jurors and the awards event.

For contact information on any of the finalists, please contact Jessica Anderson at 215-592-7020 x 101.

Two Philadelphia Schools Honored With Environmental Community Service Award

Two Philadelphia schools have won a region-wide competition competing with 45 schools from Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania to receive the Environmental Community Service Award and a \$5,000 grant to further their studies.

[W.B. Saul High School of Agricultural Sciences](#) is the high school winner and the [Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander](#) University of Pennsylvania Partnership School is the middle school winner.

[Wawa](#), [NBC 10](#) and the environmental law firm of [Manko, Gold, Katcher & Fox, LLP](#) are the sponsors of this area-wide competition that asked schools to nominate environmental community service programs that demonstrate a "Connection to the Community."

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W.B. Saul High School was honored for removing the lead from the lawn of Miss Ruth Battle, 84. They developed a Community Phyto-Remediation Project and studied how to remediate this residential lawn. This project teaches students how to determine toxicity levels within the soil and use phyto-remediation, a process used to decontaminate polluted soil, to decrease traces of lead and return the soil back to acceptable levels.

The Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander University of Pennsylvania Partnership School was selected for its efforts to restore the grounds surrounding their school on a 4.3 acre Urban Arboretum. Students and teachers have been working to create an outdoor classroom where they study storm water management and much more. This is also a resource to the West Philadelphia neighbors.

For more information on the award, visit the [Environmental Community Service Award webpage](#).

EPA Recognizes North Area Environmental Council in Allegheny County

EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson this week honored the [North Area Environmental Council](#) with the [President's Volunteer Service Award](#) in recognition of the group's more than 30 years of volunteer work in addressing environmental issues in the North Hills area of Allegheny County, Pa.

Bill Moul, president of the North Area Environmental Council, accepted the award on behalf of the all-volunteer organization, whose work has been instrumental in improving the Pine Creek watershed.

“During this year's National Volunteer Week, it's an honor to recognize the members of the North Area Environmental Council for answering President Bush's call to serve a cause greater than themselves,” said Administrator Johnson. “Dedicated volunteers like these are inspiring others to join them in delivering America a brighter, healthier future.”

The North Area Environmental Council has more than 30 years experience addressing environmental issues in the North Hills area of Allegheny County. They have recruited more than 70 volunteers to conduct chemical, biological, bacteriological or riparian monitoring of the Pine Creek watershed.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the NAEC began to focus its attention on the Pine Creek watershed, developing a report with extensive mapping of critical areas. The organization has worked on stream bank restoration and riparian buffer remediation, and several NAEC members have served on local municipal environmental advisory councils and planning commissions in the watershed, and worked with staff and students from local schools on environmental projects.

For the past five years, NAEC has increased its watershed presence by chairing the steering committee for the Pine Creek Watershed Assessment and Pine Creek Watershed Coalition. NAEC has recruited more than 70 volunteers to conduct chemical, biological, bacteriological, or riparian monitoring of the watershed. NAEC has initiated a state-funded Riparian and Stream Channel Assessment and is about to initiate a Watershed Conservation Plan for Pine Creek. NAEC and Pine Creek volunteers have spent more than 1,000 hours of volunteer service on these recent activities.

For more information about the award, visit the [Presidential Service Award webpage](#).

Link: [Environmental Advisory Councils Website, PA Environmental Council](#)

Innovative Municipalities, Individuals Recognized with Governor's Awards

Gov. Rendell this week praised local government officials and community stakeholders during the 11th annual Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence for taking action to improve their municipalities.

"Over the past four years, we've made strategic investments in towns and cities across Pennsylvania that are sparking revitalization and economic development projects today," said Gov. Rendell. "We've turned Pennsylvania's economy around and created countless new opportunities for our citizens. Our state's municipalities played a vital role in this resurgence and they will continue to do so.

Awards were presented to local government entities in eight categories, including building community partnerships, promoting community and economic revitalization, innovative community and governmental initiatives, innovative planning and sound land use practices, responding to adversity, fiscal accountability and best management practices, innovative technology, and intergovernmental cooperation.

Among the awardees were:

Innovative Planning and Sound Land Use Practice: Philadelphia, Yeadon Borough, Upper Darby Township, East Lansdowne Borough, Clifton Heights Borough (Philadelphia and Delaware counties).

Five Delaware County municipalities and the City of Philadelphia, supported by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Delaware County and the William Penn Foundation, have created the Baltimore Avenue Corridor Revitalization Plan to redevelop their communities. The plan focuses on transportation resources, dense mixed use residential and retail development, and open space to make an enormous positive impact in each of the participating communities. The success of this project serves as a model for similar planning along other urban corridors.

Individual Award: Anthony Russo, Jr. serves as the executive director of the Wilksburg-Penn Joint Water Authority, one of the largest authorities in Pennsylvania. He has also served on the authority's Board of Directors for 12 years and as the president of the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association. He has devoted 26 years in public and private service in the communities he serves and has been involved in local government activities at all levels.

[A complete list of award winners is available online.](#)

Pittsburgh's Bayer Corp Honored by Rachel Carson Homestead Association

[Bayer Corporation](#) was honored at a special ceremony this week by the [Rachel Carson Homestead Association](#) that kicks off a yearlong series of special events commemorating the centennial of the birth of author and ecologist Rachel Carson.

Bayer Corporation, headquartered in Pittsburgh, is a subsidiary of Bayer AG, an international health care, nutrition and innovative materials group based in Leverkusen, Germany.

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Throughout the centennial year, Bayer is also helping to sponsor a number of special environmental education programs organized by the Homestead Association.

"Bayer employees are proud that we as a company take action that supports the public interest and demonstrates corporate citizenship that benefits humankind," said Dr. Attila Molnar, President and CEO, Bayer Corporation. "In meeting our responsibilities to society, Bayer relies on its core values of improving quality of life while harmonizing commercial efficiency, ecology and social commitment."

The objective of the event is to highlight how commitment to environmentally sustainable practices can make a tangible difference in the health, quality of life, environment and economic viability of local, regional and global communities.

"We applaud Bayer Corporation for continuing to take 'green steps to a sustainable future,' by making permanent, measurable changes in behavior and policies that promote Rachel Carson's environmental ethic," said Patricia M. DeMarco, executive director, Rachel Carson Homestead Association. "As a forward-thinking company, Bayer clearly understands that by committing to this challenge, it will help build conditions for a more sustainable, healthy world."

More than a decade ago, Bayer set an ambitious goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from more than 400 facilities worldwide in absolute numbers by 50 percent from 1990 to 2012, while simultaneously increasing manufacturing output. Since 1990, Bayer has bettered the greenhouse gas emission targets specified in the Kyoto Protocol and cut direct greenhouse gas emissions worldwide by more than 70 percent.

Through technical improvements and structural changes, Bayer also has cut its worldwide energy use by 26 percent between 2000 and 2005. The Carbon Disclosure Project, a coalition of more than 200 worldwide institutional investors, lists Bayer as "Best in Class" in worldwide climate protection.

Bayer was one of the first members of the Chicago Climate Exchange --the world's first and America's only voluntary, legally binding greenhouse gas reduction and trading system for emission sources in North America and Brazil.

Outside reporting agencies confirm Bayer's record. The company is represented in the most important relevant indices, such as the Climate Leadership Index, the Dow Jones World Sustainability Index (continuously since it was first established in 1999), its European counterpart, the Dow Jones STOXX Sustainability Index, and the FTSE4Good series.

NewsClip: [Institutions Honor Environmental Pioneer Rachel Carson](#)

Wanted – Green Business Award Nominees in Chester County

Retail, manufacturing, small business, corporations and institutions are invited to participate in Chester County's "Green Business" Award program.

The Chester County Chamber of Business and Industry and the Chester County Board of Commissioners, through the Chester County Solid Waste Authority, recognize businesses that implement efficient resource conservation, pollution prevention, waste reduction, recycling and/or "Buy Recycled" business practices.

