

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

May 8, 2006

House Environmental Chair Praises Work of Watershed Groups

Highlighting the importance of maintaining clean waterways through responsible water management is the goal of Watershed Awareness Month in Pennsylvania, said Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware), prime sponsor of [House Resolution 711](#).

“The state’s natural water system is important to the environment and the economy,” said Rep. Adolph, Majority Chairman of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. “We need to focus more attention on how best to keep these waters clean, and emphasize opportunities to join or start a local watershed group to help with the cleanup.”

Pennsylvania has 83,000 miles of rivers and streams with eight distinct river basins, including Lake Erie, Ohio River, Genesee River, Susquehanna, Delaware, Potomac, Elk and Northeast/Gunpowder.

Rep. Adolph said more than 10,762 miles of streams and rivers in Pennsylvania are so impaired that they do not meet current water quality standards.

“The countless volunteers who form our many watershed organizations are so important in the cleanup of our rivers and streams,” said Rep. Adolph. “The hours of work these volunteers give to repair the riverbanks and maintain stream quality is vital.”

Studies have shown that local watershed groups are a cost-effective investment in environmental cleanup for the state. In fact, for every \$1 invested by the state, watershed groups have matched it with \$1.25 of their own funds, more than doubling the Commonwealth’s investment.



Signs of warmer weather – snakes and violets. *Photo by Karen Hohman.*

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Session Schedule

The Senate returns to session on May 22 and the House has a non-voting session on May 8 and returns to regular session on June 5.

On the Hill

- On the Senate, House Agenda
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- Brook Trout Population Reduced in 70% of Historical Habitat in PA
- Targeted Watershed Grants Empower Partnerships in Chesapeake Bay Restoration
- State College Beneficial Water Reuse Project Wins National Award
- PUC Celebrates National Drinking Water Week, “Be Water Wise”
- Save the Date! September 21 Fifth Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration
- Results Released for 2005 Oyster Shell-Planting Program in Delaware Estuary
- Washington County Children’s Groundwater Festival Set for May 17
- Workshop on Public Notification, Emergency Response for Water Systems Set
- ClearWater Conservancy Hosts Mother’s Day Wildflower Walk May 14
- 2nd Annual Wild Resource Festival Set for May 20
- 2006-07 Wild Resource Conservation Program Grant Applications Due June 30
- Applications Due Sept. 29 for DCNR Conservation Partnership Grants
- Deer Management Assistance Program Applications Due July 1
- Harrisburg Falcon Eggs Begin to Hatch!
- PUC Has Limited Success Reducing 129% Electric Rate Increase in Pike County
- Energy Harvest, PA Energy Development Authority Grant Applications Due July 14
- Workshops in Elk, Allegheny Counties to Help Business Owners Cut Energy Costs
- Summer Ozone Season Begins in Pennsylvania
- EPA Recognizes Health Philadelphia Organizations for Protecting the Environment
- GIS and Community Demographics Workshops in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia
- Out-of-State Waste Disposed in PA Down for 4th Year in a Row
- Hard to Recycle Collection Event in Pittsburgh May 20
- Pennsylvania NRCS Office Has New Director - Craig Derickson

See & Hear

- How You Can Protect Our Watersheds - Part I

Go To the Watershed Awareness Month Events Section

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

On the Hill

On the Senate, House Agenda/Bills Moving

Here's the rundown of what's on the calendars and in committees—

Calendars

The House will start with these bills of interest on its May 8 Calendar-- [House Bill 1588](#) providing for the fluoridation of public water; and [House Bill 2067](#) setting limits on state spending through a constitutional amendment. [Senate Bill 868](#) increasing the forest land in-lieu of tax payment,

Senate/House Bills Moving

The Senate and House were both in session this week and as a result bills and resolutions were flying around. Here's the rundown.

On the Governor's Desk

Farmland Preservation: the Senate and House took final action on [Senate Bill 723](#) (Wenger-R-Lancaster) providing for definitions and legislative report under the Agricultural Area Security law and it now goes to the Governor for his action, after it is signed in both Chambers.

Community Facility Grants/Film Credits: [House Bill 983](#) (T.Stevenson-R-Allegheny) revising procedures for Community Facilities Grants and making changes to the film production tax credit was approved by the Senate and sent to the Governor for his action.

Downtown Relocation Law: The House concurred in Senate amendments to [House Bill 218](#) (Reed-D-Indiana) which requires the Commonwealth to look at locating state offices in downtown areas and the bill now goes to the Governor for his action.

Senate

New Budget Rule: [Senate Resolution 159](#) (Brightbill-R-Lebanon) requiring any budget amendment increasing spending to have an off-setting reduction in spending for the 2006-07 budget was adopted by the Senate.

Drinking Water Week: [Senate Resolution 259](#) (sponsored by Sen. Musto-D-Luzerne, and Sen. Mary Jo White-R-Venango) designating May 7-13 as "Drinking Water Week" was adopted by the Senate.