If you would like your company's program recognized at the Chamber's Annual Awards Dinner, call Nancy Fromnick at 610-273-3771 ext. 226 or 228 to request a 2007 Green Business Award Application form.

Parks & Recreation Foundation Awards Dinner Set for April 24

The Parks and Recreation Foundation will hold their [awards dinner](#) on April 24 at the Harrisburg Country Club beginning at 5:30.

The Awards program mcee will be Sen. Rob Wonderling (R-Montgomery) who will help celebrate the accomplishments of the award winners who include:

- Keystone Legacy Award: members of the Civilian Conservation Corps who served in Pennsylvania;
- Government Award: Michael DiBerardinis, Secretary for Conservation and Natural Resources;
- Park of the Year: Pymatuning State Park;
- Forest of the Year: Forbes State Forest;
- Friends Group Volunteerism Award: Friends of Codorus State Park;
- Friends Group Improvement Award: Miller Family, Greenwood Furnace State Park; and
- Friends Group Education Award: Cherry Springs Dark Sky Fund

Sponsors of the awards program include: InfoSpherix, Woolrich, PPL Corporation, Aqua America, PA Recreation and Park Society, Delta Development Group, Mr. Joseph Ibberson and an anonymous donation in honor of William C. Forrey.

For information on the program and tickets, call 717-236-7644 or send email to Marcy Mowery, [PA Parks and Forests Foundation](#), at mmowery-ppff@pa.net .

Presque Isle Bay Gets Environmental Boost as EPA Lifts Water Quality Impairment

The recovery of [Presque Isle Bay in Lake Erie](#) reached a milestone this week when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced it has lifted one of two water quality impairments for the bay due to improvements in sediment contamination.

The impairment lifted by EPA concerned sediment contamination and dredging restrictions. This was one of two water quality impairments listed for the bay under its current environmental designation as an “area of concern” meaning that it is one of the 40 most degraded areas of the Great Lakes. The remaining impairment focuses on fish tumors and other deformities.

The sediment improvements were discovered during an EPA-funded sediment survey of the bay in 2005. The survey, which included research done with EPA’s research vessel Mudpuppy, found that contaminants in the sediment were no longer degrading the ecosystem.

“We congratulate all the federal, state and local partners who have been instrumental in helping restore the health of Presque Isle Bay,” said Donald S. Welsh, regional administrator for EPA’s mid-Atlantic region. “This action brings the bay one step closer to removal from the list of the most degraded areas of the Great Lakes basin.”



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Officials credit the sediment improvements to reduced industrial discharges, upgrades in the city of Erie's wastewater treatment plant, and actions taken by local organizations to reduce harmful storm water runoff.

"Improving the health of the Great Lakes and removing these restrictions is essential to boosting the economic vitality of the region, maintaining Erie as an important shipping port and offering improved recreational opportunities," Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty said. "This announcement by EPA is the result of a commitment by the city of Erie and other local municipalities, businesses and private citizens to improve water quality entering Presque Isle Bay."

Among the most significant activities undertaken to improve the water quality entering the bay was a \$100 million upgrade of the Erie wastewater system to improve sewage treatment, eliminate unauthorized combined sewage overflows entering the bay and greatly reduce stormwater runoff which overloaded the sewer system during heavy rain.

In 2002, DEP recommended, and EPA concurred, that the Presque Isle Bay be designated in the recovery stage as the result of significant environmental improvement in the last decade. This was the first area of concern in the United States to be recommended for recovery status.

Last fall, a team of scientists and environmental experts joined forces to study the effects of sediment on the bay's aquatic ecosystem to find out if changes in the watershed have improved the quality of sediment entering the bay.

More information, visit the [Presque Isle Bay Area of Concern webpage](#).

Link: [Tom Ridge Environmental Center, Presque Isle](#)

Chesapeake Bay Report Shows Degraded Waters, But Restoration Advances

The Federal/State Chesapeake Bay Program partnership this week released its [Chesapeake Bay 2006 Health and Restoration Assessment reports](#) saying significant advances were made in restoration efforts through newly-focused programs, legislation and/or funding, but year-to-year results were mixed and the overall health of the Bay remains degraded.

These reports were developed to provide a clear and concise synopsis of Chesapeake Bay health and the on-the-ground restoration efforts taking place across the bay watershed.

"While the partnership is making strides in certain restoration efforts, there are significant challenges ahead," said Jeff Lape, director of the Chesapeake Bay Program Office. "We are counting on the continued resolve of all our partners to forge ahead to reach our Chesapeake Bay goals."

A summary of findings in the Health Assessment include:

- To-date, less than one-third of water quality goals have been met;
- The Bay's habitats and lower food webs are at about one-third of desired levels; and
- Many of the Bay's fish and shellfish population remain below desired, historical levels.

Specific indicators find that in 2006, dissolved oxygen showed a significant improvement from 2005, to one of the best years on record, though at 37 percent of the goal. Chlorophyll a, a measure of algae, showed slight improvement from last year, while mid-channel water clarity declined slightly.

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In addition, 53 percent of monitored tidal rivers had chemical contaminants in fish tissue high enough to warrant fish consumption advisories in those areas.

Bottom (benthic) habitat continued to be significantly impacted in 2006, matching 2005 numbers with 41 percent of the Bay's floor considered healthy. Bay-wide acreage of underwater grasses decreased by 25 percent in 2006 to the lowest total acreage figure since 1989, covering only 59,090 acres -- or about 32 percent of the 185,000-acre restoration goal. Blue crab, oyster, and shad populations also remained well below restoration goals with levels reaching 57 percent, 9 percent, and 3 percent of goal, respectively.

With the human population in the watershed currently at over 16 million and growing by more than 170,000 residents annually, urban and suburban lands have contributed significantly to the degraded condition of the Chesapeake Bay.

To date, it is estimated that the pollution increases associated with land development, e.g. converting farms and forests to urban/suburban developments, have surpassed the gains achieved from improved landscape design and stormwater management practices.

The rapid rate of population growth and related residential and commercial development has made this pollution sector the only one in the Bay watershed to still be growing, and thus "progress" is negative.

2006 Restoration Assessment findings include:

- About half of the pollution reduction efforts needed to achieve the nutrient goals have been undertaken;
- Habitat restoration efforts are collectively less than half-way to Program goals;
- Watershed protection efforts are slightly more than two-thirds of the way toward goals; and
- A newly developed set of indicators, Fostering Chesapeake Stewardship, has reached two-thirds of its goals.

"From the 2006 data, we can see that the Bay Program partners must remain committed to cleaning up the Chesapeake," said Carlton Haywood, chair of the Bay Program's Monitoring and Assessment Subcommittee and director for program operations at the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin. "However, not all of the data we see in the 2006 report is negative. Tremendous strides have been made in an effort to restore the Bay."

Some of the noted 2006 successes include the steep reduction of harmful nutrients discharged from wastewater treatment plants. Nitrogen discharges are at 72 percent of the reduction goal while phosphorous discharges have reached 87 percent of reduction goals.

However, pollution control efforts need to be accelerated in the agricultural sector, with only 45 percent goal achievement in the reduction of nitrogen pollution from agriculture and a 49 percent goal achievement for phosphorous, the report shows.

Reopening upstream blockages to migratory fish in the Chesapeake Bay watershed is measured at 76 percent of the goal, with 2,144 miles reopened since 1990. Watershed land preservation efforts have resulted in 99 percent achievement of restoration goals with a total of 6.83 million acres permanently preserved. The forest buffer restoration goal of 2,010 miles was reached by Bay Program partners well ahead of schedule, and in 2003 the target was raised to 10,000 miles. As of 2006, 53 percent of the new goal had been achieved.

"While much has been accomplished, there is still much work left to be done," said Lape. "Restoring the Chesapeake Bay to its former glory cannot be done with government

support alone. It is up to every citizen living in the Bay watershed to become a steward of our nation's largest and most cherished estuary."

Electronic versions of the Chesapeake Bay 2006 Health & Restoration Assessment reports can be found online: [detailed indicators](#) and [expanded analysis and interpretation](#).

Link: [Proposed Resource Enhancement and Protection Act](#)

DEP Publishes Notice of Completed TMDL for Berks County Watershed

The Department of Environmental Protection this week published notice of a completed Total Maximum Daily Load Plan (TMDL) for Bernhart Creek in Berks County. ([PaB page 1922](#))

To obtain a copy of the TMDL, go to DEP's [TMDL webpage](#) or contact Joseph Adams by sending email to: josepadams@state.pa.us.

EPA, PennVEST Recognize Mine Cleanup Work, Bristol Drinking Water Facility

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week recognized AMD Reclamation, Inc., Greene County, and the Bristol Drinking Water Facility, Bucks County, their for work in protecting the environment with [2006 PISCES awards](#).

"AMD Reclamation provides an excellent example of how communities and private companies can work together to address acid mine drainage – one of Pennsylvania's most significant sources of water pollution," said Donald S. Welsh, administrator for EPA's mid-Atlantic region.

AMD Reclamation, Inc, a private company that specializes in cleaning up acid mine drainage sites, received a loan to build a treatment facility to prevent the discharge of raw mine water into surface waters in Dunkard Township, Greene County.

The creation of the acid mine drainage pond not only protected surface waters, but also allowed an existing mine to be reopened, thereby creating an economic benefit to the Greene County community.

The Bristol drinking water treatment facility has been in operation since 1874, but Aqua Pennsylvania, an independent company, purchased the facility in 1996 and made significant upgrades to the infrastructure.

"Aqua Pennsylvania represents an outstanding example of how a private utility can make dramatic improvements to support public health needs of the communities they serve," said Donald S. Welsh, administrator for EPAs mid-Atlantic region.

Improvements to the system included automating the filters and controls, installing equipment to remove solids from the water, upgrading chlorination and electrical systems, integrating a central computer system, and replacing leaking roofs. The project reduced the potential for filter failure and discharge of contaminants and eliminated structural safety hazards.

The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority selected the winners for recognition. PennVEST administers EPAs Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program in Pennsylvania.

For information, visit [EPA's PISCES award webpage](#).

April 26 Town Meeting Set on Helping Farmers Install Conservation BMPs



The Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and other partners will hold a town meeting on April 26 at the Progress Grange Hall in Centre Hall, PA to talk about a new proposal to provide farmers tax credits to install best management practices to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff called the [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act](#).

Nearly 175 miles of Centre County streams are listed on the nation’s “dirty waters” list, but not only are streams at risk, many of Centre County’s agricultural operations are struggling.

This year Pennsylvania’s legislators have an historic opportunity to reduce pollution, protect the Commonwealth’s waterways and strengthen our economy by giving farmers better tools to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff.

REAP, introduced as [House Bill 100](#) by Rep. Stern (R-Blair) and Rep. Daley (D-Washington) and as Senate Bill 690 by Sen. Brubaker (R-Lancaster), Sen. O’Pake (D-Berks) and Sen. Mike Waugh (R-York) would give farmers tax credits of up to 75 percent of the cost of installing best management practices like forested stream buffer, stream fencing and other measures.

Pennsylvania has over 13,400 miles of rivers and streams that do not meet water quality standards and REAP is another tool that can help reduce pollution going into these streams and help the Commonwealth meet its commitment to cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay.

The town meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Progress Grange Hall, 217 South Pennsylvania Ave., Centre Hall, PA.

So far over 200 people have attended a series of town hall meetings the Chesapeake Bay Foundation sponsored to educate farmers, watershed groups and other interested citizens on this important issue.

RSVP to Trudy Uffleman by sending email to: REAP@cbf.org .

Visit the [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act \(REAP\) webpage](#) for more information.

Video Blog: [REAP Promotes Clean Drinking Water](#)

Video Blog: [Stern Sponsors Innovative Approach to Reduce Nutrients](#)

Video Blog: [Daley on Water Quality Challenges Faced by Farmers](#)

Video Blog: [Helping Farmers Help the Environment](#)

Video Blog: [Help Farmers Help the Environment –Senate Ag Committee](#)

Property Management for Cleaner Streams Workshop April 25

The [Partnership for the Delaware Estuary](#), in affiliation with the Philadelphia Water Department and The Friends of the Poquessing Watershed, is hosting a local workshop entitled “[Property Management for Cleaner Streams](#)” on April 25.

The program will be held from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. in Room 130 of the Community College of Philadelphia’s Northeast Regional Center, located at 12901 Townsend Road.

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Representatives from schools, corporations, businesses, municipalities and non-profit organizations are welcome to attend to learn about programs that will help them protect the Poquessing Creek and other local sources of drinking water.

These programs are designed to facilitate projects such as creating native meadows, enhancing riverside habitats, implementing “responsible-housekeeping” practices and more.

“Many community leaders don’t realize they can help restore the Poquessing Creek Watershed while saving money on maintenance costs,” said Jenn Jones, environmental stewardship coordinator at the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary. “Meanwhile, these same land-use changes go a long way toward improving drinking-water quality for more than 1.6 million people in Philadelphia and Lower Bucks County.”

The Department of Environmental Protection is an additional sponsor of Property Management for Cleaner Streams.

For more details and to register, please contact Lisa Wool, program director for the Partnership, at 800-445-4935, extension 105.

Information about the programs being discussed at the workshop, including Clean Water Partners, the Corporate Environmental Stewardship Program and Sense of Place, can also be found at the [Delaware Estuary website](#).

May 3-4 Volunteer Monitoring Summit Cancelled By DEP

The Department of Environmental Protection announced this week the May 3-4 Volunteer Monitoring Summit in Gettysburg, PA is cancelled, but may be rescheduled depending on available funds.

For more information, watch the [Volunteer Monitoring Summit webpage](#) or call 717-244-6248

Dirt and Gravel Road Program Celebrates 10th Anniversary

It was 10 years ago this month that the state [Dirt and Gravel Road Program](#) was created as a result of work done by the [Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited](#) whose members documented the pollution that washed into exceptional value and high quality streams from unpaved roads.

Trout Unlimited first brought the problem of unpaved road runoff into the spotlight in 1991 when Trout Unlimited Members in Centre County’s Black Moshannon State Forest started a project to reduce pollution from dirt and gravel roads.

In 1993 a Task Force on Dirt and Gravel Roads was created to investigate the problem statewide and look at road maintenance practices. This private-public partnership include nonprofit groups, businesses and local, state and federal agencies.

During the summers of 1996 through 1998, volunteers from Trout Unlimited went out at their own expense and drove thousands of roads in an effort to identify pollution sites, ultimately identifying over 900 sites in exceptional value or high quality watersheds.

The Task Force members were later given a Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence.

The work of the Task Force convinced key decision-makers and legislators that a program was needed to deal with the pollution from unpaved roads and on April 17, 1997

Act 3 was signed into law allocating \$5 million a year for these efforts to the State Conservation Commission and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

The key elements of the program included: local control over projects and decision-making, education and training on proper maintenance and road building techniques, simplified grant applications and encouraging public-private partnerships.

Since 1998 when it received its first funding, over 719 miles of unpaved roads have been rebuilt to new standards and using new materials piloted by the new [Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies](#) with a total project value of \$34.5 million and over \$594,000 has gone into training local road maintenance staff in new maintenance and road building techniques. (*Thanks to [Michael Klimkos](#) for the reminder of this anniversary.*)

EPA, State, Environmental Groups Promote "Green Infrastructure" Solutions

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen Johnson celebrated Earth Day by signing a statement of intent at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh with four environmental organizations to promote the use of "[green infrastructure](#)" approaches, such as rain-catching roofs and gardens, to lessen sewer overflows and runoff after storms.