NewsClip: [Gov. Rendell Declares Safe Drinking Water Week](#)

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House

Tax Incentives for Land Conservation: [House Bill 1895](#) (Fairchild-R-Union) proposing a constitutional amendment to provide tax incentives for land conservation was passed by the House and now goes to the Senate for action.

Spill Response: [House Bill 2169](#) (McGill-R-Montgomery) providing definitions for terms related to responding to accidents and spills on highways was passed by the House and goes to the Senate.

Clean Streams Penalties: [House Bill 2042](#) (Reichley-R-Berks) increasing penalties under the Clean Streams Law, was passed by the House and goes to the Senate for action.

Rubberized Asphalt: [House Resolution 456](#) (R.Miller-R-York) directing the Joint State Government Commission to study the use of rubberized asphalt in other states and how it could contribute to solving the used tire problem in Pennsylvania was adopted by the House.

Hiking Week: [House Resolution 680](#) (Argall-R-Schuylkill) designating the week of May 27 through June 4 as “Pennsylvania Hiking Week” was adopted by the House.

Arbor Day: [House Resolution 706](#) (Marsico-R-Dauphin) designating April 28 as “Arbor Day” was adopted by the House.

Bike to Work: [House Resolution 747](#) (Baldwin-R-Lancaster) designating May as “National Bike Month” and May 15 through 19 as “Bike to Work Week” and May 19 as “Bike to Work Day” was adopted by the House.

Rachel Carson Day: The House adopted [House Resolution 702](#) (Josephs-D-Philadelphia) designating May 27 as Rachel Carson Day in recognition of the birthday of the author and environmentalist from Springdale, Allegheny County. She would have been 99 this year.

Flood Insurance: the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee reported out [House Bill 243](#) (Simmel-R-Berks) to provide premium assistance for property owners eligible for federal flood insurance.

In-Lieu of Tax Payments: [Senate Bill 868](#) (Scarnati-R-Warren) increasing the forest land in-lieu of tax payments was referred to and reported from House Appropriations.

Land Trust Reimbursements: [Senate Bill 940](#) (Waugh-R-York) which would set aside up to \$200,000 per year from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Fund to reimburse Land Trusts for expenses incurred in acquiring agricultural conservation easements was referred to House Appropriations.

Storage Tanks: [House Bill 1195](#) (Yudichak-D-Luzerne) that makes changes to the program to help underground tank owners upgrade tanks was reported out of the House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee was referred to House Appropriations.

Bills Introduced

Mercury Thermostats: [House Bill 2658](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) prohibiting the same and restricting the disposal of thermostats containing mercury.

Hunting/Fishing Day: [House Resolution 746](#) (E.Z.Taylor-R-Chester) designating September 23 as “National Hunting and Fishing Day.”

Toxicologist Says Women, Children Not at Increased Risk Due to Eating Fish in PA

An M.D./Toxicologist told a Senate Committee this week that they have not been provided credible evidence supporting speculation that any women, children, or fetuses have been harmed, or have been placed at increased risk of harm, as a result of eating fish obtained from bodies of water in Pennsylvania or other parts of the United States.

The testimony came as the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee held the second day of public hearings on how best to craft a state program to reduce mercury emissions. Those testifying included representatives of coal, business, health and environmental organizations.

[Dr. Jack W. Snyder, an M.D. and Toxicologist](#) from the Annapolis Center for Science-Based Public Policy, also told the Committee --

- You have not been provided credible (valid, reliable, and generally accepted) evidence supporting speculation that burdens of mercury have increased in the past decade, century, or even millennium in fish, in humans, or in the total environment of the Commonwealth, of the United States, or even of the world.
- You have not been provided credible evidence supporting speculation that U.S. power plants account for any increase in, or for any more than one percent of, global mercury emissions.
- You have not been provided credible evidence supporting speculation that mercury emitted from U.S. power plants will accumulate in so-called “hot spots of pollution,” or that cutting emissions will reduce mercury in fish.
- You have not been provided credible evidence supporting speculation that “mercury is a growing threat” or that “mercury is lead’s evil twin” for purposes of regulating potential threats to human and environmental health.

The Annapolis Center recommended that the Committee give considerable weight to documents and studies that indicate the following:

- Mercury emissions and depositions in the U.S. have been decreasing for many years in the absence of attempts to reduce emissions from power plants.
- The recent increase in the number of fish advisories is due to an increase in the number of mercury measurements in fish, and not due to an increase in levels of mercury in fish or in the environment.
- Increased fish consumption by pregnant women and young children has been associated with “improved intelligence” and “higher mental development” scores in

children, while increased fish consumption by adults has been associated with “slower cognitive decline.”

- Finding a measurable amount of mercury in blood or urine does not mean that the level of mercury causes an adverse health effect. Importantly, the blood mercury levels in U.S. women of child-bearing age have been shown consistently to fall orders of magnitude below levels considered associated with known health effects.