"Earth Day is an annual reminder to all Americans that environmental responsibility is everyone's responsibility," said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. "EPA is pleased to join our water infrastructure partners to help communities understand the environmental and economic benefits of going 'green.'"

The statement formalizes a collaborative effort among EPA, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, the Association of States and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the [Low Impact Development Center](#) to assist state, city and local governments in implementing and evaluating innovative and effective green infrastructure approaches.

Through green infrastructure techniques, stormwater and its pollutants are managed using natural systems to help absorb, infiltrate, evaporate or reuse excess stormwater instead of using traditional infrastructure that collects, stores and transports water through large, buried sewer systems.

Rain barrels and cisterns, roofs that are covered with vegetation and plantings, tree boxes, rain gardens, and pocket wetlands are just a few examples of common green infrastructure approaches.

Water is treated as an important resource rather than a waste product.

A variety of initiatives are included in the statement of intent. EPA and its partners plan to offer technical assistance, training, and outreach to potential users of green infrastructure, including states, cities, counties, utilities, environmental and public health agencies, engineers, architects, landscape architects, planners and nongovernmental organizations.

The creation of a web-based green infrastructure resource center will assist communities in complying with requirements for combined sewer overflows and municipal stormwater permits. EPA also seeks to recognize the most effective and innovative uses of green infrastructure through awards and recognition programs to meet the federal Clean Water Act goals while making models of green infrastructure techniques available nationwide.

For more information, go to [EPA's Green Infrastructure webpage](#).

NewsClip: [EPA Touts New Green Stormwater Control Project](#)

Game Commission Finalizes Wind Energy Cooperative Agreement

The Game Commission this week signed cooperative, voluntary agreements with 12 companies to avoid, minimize and potentially mitigate any adverse impacts the development of wind energy may have on the state's wildlife resources.

Brokered with substantial input from wind energy industry representatives and assistance from the Pennsylvania Wind and Wildlife Collaborative, the Game Commission's "Wind Energy Voluntary Cooperation Agreement" aims to provide guidance and consistency - in the absence of compulsory regulations for private lands - for development of wind turbines sites, which have become one of the state's fastest-growing industries.

In addition to the Game Commission, the PWWC is comprised of representatives from the Governor's Office, Fish and Boat Commission, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, as well as conservation organizations and the wind industry.

"This agreement is the product of cooperation and mutual interest to safeguard wildlife resources - as thoroughly and uniformly as possible - by all parties involved," explained Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe. "It's understood that the advancement of renewable energy initiatives can create wildlife impacts. But this agreement has established protocols that will pave the way for wind energy development to occur in a more amenable and disciplined manner that is expected to largely satisfy developers and address potential bat and bird impacts identified by the Game Commission's wildlife managers.

"The agreement standardizes wildlife monitoring and impact review procedures for primarily migrating raptors - particularly eagles - and bats. It also engenders heightened focus on project sites for direct and indirect impacts to 'priority' breeding wild birds listed in Pennsylvania's Wildlife Action Plan. But if problems for other, more common, species arise, the protocols should identify them."

Speaking on behalf of the Rendell Administration, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis and Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty offered their support for the cooperative agreement developed by the Game Commission.

"The Game Commission's voluntary agreement is a model for the nation," Secretary DiBerardinis said. "It grew out of their participation in a science-based, collaborative effort of government, industry and others that DCNR formed more than a year ago to work on wind power siting guidelines. We appreciate the Game Commission's strong commitment to that process, and we commend the agency for the agreement it has crafted. This work benefits the citizens of Pennsylvania and is appropriate to the unique natural resources we're all striving to protect."

"We think the Game Commission and those companies who sign the Wind Energy Voluntary Cooperative Agreement have taken a good first step in assessing the impacts of birds and other wildlife," said Timothy Schaeffer, PhD, Executive Director of [Audubon](#)



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[Pennsylvania](#), the state office of the national Audubon Society. “We are pleased that the Game Commission is taking a leadership role in trying to balance wind power development with the birds for which it has stewardship responsibility.

“Audubon would offer a few suggestions for strengthening future agreements, including expanding the pre- and post-construction monitoring requirements to better account for seasonal variation in bird migration.

“We believe that the one year of pre-construction monitoring and two years of post-construction monitoring required in the agreement should be expanded to two and three years, respectively. Bird will use different ridges from year-to-year, and we think it is prudent to capture that variation.

“We would also encourage the Commission to work with members of the Wind and Wildlife Collaborative to develop more thorough analyses of the potential and actual impacts on migrating songbirds and in tact forest ecosystems. The 60 percent of Pennsylvania that is forested is home to globally significant populations of songbirds, and we need to do everything we can to maintain our global stewardship responsibility while encouraging alternative energy.”

The Game Commission's WEVC Agreement enhances the troubleshooting capacity of the Commonwealth's standard review process, the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory, by gathering new information for the construction or project site. The agreement's protocols establish current, site-specific reviews to measure pre- and post-construction wildlife activities and seasonal events, including site visitation and usage and migration, and will lead to a better understanding of the site's ecology.

Those companies who signed voluntary agreements today are (listed in alphabetical order): AES Headwaters Wind, L.L.C. of Arlington, VA; AES Keystone Wind, L.L.C. of Arlington, VA; Airtricity, Inc. of Austin, TX; CPV Wind County Line, L.L.C. of Braintree, MA; Energy Unlimited, Inc. of West Conshohocken, PA; Freedom Wind Energy, L.L.C of White Oak, PA; Gamesa Energy USA of Philadelphia, PA; Iberdrola Renewable Energies USA, LTD of Radnor, PA; PPM Atlantic Renewable of Washington, D.C.; ReEnergy, L.L.C. of Arnold, MD; UPC Wind Management, L.L.C. of Newton, MA; and US Wind Force, L.L.C. of Wexford, PA.

Under the agreement, a cooperator, or site developer, must notify the Game Commission at least 14 months in advance of wind energy site construction to ensure the agency has sufficient time to assess the land's importance to wildlife and whether species of special conservation concern traverse, nest, feed or rest in it throughout the year or during spring and fall migrations.

Notification includes details of the project's infrastructure, topographic maps, demarcation of electrical transmission lines, and planned surface impacts. The agency's initial review - limited to 45 days - will help identify wildlife that use the land - both year-round and seasonally - and assess species use of the land and the air space directly above it.

If a project is proposed for construction in one of Pennsylvania's "Important Bird Areas," or within an area supporting "birds of greatest conservation concern," field survey work will include checks to confirm or deny the presence of nesting birds one day in May and two in June. Additional survey work may be required for state-listed birds and mammals known to inhabit the site.

The agreement also requires the project area to be checked for caves, abandoned mine portals, particularly prevalent in the Pennsylvania's Appalachian Mountains and Ridge and Valley province, or other openings in the ground that bats use as winter

hibernacula. Additionally, the field review includes raptor surveys to determine the number, height of flight, time of day, flight path, avoidance behavior and species that pass through the project area in the spring and fall.

Another important facet of the agreement is post-construction bat and bird mortality monitoring. Mortality monitoring is the most crucial work conducted because it is used to develop estimates of the number of birds and bats are being killed at a specific site. If high mortality is occurring on a site, or at a particular turbine, discussions about remedial action would follow.

"Conducting pre-construction mortality surveys and project reviews provides the Game Commission with a means to measure its initial risk assessments," said Bill Capouillez, Game Commission Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management director. "This critical information has been sought by Pennsylvania and nationally for some time. In the ongoing absence of this information, we find ourselves continually examining the same impact questions without having reliable data to make valid scientific conclusions. The post-construction survey work will provide a more complete understanding of a project's impact on wildlife and assess whether more must be done to further protect birds and mammals of special concern."