“In conclusion, as a promoter of the use of sound science in decision-making, the Annapolis Center believes it is time to stop the “science charading” used in support of environmental regulation,” Dr. Snyder said. “When speculation, modeling, and novel assumptions are interspersed with, or used as substitutes for, verifiable and reproducible measurements in the course of issuing regulations, our lawmakers and citizens deserve now, more than ever, to have the details of that “science behind lawmaking” subjected to intense scrutiny by all interested parties.”

In addition to being a licensed physician in Pennsylvania, Dr. Snyder served on the faculty of the Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia for 15 years.

[George Ellis, president of the Pennsylvania Coal Association](#) representing bituminous coal operators, testified that the PCA view sharply differs with DEP’s contention that its proposal encourages use of Pennsylvania coal and protects coal jobs. Despite his organization’s repeated requests, DEP has not provided any type of analysis to substantiate its claim.

Testifying on behalf of the [United Mine Workers of America](#), Eugene M. Trisko told the committee that legislation introduced in the Senate and House to participate in the nationwide program to reduce mercury emissions from power plants has several key advantages over the DEP plan, including incentives for plants to over-control mercury emissions, so that power providers can trade credits to under performing plants to help pay for major investments in pollution control technologies. The proposed DEP rule, the Committee was advised, may cause smaller generators to shut down and lead to the loss of electric generating capacity and mining jobs.

The [Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry](#) urged the committee to examine what, if any, incremental benefits would be achieved under a state-specific mercury rule.

[Clean Water Action](#) urged the committee to hear directly from public health officials who have studied the impact of mercury on human health.

Sen. White will be scheduling a third hearing to take further testimony from state DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty, as well as public health experts.

“Several committee members [including Sen. Tony Williams (D-Philadelphia)] have serious concerns over statements made by Secretary McGinty at the committee’s first hearing last week which have apparently misrepresented both the position of the mineworkers and the coal association, as well as the timing of when the secretary learned of these positions,” said Sen. White.

Under bipartisan legislation ([Senate Bill 1201](#)) introduced by Sen. White and Sen. Ray Musto, Democratic chair of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, Pennsylvania coal-fired power plants will be required to reduce mercury emissions by 86 percent no later than 2018, and could utilize a cap and trade program. Identical bipartisan legislation has been introduced as [House Bill 2610](#).

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This approach provides incentives for power plants to comply earlier and achieve greater emission reductions. A plan proposed by DEP does not allow for trading and incorrectly labels the federal trading provision as “illegal.”

Sen. White said the two hearings have highlighted several concerns with the DEP plan:

- The DEP plan will provide no added environmental or health benefits to PA residents over adopting the federal rule;
- It will lead to higher energy costs, affecting not only manufacturers and other large energy users, but residential customers, who are facing the expiration of rate caps in the coming years (most in 2010);
- It does not protect Pennsylvania bituminous coal jobs, but in fact may encourage fuel switching to bituminous coal mined in West Virginia and Kentucky; and
- According to the United Mine Workers of America, the DEP plan may be unconstitutional because it includes a preference for bituminous coal.

“Unless we are putting a dome over the Commonwealth, we will continue to receive air from states that are not playing by the same rules,” said White.

Video of the hearings, along with written testimony, can be accessed by visiting the [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee webpage](#).

On May 17, the [Environmental Quality Board](#) will consider adopting for public comment DEP’s proposed Pennsylvania-only rule to reduce mercury emissions from power plants.

House Committee Hears Update on State Water Planning, Local Project

With less than two years left to finish the State Water Plan and with Pennsylvania at the first stage of drought conditions, the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee held an informational meeting on the state’s [Water Resources Planning efforts](#).

The Committee heard from John T. Hines, Executive Director of DEP’s Office of Water Management, Carol Collier, Executive Director of the Delaware River Basin Commission, Tom Beauduy, Deputy Director of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission and Mark Gutshall, LandStudies, Inc.

[Act 220 of 2002](#) directed DEP to finish a comprehensive update to the State Water Plan by March 2008.

To implement the Act and update the Plan, [John Hines noted DEP](#) developed a four tier approach--

Tier One – collecting data and developing the analysis tools to look at that data. DEP is using the USGS Screening Tool as the foundation of an effort to develop a statewide water budgeting tool, the Water Use Analysis Tool is being used to estimate current use and project demand and the Yield Analysis Tool helps assess current and future capacities of water suppliers.

Hines said DEP is about 85 percent complete in registering major water users under the Act and has worked with the Susquehanna and Delaware River Basin Commissions to coordinate water user information.

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DEP is also pulling together discharge monitoring reports (DMRs) to get a better picture of water discharges, particularly from smaller users and consolidating its internal water resource information databases to a single platform.

A major focus of this effort, Hines said, is to identify Critical Water Planning Areas where water shortages are likely to occur in the future.