For centuries, migrating bats and birds of prey have faced few obstacles in their migration corridors as they travel between wintering and breeding ranges. Other than an occasional collision with skyscraper windows, communication and electrical towers, and aircraft, these well-traveled routes have historically provided safe ways with seasonal wind currents for birds and bats to do interstate and transcontinental travel. Wind turbines, given their dominant presence on any mountaintop, harbor the potential to change nature's way, if sited without concern for consequence.

"The cooperation agreement lays the groundwork from which we can build and better manage Pennsylvania's unfolding wind energy program," emphasized Dan Brauning, who supervises the Game Commission's Wildlife Diversity Section. "Pennsylvania's private-property ridge-tops are prime real estate for wind farms and we must play a more active role in their development if we are to ensure that potential wildlife impacts are considered and addressed. Unfettered siting will not serve the best interests of wildlife or the countless Pennsylvanians who consider wildlife an invaluable natural resource."

The [Pennsylvania Wind and Wildlife Collaborative](#) is working to cultivate and fine-tune specific principles, policies, best management practices, guidelines, and tools that can be used to assess risk to habitat and wildlife from wind power development, and to mitigate for the impact of that development.

Currently, Pennsylvania is home to at least seven operating wind turbine sites. Another 60 or so currently are being investigated for possible construction. About 15,000 individual wind turbines were sited in America as of late 2001.

Within just the last month, the Game Commission has been provided an early opportunity to review and comment on proposed projects that would encompass nearly 40,000 acres.

Without the Wind Voluntary Cooperation Agreement framework in place, it is doubtful the agency would have known about these projects early enough in the industry's decision-making process to be nearly as effective in avoiding and minimizing potential bat and bird impacts.

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"This agreement promotes teamwork and has reasonable requirements," Capouillez emphasized. "It certainly symbolizes Pennsylvania's concern for wildlife, which has been reaffirmed by the wind-energy partners who have chosen to be a part of it.

Several developers started conducting business under the agreement guidelines before it was signed. The Game Commission already has received feedback from many other wind-energy developers and states that recognize the mutual benefits of Pennsylvania's agreement and may well follow suit with similar types of initiatives."

For more information visit DCNR's [Pennsylvania Wind and Wildlife Collaborative](#) webpage.

NewsClip: [Wind Energy Firms Agree to Wildlife Pact](#)

Free Energy Harvest, PEDA Grant Writing Workshop April 27 in Norristown

The Southeast Office of the Department of Environmental Protection will hold a grant writing workshop for [Energy Harvest](#) and [PA Energy Development Authority](#) grants on April 27 starting at 9:00 a.m.

The program will be held at the DEP office at 2 East Main St., Norristown.

Non-profits, local government, educational institutions, conservation districts, watershed organizations and businesses interested in applying for grants should attend.

Advanced registration is required as seating is limited.

To register contact Richard Sheckler at 484-250-5940.

May 3 Workshop in Williamsport on Energy Harvest, PEDA Grant Writing

The Northcentral Office of the Department of Environmental Protection will hold a grant writing workshop for [Energy Harvest](#) and [PA Energy Development Authority](#) grants on May 3 starting at 10:00 a.m.

The program will be held at the DEP office at 208 W. Third St., Williamsport.

Non-profits, local government, educational institutions, conservation districts, watershed organizations and businesses interested in applying for grants should attend.

Advanced registration is required as seating is limited.

To register, send your name and contact information by email to:

dshimmel@state.pa.us or call 570-327-3568.

Only Two More Communities Can Qualify for Free Solar Energy System

There are only two free solar energy systems left as part of the [Pennsylvania Clean Energy Communities Campaign](#) which have already been awarded to 18 communities.

This campaign is a partnership between the Sustainable Development Fund of Pennsylvania and SmartPower. With global warming, energy efficiency, and clean power at the forefront of news today, local communities are aggressively looking for ways to begin using clean energy.

This program assists cities, boroughs and townships located in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties with purchasing clean energy.

The basis of the campaign is to award a free 1 Kilowatt Solar Energy System to the first 20 communities that commit to purchasing 20 percent of their electricity from clean

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energy by 2010. This Solar Energy System has a market value of \$10,000, so it is highly coveted by these municipalities.

To qualify, communities need to pass a formal resolution to commit to purchase 20 percent of their electricity from clean energy by 2010 and community residents and businesses must sign up to purchase clean energy from one of the local clean energy suppliers.

The PA Clean Energy Communities Campaign also requires that either 7 percent of the local households must purchase clean energy or the new clean energy purchases within the community must be the equivalent to 60,000 kWh per month, approximately 200 new customers

“Marple is happy to be one of the 20 towns in our region that have made the commitment to purchase 20 percent of our energy from clean renewable energy being generated in PA. It is important that government set the example so we can generate more of our energy needs locally and reduce imported oil,” stated John Butler, Marple Township Commissioner.

“Thanks to the hard work of SmartPower, the Pennsylvania Clean Energy Communities Campaign is doing much to build awareness and support for clean energy in southeastern Pennsylvania,” said Roger Clark, manager for technology and policy at the Sustainable Development Fund. “SmartPower is doing a great job growing the demand for clean energy in southeastern Pennsylvania by helping local municipalities and their residents sign up to purchase clean energy and by working cooperatively with the clean energy marketers.”

“Already 18 communities have committed to this campaign, making it clear that municipalities are ready to do their part to make a difference.” stated Molly Tsongas, SmartPower Pennsylvania State Director. “SmartPower works closely with all local community members to help them sign up citizens in their communities for clean energy. We want every municipality to become a Clean Energy Community,” continued Tsongas.

For more background, visit the [Pennsylvania Clean Energy Communities Campaign webpage](#).

Giant Eagle Store Uses 20 Percent Less Energy Than Traditional Supermarket

It’s not just the produce that is green in Giant Eagle Inc.’s remodeled store in Pittsburgh’s Shadyside neighborhood. The whole building is now certified “green” for its energy efficiency, high air quality, water conservation, and even a living “green” roof.

The 67,000-square-foot store earned a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, Silver Certified Commercial Interior designation, indicating it met a broad array of environmental performance benchmarks. LEED is a national green building rating system administered by the U.S. Green Building Council.

With more than 60 LEED-certified buildings, Pennsylvania is among the national leaders, second only to California, in energy efficient construction.

The LEED designation builds on Giant Eagle’s commitment to environmental stewardship. In February it was recognized with a 2007 ENERGY STAR Sustained Excellence Award by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for outstanding contributions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency. In 2004, it opened the world’s first LEED-certified supermarket in Ohio.

Giant Eagle's LEED-certified Shadyside store is designed to consume 20 percent less energy than comparable, conventionally designed supermarkets, using increased insulation, a green roof and integrated natural lighting. All of the store's electricity is produced by green energy sources, such as wind power.

Other green features include advanced water conservation and air quality sensors to ensure fresh, clean air throughout the store. Air quality is improved by the use of no-ozone-depleting refrigerants in its refrigeration and cooling systems, in addition to adhesives, sealants, paints, carpeting and wood products that are low in volatile organic compounds.

NewsClip: [Giant Eagle's Shadyside Store Gets Green Designation](#)

100th Annual Conference of the Air & Waste Management Association In Pittsburgh

The Air & Waste Management Association's [Annual Conference & Exhibition](#), scheduled for June 26 -29 in Pittsburgh, will celebrate 100 years of environmental stewardship.

"A&WMA's 100th Conference & Exhibition is a celebration of our membership – the scientists, engineers, regulators, academics, lawyers, and other professionals – whose work is often unsung when we look back on a century of environmental progress," said current A&WMA President, Tony van der Vooren. "These are the professionals who meet the complex environmental challenges facing us today. The kind of networking, education, and idea exchange fostered at A&WMA's annual conference will inspire those future solutions."

A&WMA's 2007 conference and exhibition will open June 26 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, the world's largest green building. Christine Todd Whitman, former administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and one-time governor of New Jersey, will keynote the event on June 28.