Tier Two: The second prong of the effort involves the six regional Water Resources Advisory Committees and the development of a regional water atlas as an interactive way of providing local governments and others with useful water resources information.

So far the regional committees have tentatively identified key water priorities in each of their areas.

Tier Three: “Why Should We Care?” Hines noted that for eight of the last 10 years all or parts of Pennsylvania has been at some stage of drought conditions. This step is designed to educate the public and water users about the importance of water to the environment and our economy and lifestyle.

Tier Four: Statewide Action Agenda. The intent of the State Water Plan is to identify the gaps and water needs in the state and designate Critical Water Planning Areas. This step will outline the actions needed to deal with these gaps and to plan each of the Plan updates that must occur every five years.

Carol Collier, Delaware River Basin Commission, outlined several programs that relate to the development of Pennsylvania’s State Water Plan. They include the DRBC’s own Water Resources Plan for the Delaware, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Ground Water Protected Area, Water Conservation Plan, Keeping the Clean Water Clean and its Drought Management Program.

Tom Beauduy, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, said the Commission was actively involved in the planning process coordinating the registration of water users, helping DEP pull together discharge monitoring reports and helping develop and update water analysis tools as well as sitting on several regional water planning committees.

Both Collier and Beauduy noted how critical accurate water resource information is to help both the environment and economic development.

To bring the usefulness of water resources planning down to the local level, [Mark Gutshall of LandStudies, Inc.](#) outlined a local project he has been involved in with SRBC, Pfizer, DEP and other local government partners.

Gutshall noted one of the tasks of Water Resource Planning was to identify Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas, areas that are especially well suited to convey water from the surface to the groundwater table.

The SRBC, in cooperation with DEP and local governments in the Manheim-Lititz and Ephrata areas of Lancaster County did a pilot project to take available water resources information to identify local recharge areas. LandStudies was also involved.

Working with Lititz Borough and Pfizer, LandStudies pointed out the potential of one of the areas—a drainage swale through the Butterfly Areas development—to act as a recharge area to put water back in the ground to offset future water use by Pfizer. Water offsets are required by both SRBC and the DRBC.

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Gutshall pointed out that restoring these water recharge areas had several potential benefits—

- A way for businesses and others to increase the water available for withdrawals regulated by the river basin commissions;
- A non-traditional, non-structural way for developers to meet stormwater management requirements for local developments;
- A way to generate water quality credits, because the technique will reduce nutrients and sediments; and
- The additional water will increase local stream flows during low-flow periods.

For more information, visit the DEP [Water Resources Planning webpage](#) .

Rep. Adolph (R-Delaware) is the Majority Chair and Rep. George (D-Clearfield) is the Minority Chair of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Joint Senate/House Agriculture Hearing on 2007 Farm Bill Issues

The Senate and House Agriculture Committees held an informational hearing this week to help them identify priority issues for Pennsylvania’s farm community in the upcoming 2007 federal Farm Bill.

Representatives of the Department of Agriculture, the Chesapeake Bay Commission and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation presented comments that were remarkably similar—there is not enough federal help coming to farmers to help them solve environmental and conservation issues on their farms.

Ann Pesiri Swanson and Marel Roub from the [Chesapeake Bay Commission](#) noted a series of listening sessions they held throughout the Bay drainage area turned up these priorities from farmers—

- Establish a Regional Stewardship Fund;
- Implement the Conservation Security Program as an entitlement program;
- Target funds to maximize environmental benefits;
- Enhance the viability of agriculture through market development, renewable energy applications and risk management; and
- Expand technical assistance and outreach.

The full set of recommendations and background was included in a special Commission report entitled, “[2007 Federal Farm Bill: Concepts for Conservation Reform in the Chesapeake Bay Region.](#)”

[Matthew Ehrhart of the PA Office of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#) said, “Society is asking farmers to do more and more to improve water quality. Without robust federal and state conservation programs to assist producers with cost-share and technical assistance, farmers simply cannot implement many critical BMPs.”

CBF, Brubaker Corporation, the Grange, DEP and many other partners held 14 special public discussions with farmers through the Bay drainage area to produce a “[Voices of Agriculture](#)” report that captures recommendations made on the Farm Bill.

Ehrhart noted Pennsylvania only receives about 2 cents of every dollar in agricultural goods produced in the state. Midwest states receive about 15 cents and the nationwide average is 7 cents.

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Only about \$3.8 billion of the \$29 billion in the Federal Farm Bill represents conservation spending, even though 96 percent of the participants in the CBF listening sessions said conservation spending should be increased.

The total conservation backlog of unfunded conservation support requested by producers as of 2004 was about \$37.5 million in Pennsylvania.

CBF also gave the Committees a series of recommendations on what it would like to see in the next Farm Bill.

Ehrhart noted CBF has worked with over 850 Pennsylvania farmers and landowners on conservation practices.

Secretary of Agriculture Dennis Wolff told the Committees in comments that their series of listening sessions also resulted in strong support for increased funding for farm conservation programs.

The Department of Agriculture would like to see several improvements in federal conservation programs:

- Greater funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives and the Conservation Security Programs;
- Allowing EQIP to fund alternative manure utilization and treatment technologies;
- Ensure that only highly environmentally sensitive lands are enrolled in CREP;
- Develop a national energy policy that encourages contributions from agriculture; and
- Ensure funds are available to provide technical assistance to farmers.

Sen. Waugh (R-York) is the Majority Chair and Sen. O’Pake (D-Berks) is the Minority Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee and Rep. Hershey (R-Chester) is the Majority Chair and Rep. Daley (D-Washington) is the Minority Chair of the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

In Other News

CBF Names Educator of the Year, Lifetime Achievement Award Winners



(L to R) Matthew Ehrhart, PA CBF, Karl Blankenship, William C. Baker, CBF President, Dr. Bern Sweeney, Bill Bechtel, Rep. Russ Fairchild

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation this week held a special awards ceremony in Harrisburg to honor its 2006 Educator of the Year and recognize two other individuals with Lifetime Achievement Awards.

Bill Bechtel, a Selinsgrove high school environmental science teacher was named 2006 Educator of the Year and Karl Blankenship and Bern Sweeney were each honored with Lifetime Achievement Awards for their outstanding contributions to the environmental field.

“These awardees are truly examples of individuals who make a difference in the lives of others, CBF President William C. Baker said. “We honor them for their substantial

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contributions toward improving the quality of our environment, and specifically, to improving the water quality of Pennsylvania’s streams and rivers which ultimately impact the Bay.”

Educator of the Year: Bill Bechtel -- Bill Bechtel teaches high school environmental science in the riverside town of Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. A past recipient of the Snyder County Conservation District Conservation Educator of the Year, he is an icon in his community.

His teaching involves the science of healthy aquatic systems with a strong philosophy emphasizing personal responsibility and action. His students get out of the classroom, study the Susquehanna River, collect data, track rainwater, and even map where farm animals have access to local waters.

Each of his students prepares a personal “Chesapeake Bay Action Project,” and engages in stream clean-ups, habitat restoration, and even fundraising to conduct their projects.

A stalwart supporter of CBF programs for over 11 years, Bill has taken students on canoe programs, participated in CBF’s Teacher Training Institute, and served on CBF’s Pennsylvania advisory panel.

Bechtel recently was quoted as saying, “What really helps is getting outside... We’re fooling ourselves if we think kids are going to remember the worksheets they do. But if we take them out on a canoe, they’re going to remember that the rest of their lives.”

Lifetime Achievement: Karl Blankenship - Karl Blankenship created the [Bay Journal](#) in 1991 and has been its editor and principal writer ever since.

The Bay Journal is widely read by policy makers at both the state and federal levels, as well as by citizens, scientists, journalists, and others interested in the Chesapeake Bay or coastal issues.

Its accurate, in-depth coverage of scientific and policy issues has made it the “paper of record” for the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort, and it is frequently cited in reports, books, and other publications.

Besides his work with the Bay Journal, Blankenship has been widely published in regional and national magazines. He is frequently consulted on the creation of environmental publications, and communicating science and environmental issues.

Blankenship has won numerous awards for his work, including the June Sekoll Media Award from the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Society in 1998; the Environmental Excellence Award from the Maryland Department of Environment in 1992; the Salute to Excellence from the Maryland Governor, also in 1992; and the 2001 Excellence in Journalism Award from the Renewable Natural Resources Foundation, a coalition of 14 scientific and conservation organizations.

Lifetime Achievement: Bern Sweeney - Bern Sweeney is the Director of the [Stroud Water Research Center](#) in Chester County. He has been a credentialed leader in stream ecosystem research and education for decades.

A former Vice-President and Curator for the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia and President of the North American Benthological Society, at present

Sweeney also serves on a number of state and federal committees which deal with developing and implementing groundbreaking science relating to streams and riparian ecosystems.

Sweeney has been an invaluable ally in CBF's efforts to restore the Chesapeake and its watershed. Currently, he is assessing the impact of acid mine drainage streams' abilities to process nutrients. His findings are providing the critical link between Pennsylvania's two leading causes of stream impairment and will be critically significant for advancing CBF's nitrogen reduction efforts in Pennsylvania.

Sweeney and the Stroud Center are fully committed to seeing that information is disseminated to academics, decision makers, conservation professionals, watershed activists, and school children and to seeing it put to use in policy decisions.

NewsClip: [Bay Group Honors Selinsgrove Teacher](#)

Brook Trout Populations Reduced in 70% of Historical Habitat in PA



Brook trout populations have been eliminated or greatly reduced throughout more than 70 percent of their historical habitat in Pennsylvania, according to the results of a new assessment released this week by Trout Unlimited and a coalition of state and federal

agencies.