Also addressing the conference will be Carnegie Mellon University Professor Lester Lave, internationally renowned expert on the complex relationships between environmental issues and political economies. John Bachmann, recently retired from EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, will discuss the successes and failures of U.S. National Ambient Air Quality Standards in what promises to be a lively, interactive session.

Additionally, the conference agenda includes three days of professional development courses, a comprehensive technical program that looks at the latest on specific regulations, and opportunities to explore new developments, methodologies, and topic areas in the environmental business. Exhibit hall displays will provide a closer look at the world's leading environmental products and services.

A&WMA traces its roots to the establishment of the International Association for the Prevention of Smoke, convened in 1907 by municipal smoke inspectors concerned about emissions from railroads and industry.

As early as 1916, the group advocated a national "Cleaner Air Week," and in 1958, the Association expanded to include environmental professionals whose primary responsibilities included work with hazardous wastes. Today, A&WMA focuses on air quality, waste issues, and environmental management, and continues to expand its purview as the environmental profession evolves.

"Holding this conference in Pittsburgh, our headquarters city, will be a distinct reminder to attendees just how far we have come in environmental stewardship," van der

Vooren said. “We will certainly find inspiration in once-smoky Pittsburgh, which has been reborn through the growth and success of its environmental businesses and organizations.”

During the conference, the Association will unveil its “History of A&WMA” display, featuring a look back at key people and events that shaped A&WMA and the environmental profession over the past century. The exhibit will include original notes and drafts of the Clean Air Act, as well as photos and other documents of significance.

For more information, visit [A&WMA’s 2007 Annual Conference & Exhibition webpage](#).

Wildlife for Everyone Foundation, Game Commission Announce Land Purchases

The Board of Game Commissioners this week approved four options that will increase the State Game Lands system by about 87 acres and the Wildlife for Everyone Endowment Foundation announced a donation of 30 acres adjacent to the Flight 93 Memorial.

The announcements include:

- In **Haycock Township, Bucks County**, the Board approved the purchase of property adjoining SGL 157. The parcel - 50 acres of mostly forested land with a three-acre wetlands - is being purchased through the Natural Lands Trust, of Media, and the Bucks County Open Space Program, through funding by a Bucks County bonding initiative, and provides exceptional white-tailed deer habitat. An unnamed tributary of Haycock Creek runs through the parcel. The purchase price is \$82,000, with no new reservations. It will be paid using escrowed funds provided by Ladner Inc., of Hummelstown, for a mining lease on SGL 264 in Dauphin County.
- In **Shade Township, Somerset County**, the Board approved the donation of 30 acres near SGL 93 from Waste Management Inc. of Latrobe. The donation, made possible through the Wildlife For Everyone Foundation, State College, will provide additional protection from development of the Flight 93 flight path. The wetland property, developed from mitigation for wetlands impacted by a nearby landfill, provides waterfowl habitat.
- In **Montgomery Township, Indiana County**, the Board approved a land exchange involving two lots of SGL 262 totaling 1.67 acres that will allow Arcadia Industrial Corp, of Indiana, to expand its current manufacturing facilities. Safety zone conflicts with the plant already impede hunter use of the land being offered. In exchange for the lots, the Game Commission will receive 6.68 acres in Grant Township adjoining SGL 262. The parcel is forested riparian habitat and will provide additional road frontage/access along Pine Vale Road. The acquisition of this land will further protect a portion of Little Mahoning Creek, a trout stream.
- In **St. Clair Township, Westmoreland County**, the Board approved a land exchange involving a 150-foot by 337-foot easement (1.16 acres) on SGL 42 that will be used to construct an emergency spillway on the existing High Ridge Water Authority reservoir adjacent to the game lands. In exchange, the Authority will convey a 2.93-acre parcel and an easement that will provide improved access to a large portion of SGL 42. Sugar Run passes through the tract being acquired by the agency.

"The Game Commission's ability to purchase and preserve lands for wildlife and for public hunting and trapping has always been limited by rising property values and the availability of funds," said Carl G. Roe, agency executive director. "The agency's last license fee increase was in 1999, and since that time, we have made considerable cuts in

the agency's budget to keep pace with inflation and to offset reduced license sales. Consequently, for the foreseeable future, it seems likely that most of this agency's land acquisitions will be tempered by the availability of escrowed funds, assistance from conservation partners and property donations. We'd like to do more, but it's a financial impossibility."

The [Wildlife for Everyone Endowment Foundation](#) was established in 2004 to provide permanent private support for wildlife habitat enhancement, wildlife research and education, land preservation, and for the establishment of a Wildlife Research and Education Center.

Game Commission Awards Funding for Priority Wildlife Projects

The Game Commission this week approved two projects that will benefit northern goshawks and eastern red bats funded from an allocation provided by the [State Wildlife Grant Program](#) and regional endangered species funds, administered through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Federal Aid Program.

The projects will be provided a combined \$37,000 in funding. The projects approved by the Board include:

- **Migration Telemetry for the Eastern Red Bat:** This \$27,000 project will finance the capture, radio tagging and tracking - via telemetry - of red bats during migrations to collect information on migratory patterns and mortality at wind-energy facilities. The project will be jointly funded by the Wild Resource Conservation Fund and will be conducted by Mountain Watershed Association, Inc.
- **Northern Goshawk Status and Response to Forest Management:** This \$10,000 project assesses northern goshawk populations using standardized protocols to evaluate their response to forest conditions and to update population modeling for this bird of prey. The project will be jointly funded by the Wild Resource Conservation Fund and will be conducted by Slippery Rock University.

"State Wildlife Grants have made a tremendous difference for wildlife throughout the Commonwealth," noted Carl G. Roe, agency executive director. "The management of Pennsylvania's birds and mammals covers a broad front that becomes more challenging - and usually more expensive - with each passing year. When we can get some help from universities, conservation organizations and specialized researchers, as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we welcome it."

The U.S. Congress has recently reauthorized the State Wildlife Grants Program in the 2007 fiscal year; Pennsylvania will receive \$1.96 million.

For more information, visit the [State Wildlife Grants Program webpage](#).

May 19 Native Plant Sale in York, Take a Walk on the Wildside

The [Mid-Atlantic Ecological Landscapes Partnership](#) (MAEscapes) announced it is sponsoring the 11th Annual Native Plant Sale on May 19, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at Nixon County Park, York County.

Why native plants? Mid-Atlantic native plants occurred here before settlement by Europeans, are adapted to the region's climate, soils, and moisture conditions, and include: grasses, sedges, rushes, ferns, clubmosses, wildflowers (annuals, biennials, perennials), and herbaceous and vines, shrubs and trees.

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You can create beautiful landscapes of native plants that conserve water, reduce the needs of fertilizer and pesticide uses, provide wildlife habitat, and help MAEscapes conserve native plants for future generations.

Over 75 species of native ferns, flowers, herbs, shrubs, and trees are available for purchase. All plants are hardy, well rooted nursery grown plants from established local growers. Plan to find your old favorites or “take a walk on the wildside” and expand your landscape and gardens with new species of native plants adapted to the Mid-Atlantic region.

Why shop here? Opportunity to “ask the expert,” Master Gardeners will be onsite all day to answer your questions, provide planting, growing and maintenance information, and assist you with choosing “the right plant for the right place.”

MAEscapes is a public-private partnership between Doyle’s Farm Nursery, GardenScapes Inc., Mary Kline RLA, Penn State Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Susquehanna Piedmont Preservation Society, The Garden’s Edge, and the York County Conservation District . The purpose of the native plant sale is to raise funding for MAEscapes public education and outreach programs..

Come see our public Demonstration Landscapes located at the Pleasant Acres York County ANNEX, in Springettsbury.

For more information, visit the [MAEscapes webpage](#) or call the Penn State Cooperative Extension at 717-840-7408.

Video Blog: [Go Native With Wild Plants!](#)

DCNR Explores Innovative Soil Solutions to Boost Survival of Urban Trees

City life is tough on trees, but the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is exploring ways to change that.