“Brook trout are the canary in the coal mine when it comes to water quality,” said Gary Berti, Trout Unlimited’s Eastern Brook Trout Campaign Coordinator. “The presence of brook trout in a watershed indicates that water quality is excellent. Declining brook trout populations can provide an early warning that the health of an entire stream, lake or river is at risk.”

The report, “Eastern Brook Trout: Status and Threats,” is the first comprehensive assessment of the status of brook trout in the Eastern United States. These beautiful fish historically thrived in rivers and streams stretching from Maine to Georgia, but land use pressures have relegated the remaining isolated populations to the headwaters of high elevation streams.

Brook trout historically thrived across Pennsylvania, with the exception of areas in the extreme western and southwestern portions of the state. Today, brook trout have been eliminated from 34 percent of their historic habitat in Pennsylvania, and they are greatly reduced in another 39 percent of habitat that formerly supported brook trout.

“The brook trout is the official state fish of Pennsylvania, and we’re committed to ensuring its status in the Commonwealth is more than merely symbolic,” said Doug Austen, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. “Our collective challenge is to protect the best remaining habitat and improve the rest.”

“Brookies are quick to respond to habitat improvements,” explained Jack Williams, the brook trout coordinator for Trout Unlimited’s Pennsylvania Council. “We are already seeing the results of our work with partners such as state and federal agencies and local TU Chapters, in places such as Mill Creek in Westmoreland County. By scaling up these programs throughout the state and region, we will see wild brook trout returning to our streams. And that’s great news for all of us who love to fish locally with our families and friends.”

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This assessment represents the first stage of the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture’s collaborative efforts to restore brook trout habitat. The Joint Venture was initiated in 2002 as a pilot program of the [National Fish Habitat Action Plan](#), which was recently launched by the Secretaries of Interior and Commerce. Participants include fish and wildlife agencies from 17 states, federal partners, conservation organizations and academic institutions.

The results of this assessment will be used to develop state-by-state strategies for brook trout conservation and recovery.

The full report, as well as state-specific data and maps, are available at the [Back the Brookie website](#).

NewsClip: [PA Looking at Earlier Trout Season](#)

Targeted Watershed Grants Empower Partnerships in Chesapeake Bay Restoration

Ten watershed-based partnerships were awarded grants ranging from of \$500,000 to \$1 million to help improve the quality of local waters and the Chesapeake Bay this week, with four grants going to help restoration efforts in Pennsylvania.

To help support local organizations restoring the Bay, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Chesapeake Bay Trust provided \$7.7 million to help reduce pollution reaching the Bay from agricultural and suburban lands.

Projects include managing nutrient runoff from manure through precision feeding and identifying markets for manure as fertilizer; integrating farm stewardship with ecosystem restoration activities; and implementing various “low-impact development” and “social marketing” approaches to address urban/suburban stormwater in cost-effective ways.

The ten projects will reduce more than nine million pounds of nitrogen and nearly seven million pounds of phosphorous annually to the Bay. The projects reduce pollution from a range of sources and explore market-based incentives to encourage more widespread implementation of pollution-fighting programs.

Here are the grants that benefit Pennsylvania:

Crop Management

- **Environmental Defense** - Regional Nutrient Use Efficiency in the Lower Susquehanna River Basin. Environmental Defense will work directly with 350 farmers in the Lower Susquehanna River Basin to improve on-farm nutrient use efficiency, including Plain Sect farmers who may be reluctant to participate in government-sponsored programs.
- **DEP** - Park the Plow for Profit: A Continuous No-Till Transition Program. The Department of Environmental Protection -- in partnership with Penn State Cooperative Extension, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Capital Area RC&D Council, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) -- will facilitate the conversion of 12,750 acres of cropland to continuous no-till agriculture.

Manure and Poultry Litter Management

- **Upper Susquehanna Coalition** - Cost Effective Nutrient Reduction in the Upper Susquehanna River Watershed. The [Upper Susquehanna Coalition](#) will integrate

innovative prescribed grazing with riparian preservation and restoration approaches on agricultural land in the Upper Susquehanna River Watershed.

Urban/Suburban Stormwater Management

- **Susquehanna River Basin Commission** - [Paxton Creek Watershed](#): Stormwater Management for Pennsylvania Communities. Using the Paxton Creek Watershed as a model, this project will develop a multi-jurisdictional stormwater management structure spanning several municipalities in the greater Harrisburg area. To test the management structure and address water quality impacts, the initiative also will implement five stormwater demonstration projects that are supported by and funded through public-private partnerships.

[A copy of the entire announcement is available online.](#)

State College Beneficial Water Reuse Project Wins National Award

The [University Area Joint Authority](#) Beneficial Reuse project has received national recognition through the Engineering Excellence Awards competition sponsored by the American Council of Engineering Companies.

The project was designed by [Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.](#)

This innovative wastewater treatment design, which is the largest operational water reuse project of its kind in the Northeastern United States, was one of just 16 projects from around the globe to receive honor awards.

The project involved expanding a 6 million gallons per day wastewater treatment plant to 10.4 mgd with the addition of a biological nutrient removal treatment system to remove nitrogen and phosphorus.

In addition, an advanced water treatment system was built to recycle a portion of the treated wastewater flow prior to discharge and producing up to 3.0 mgd of recycled potable-grade water.

This recycled water can be utilized by area manufacturers, to supply fire hydrants, and for irrigation by local farmers and golf courses, and for groundwater recharge.

UAJA provides wastewater treatment, sludge composting, and now ultra-pure reclaimed water to communities in the Centre County Region of Pennsylvania.

Link: [Reclaimed Water Offers Solutions to Water Quality, Water Demand Problems](#)

PUC Celebrates National Drinking Water Week, “Be Water Wise”

As the Commonwealth continues with its drought watch, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission will celebrate National Drinking Water Week, May 9-11, in the Commonwealth Keystone Building Atrium, asking consumers to “Be Water Wise.”

PUC Chairman Wendell F. Holland and Commissioners Kim Pizzigrilli and Bill Shane will highlight the importance of water. The week’s message will focus on the value of drinking water and how responsible water usage conserves this irreplaceable resource while saving consumers’ money. In celebrating water week, the Commission will remind consumers to “Prepare Now: Be Water Wise,” which builds on the Commission’s other successful consumer-education campaigns.

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“We urge water consumers to be responsible in their water usage not only to protect this valuable resource but also to help save another valuable resource - money,” said Chairman Holland. “Celebrating National Drinking Water week gives us an opportunity to also talk about the value of water and how changes in the utility shut off laws apply to water consumers.”

Water consumers will be encouraged to learn more about the changes in the law related to utility shut-offs and how these changes impact water consumers. Because coverage has focused on natural gas and electric users, most consumers don't realize that the changes in the utility shut-off laws (Act 201 of 2004 / Chapter 14 of the Public Utility Code) also apply to water customers. Information about customer assistance programs designed to help low-income consumers with their bills also will be available.

Throughout the week, exhibits from water companies, state agencies, and organizations will be on display in the Atrium of the Keystone Building. The public is welcome to tour the exhibits.

An actor playing Ben Franklin also will join the Commissioners at a media event at 10 a.m. May 11, to deliver the messages found in two famous Franklin quotes of “A penny saved is a penny earned” and “When the well is dry, we know the worth of water.”

Both messages underline the importance of using water wisely to potentially save money by lowering utility bills and avoiding shutoffs.

With a back drop of 162 one-gallon jugs of water representing the amount of water one person can use in a day, Rep. Rubley (R-Chester) will join the Chairman Holland and Commissioners Pizzingrilli and Shane at the media event. Representatives from the water industry also will be on hand.

NewsClip: [Gov. Rendell Declares Safe Drinking Water Week](#)

Save the Date! September 21 Fifth Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration

The Fifth Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration will be held on September 21 this year in Pittsburgh.

To register, visit the [2006 Ohio River Watershed Celebration](#)

Link: [Ohio River Watershed Celebration Attracts 800 Participants](#)

Results Released for 2005 Oyster Shell-Planting Program in Delaware Estuary

On behalf of the Delaware Bay Oyster Restoration Group, Dr. Eric Powell of Rutgers University's Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory has released the monitoring results of the 2005 Oyster Shell-Planting Revitalization Project in the Delaware Bay.

The report reveals that, while overall oyster abundance has declined to its lowest levels throughout the bay since the onset of Dermo disease (circa 1989), as well as to one of the lowest levels in the 1953 to 2005 record, abundance has increased in the areas where shell planting took place. Oyster larvae require a clean, hard surface to which they can attach for future growth, but the sources of these shells have diminished over time.

The 2005 shell-planting program was designed specifically to address the issue of low recruitment by restoring six critical beds in the Delaware Bay. As a result, 280,000 bushels (approximately 150 acres or 10,500 tons) of shell were planted in July to begin the

restoration of natural beds in New Jersey and Delaware, where the abundance of oysters had declined.

The revitalization project was funded in 2005 with a total of \$750,000 from Congress, the Cumberland Empowerment Zone Corporation, the States of Delaware and New Jersey, the Delaware River and Bay Authority, and the oyster industries of both states. The oyster beds were then monitored to determine the success of the planting effort.

“Oyster recruitment doubled in the target areas of the bay, which is a big success. The 2005 program could lead, in three years, to a 50-percent increase in the number of oysters that could be harvested,” said Powell.

“These findings hold great promise as to the potential outcome of this important work being done in the bay,” said Kathy Klein, executive director of the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, a member-organization of the restoration group.