Pollution, people and automobiles pose major threats to trees above sidewalks, but below the surface, compacted soil necessary to lay the footpaths surrounding trees often destroys the structure of the soil needed for the movement of air and water and the growth of plant roots.

Starting next week, downtown Harrisburg will serve as a test site for the use of a new material developed by Cornell University to address this problem. The material, called “[CU Structural Soil](#),” is being used to plant trees at the Rachel Carson State Office Building at Fourth and Market streets, home to the departments of Conservation and Natural Resources and Environmental Protection.

“Earth Day and Arbor Day lead right into spring planting season, making this a great time to focus on the important role trees play in urban areas,” DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis said. “Picture a tree-lined street, and then one without trees. Where would you rather work, live and shop?”

On April 20, Black Landscape Contracting and volunteers will be planting bare root Freeman Maples and Swamp White Oak trees on Third, Fourth, Chestnut and Market streets. Bare root trees are less expensive, retain roots and make planting by volunteers more manageable.

Mechanicsburg-based Black Landscape Contracting had to become licensed to produce the structural soil, which was used for eight trees on Market and Fourth streets.

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Sites other than Fourth and Market streets are being planted without soil replacement as a comparison. Later this year, trees on Dewberry Street will be planted with root balls in structural soil.

The project to replace nearly 30 trees is a collaboration between the Harristown Development Corp. and DCNR's Bureau of Forestry, with a \$30,000 grant from Pennsylvania Community Forests.

"We applaud DCNR and our partners at PPL and the City of Harrisburg for using their resources, enthusiasm and cooperation for this exciting beautification project for downtown Harrisburg," said Brad Jones, vice president for community development at Harristown Development Corp..

Twenty-six dead and dying trees were removed in March by PPL as a community contribution, and nine healthy trees were pruned. Work to remove sidewalk bricks in preparation for the plantings was done by youth from the Tressler Care Wilderness Center in Boiling Springs.

The project is to be completed by May to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Rachel Carson, the renowned writer and naturalist who is credited with the start of the environmental movement. Carson was born on May 27, 1907, in Springdale.

Additional partners include the Department of General Services and the City of Harrisburg departments of Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and Office of the City Engineer.

For more information, visit the [Cornell Urban Horticulture Institute](http://CornellUrbanHorticultureInstitute.org). For more information about urban forestry, contact Ellen Roane of the DCNR Bureau of Forestry at 717-705-2825 or eroane@state.pa.us.

Pennsylvania First State to Preserve 350,000 Acres of Farmland

Pennsylvania set a national record this week by becoming the first state in the nation to preserve 350,000 acres of farmland. The goal was reached by the approval of 70 farms for preservation under the Farmland Preservation Program.

"Pennsylvania is the national leader in farmland preservation, allowing production agriculture to remain a viable industry in the state," said Gov. Rendell. "Agriculture is a tremendous economic driver and it is Pennsylvania's number-one industry; every measure must be taken to secure its future for the benefit our producers and consumers."

The achievement was celebrated at the Fred and Grace Yearick Farm in Clinton County. The 79-acre crop farm was preserved today and also recognized by Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff as a Century Farm.

The Century and Bicentennial Farm program acknowledges Pennsylvania farms that have been in operation for more than 100 and 200 years. There are nearly 1,920 farms with this distinction across the state.

"Agriculture is an integral part of Pennsylvania life. It's part of our rich heritage and it will play a leading role in our future," said Secretary Wolff. "By preserving 350,000 acres, we are preserving a part of our history and culture for present and future generations, and making an investment in our future economic well-being at the same time."

The board preserved 5,633 acres on 70 farms in Adams, Allegheny, Armstrong, Berks, Butler, Cambria, Clinton, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Fayette, Franklin, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lawrence, Lebanon, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Montour,

Northampton, Perry, Snyder, Sullivan, Wayne, Westmoreland and York counties. The Armstrong County farm is the first within the county to be preserved.

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](#).

Earth Day Celebration Brings Agriculture to Urban Philadelphia Students

Students from the [West Philadelphia Achievement Charter Elementary School](#) grew green thumbs and learned about agriculture’s role in preserving the environment at an Earth Day celebration this week in Philadelphia.

The Department of Agriculture partnered with the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, the Penn State Cooperative Extension and [The Growing Connection](#) in the celebration, which was highlighted by the unveiling of 10 EarthBoxes that will be used by students to grow vegetables for the community.

“By celebrating Earth Day, we are recognizing agriculture’s commitment to preserving and protecting the environment,” said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. “Today’s event allows us to increase agricultural awareness among the urban community, while giving students a first-hand look at how their food is produced.”

Representatives from Penn State Cooperative Extension and members from Philadelphia’s W.B. Saul High School FFA Chapter helped in Wolff’s lesson about soil.

The EarthBox project, funded by the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, is teaching students agricultural principles through vegetable production. Students will also be part of The Growing Connection, an affiliate of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The Growing Connection provides school gardening programs the opportunity to grow food, conduct horticultural experiments and share lessons and experiences with participants from other countries including Ghana, Mexico and Nicaragua.

Penn State Cooperative Extension will form an after-school 4-H program to help maintain the EarthBoxes through the summer.

For more information, visit the [The Growing Connection website](#) or contact the EarthBox project contact MeeCee Baker at 717-705-9512 or send email to: c-mebaker@state.pa.us .

High School Students Compete in 22nd Annual Westmoreland Envirothon

You might say its “April Madness,” as students from 11 area high schools and one home-school program move into the final weeks of preparation for the annual countywide environmental competition in Westmoreland County.

This exciting academic event, known as the Westmoreland County “Envirothon,” will pit teams of ninth- to twelfth-grade students against each other in



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outdoor situations that test their knowledge of the natural world. This year's competition will be held at Mammoth Park on May 7.

During this hands-on competition, students may be asked to measure a tree...analyze water from a stream...or feel handfuls of earth to identify the type soil. They will work as a team to answer questions of fact, and use their critical thinking to find solutions to reality-based situations, such as how to balance the use and protection of our natural resources. Topics include: forests, soil, wildlife, aquatic environments, and this year's special challenge: alternative energy.

More than 100 students are scheduled to participate in this 22nd annual countywide competition, representing Burrell, Derry Area Senior, Franklin Regional, Greensburg Central Catholic, Greensburg Salem, Kiski Area, The Kiski School, Mount Pleasant, Norwin Senior, Southmoreland, and Yough Senior high schools...as well as students from The Westmoreland Enrichment Classes (a home-school team based in Norwin). Each has registered at least one team in this year's competition; some schools have registered two teams.

The winning Westmoreland County team will go on to compete in the Pennsylvania State Envirothon on May 21 and 22, at Penn State University, University Park, in Centre County. Last year's Westmoreland County Envirothon winners, the Westmoreland Enrichment Classes, placed ninth overall in last year's state competition, which included a field of 64 teams.

State winners move next to the ultimate challenge – a final national/international competition called the Canon Envirothon. This year, the national/international competition will be held at Hobart & William Smith Colleges in New York from July 29 to August 4.

In the previous 21 years of competition, Westmoreland County teams have gone on to win the state championship four times . . . placed among the top three teams in the state seven times . . . and competed nationally three times, placing sixth, fifth, and second.

A number of cooperating agencies assist the Westmoreland Conservation District in hosting the county Envirothon, including: The Game Commission, the DCNR Bureau of Forestry, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Carnegie Museum of Natural History's Powdermill Nature Reserve, and Penn State Cooperative Extension Westmoreland County.

Giant Eagle is a major corporate underwriter of the 2007 Westmoreland County Envirothon.

For more information, visit the [Westmoreland County Conservation District](#) and [PA Envirothon](#) websites.

EPA Staff Served As Teachers for Students at Upper Darby Middle School

Nearly 100 employees from EPA's joined and other organizations acted as substitute environmental science teachers at the Beverly Hills Middle School in Upper Darby, Pa., to celebrate Earth Day 2007.

The 1,500 students in grades six, seven and eight learned about radiation, lead poisoning, wetlands, recycling, climate change, and ozone, as well as careers in science and the environment.

In addition to EPA, employees from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forestry, Upper Darby Police Department, Upper Darby Fire Department and volunteers

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from the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Delaware County joined in teaching 62 classes at the middle school.

A highlight of the day was the ribbon-cutting of the 14'x14' restored and refurbished greenhouse or botany lab, which had most recently been used for storage. EPA and collaborating organizations provided lighting, heating, water, seed trays, seeds, and plantings. VISTA volunteers worked with local retailers to help provide donated materials.

“This is an outstanding environmental education effort,” EPA Regional Administrator Donald S. Welsh said of the 2007 Earth Day project. “Students at Beverly Hills Middle School have gotten an excellent foundation in protecting the environment, and the restored botany lab will help them develop a sense of responsibility and stewardship for the planet. All of our volunteers deserve to be congratulated for all their hard work.”

Teachers will use the restored greenhouse as a living classroom and will learn how to care for the plants, which will include basil, dill, sunflowers, marigolds and bush beans.

Help Wanted: PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers Seeks Executive Director

The [PA Organization for Watersheds & Rivers](#) is seeking a full-time Executive Director responsible for employee management and supervision, financial management, program direction, fundraising, compliance with federal and state laws, and implementation of the group's strategic plan.

POWR advocates for the protection, restoration and enjoyment of Pennsylvania's water resources and conducting programs that foster stewardship, communication, leadership and action.

[A more complete job description is available online.](#)

Quick Clips

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

[Monroe Environmental Center Recognizes Local Individuals](#)

[PV Students Participate in Envirothon](#)

[Enjoying the Envirothon](#)

[Institutions Take Action in Honor of Environmental Pioneer Rachel Carson](#)

[Biking: Development of Southwest Region's Trails](#)

[Grant Will Bring More People to Delaware River Water Trail](#)

[Local Farmers Tell Lawmakers About Financial Woes](#)

[Governor Proclaims April 22-28 Energy Conservation Week, Energy Expo April 26](#)

[More Manure to Energy for Lancaster County](#)

[Renewed Push for Ethanol, Without the Corn](#)

[Ethanol Jacking Up Cost of Fertilizer](#)

[Rendell Announces Arrival of Solar Matereial Manufacturer in York](#)

[Doylestown Borough Joins Clean Energy Campaign](#)

[Survey: Most Unwilling to Make Changes to End Global Warming](#)

[Op-Ed: World Needs US to Be Moral Leader on Global Warming](#)

[PPL Advises Consumers to Prepare for 20-30% Rate Hike](#)

[Power Line Fight Brews](#)

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[Editorial: Make Coal Cleaner](#)
[Linking Local Diners and Local Produce](#)
[Bucks Officials OK Farm for Preservation](#)
[Editorial: Every Family Can Help Eliminate Litter](#)
[\\$927,000 in Grants Help Businesses Increase Use of Recyclable Materials](#)
[Task Force Kicks Off Hazardous Waste Collections in McCandless](#)
[EPA Conducts Pollution Response Drill on Susquehanna River](#)
[Forum: Toxic Women, Teresa Heinz](#)
[Liability Protection Needed for Deer Hunting](#)
[Editorial: A List of Species](#)
[Agencies Plan Drill to Test TMI's Emergency Plan](#)
[Editorial: Delay in Updating Regulations Only Invites Another Disaster](#)
[Why Didn't Eagle Egg Hatch?](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Schuylkill Conservation District Gets Governor's Award](#)
[Cowanshannock Creek Watershed Assn. Honored for Making a Difference](#)
[Conservation Reserve Program Seeks Farmers' Support](#)
[Giving a Stream Its Curves](#)
[EPA Touts New Green Stormwater Control Project](#)
[Borough, Group Focus on Acid Mine Drainage](#)
[Do Trout Bring in the Green?](#)
[Trout Fishermen Still Won't Be Plying Depths of Two Lakes](#)
[Conservationists Talk to Borough About Satterlee Creek Study](#)
[Nutrient Trading May Mean Big Bucks for Some, Losses for Others](#)
[Op-Ed: Farm Bill Can Help Reduce Water Pollution](#)
[PA Lawmakers Seek New Limits on NYC Reservoirs](#)
[Editorial: Keep Studying Flood Responses](#)
[How the Bay Agreement Affects Penn's Woods](#)
[Dirt Road Blues](#)
[\\$61 Million in Grants, Loans for Water Infrastructure Projects Approved](#)

Regulations

The Department of Environmental Protection is [seeking an upgrade](#) to the Ozone Designation for the Harrisburg-Carlisle-Lebanon area, the [Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton Area](#) and the [Scranton/Wilkes-Barre Area](#).

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – April 21, 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 Department of Environmental Protection published a notice rescinding certain drinking water system related guidance. Here are the details...

[Notice to Recind:](#) DEP ID: 383-2129-001. Enhanced Coagulation Calculator Spreadsheet--Version 1.1. The Enhanced Coagulation Calculator Spreadsheet--Version 1.1 is an obsolete technical guidance document that is rescinded from the Department's technical guidance inventory.

[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](#)

- **April 24** – House Game & Fisheries Committee meets to consider [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-D-Allegheny) limiting liability of landowners in connection with opening their lands for hunting and recreation. Room 205 Irvis Building. Call of Chair
- **April 24** – House State Government Committee meets to consider [House Bill 894](#) (Leach-D-Montgomery) authorizing additional reimbursements for school building construction which meets the LEED standards. Hearing Room 3, North Office. 10:00.
- **April 24** – Senate Transportation Committee public hearing on transportation funding options. Room 461. 9:30.
- **April 25** – House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Bill 496](#) (George-D-Clearfield) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and [House Bill 483](#) (Bastion-R-Somerset) creating the Mine Families First Program to provide assistance to families involved in mine rescue incidents. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 9:30.
- **April 25** – Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 352](#) (Robbins-R-Mercer) providing additional funds for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Room 8E-A East Wing. 9:30.
- **April 25** – **CANCELLED**. [DEP Small Business Compliance Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Next scheduled meeting is July 25.
- **April 25** – [DCNR Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **April 26** – [Joint Conservation Committee](#) Forestry Task Force meeting. Celebration Hall by Hoags, 2280 Commercial Blvd., State College. 10:00.
- **April 27** – Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee Listening Session. Berks County Agricultural Center, 1238 County Welfare Road, Leesport. 10:00.

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- **April 27-28:** West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium III. Genetti Hotel. Williamsport. Contact: Amy Wolfe at 570-726-3118 or send email to: awolfe@tu.org .
Video Blog: [Amy Wolfe Talks About Restoring the West Branch](#).
- **April 30** – Senate Community, Economic & Recreational Development Committee hearing on Governor’s Energy Independence Initiative and DCED budget with Secretaries Yablonsky (DCED) and McGinty (DEP). Hearing Room 1, North Office. 9:00.
- **May 1** – DEP [State Water Plan Statewide Water Resources Committee](#), Critical Water Planning Area Subcommittee meeting. 10th Floor Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **May 11** – **CHANGE**. DEP’s [Delaware Regional Water Resources Committee](#) will [convene on its alternate location](#): Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association, 12 Morris Road, Ambler. 9:30.
- **May 14** – Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee Listening Session. Mercer County Conservation District, 747 Greenville Road, Mercer. 10:00.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#) (courtesy [PA Organization for Watersheds & Rivers](#))

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

Helpful Web Links

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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

[DEP Press Releases](#) [DEP Advisory Committee Meetings & Agendas](#)

[DCNR Resource Magazine](#) [DCNR Press Releases](#)

[Fish & Boat Commission Press Releases](#) [Game Commission Press Releases](#)

Stories Invited

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

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