“It also demonstrates just how critical working together in a bay-wide partnership is to restoring one of the Delaware Estuary’s signature species, from both an ecological and economic standpoint.”

With the additional \$2 million Congressional funding allocation that was granted for 2006, the oyster shell-planting and transplant program will be able to continue and expand at a much greater scale. This bi-state program is a collaborative effort at the local, state and federal levels that will benefit the environment, as well as the oyster industry.

Copies of the “2005 Shell-Planting Program in Delaware Bay” report can be found online at the [Partnership for the Delaware Estuary website](#).

Washington County Children’s Groundwater Festival Set for May 17

The 11th Washington County Children’s Groundwater Festival will be held on May 17 at California University of Pennsylvania, California, PA. This year’s Festival will involve more than 850 sixth-grade students and teachers from six public and three parochial schools in Washington County.

For the 2006 Festival, the feature program will be “Water Water Everywhere,” a hilarious new show created and performed by Jack Golden. The program will cover topics on water composition, conservation, pollution and ground water quality. The feature program is one of the major components of the Festival, attended by all the sixth graders.

The California High School Drum Line, always received with enthusiasm by Festival audiences, will perform as part of the feature program. The Drum Line is directed by Frank Stetar.

All the students will also see and take part in activities at the Exhibit Hall in Hamer Hall. At least 25 exhibits are scheduled. All students will also attend two of the 17 classroom presentations that address a wide range of water-related issues.

The festival is a complicated event that requires the help of many students from California High School—52 this year. Members of the Festival’s Steering Committee and other adult volunteers will also be on hand to see that the Festival runs smoothly.

The festival is the principal project of the Groundwater Coalition Education Committee of the Washington County Watershed Alliance. Festival events will be concentrated in a small area of the campus: the Exhibit Hall in Hamer Hall; the feature

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program in Natali Performing Arts Center; and the classroom presentations in Keystone, Coover and Hamer Halls.

For more information contact Joan Jessen by sending email to:
jjessen@pulsenet.com

Workshop on Public Notification, Emergency Response for Water Systems Set

The PA Section of the American Water Works Association is sponsoring a May 23 workshop on Public Notification and Emergency Response Procedures for Water Systems in Harrisburg.

The seminar is designed to explore the public notification options available to water systems during emergencies and describe the legal liability involved in those notifications.

The workshop is co-sponsored by PA American Water and LeBoeuf, Lamb, Greene & MacRae, LLP.

For [more information](#) and to register, visit the [PA-AWWA website](#).

ClearWater Conservancy Hosts Mother's Day Wildflower Walk May 14



The [ClearWater Conservancy](#) will celebrate Mother's Day with its traditional [Mother's Day Wildflower Walk](#), to be held May 14 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at The Rock, located off of Rock Road near Houserville, Centre County.

Now in its twenty-third year, the walk leads participants along a section of Spring Creek within the property of Rockview State Correctional Institution, by special permission.

Participants can expect to see a variety of plants in bloom, including rue anemone, columbine, and jack-in-the-pulpit, among others, during the two-hour walk.

"This is a once-a-year opportunity to have bridge access to the limestone cliffs along a stretch of stream with a good diversity of spring wildflowers," according to wildflower walk guide George Hildenbrandt.

This event will be held rain or shine. The walk covers sloping terrain and is recommended only for the sure-footed. Sturdy shoes and water are a must; cameras, binoculars, and mothers are optional.

ClearWater Conservancy of Central Pennsylvania, Inc. is a Centre County-based nonprofit land trust and environmental conservation organization formed in 1980 – this year celebrating their 25th anniversary!

Through the support of over 700 members, ClearWater Conservancy has become a leading organization in promoting conservation and restoration of natural resources through land protection, watershed stewardship, and environmental outreach to the community.

For more information, visit the [ClearWater Conservancy website](#), please contact Jennifer Shuey at 814-237-0400.

2nd Annual Wild Resource Festival Set for May 20

From songbirds flitting in the tree canopy above to mushrooms enriching the forest floor below, Pennsylvania's vast natural heritage will be celebrated in a day-long [Wild Resource Festival](#) on May 20, at French Creek State Park in Berks and Chester counties.

Sponsored by DCNR's [Wild Resource Conservation Program](#), in partnership with the Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission, the second annual Wild Resource Festival will be offered free to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Many of the festival speakers have been involved in Wild Resource Conservation Program-supported projects in recent years, studying mammals, inventorying plants and banding birds. Their work will be demonstrated and discussed on the park's two lakes and 7,475 acres of woodlands and fields.

In addition, fungi and their importance in the state's ecosystem will be addressed in at least three seminars as part of Wild Resource Conservation Program efforts to educate the public on the value of the more than 8,000 fungi species found in Pennsylvania.

"There will be an attempt to educate festival visitors on the vital role of fungi in forest ecology and in Pennsylvania's agricultural economy, as few people understand their uniqueness and appreciate their astonishing variety," said Wild Resource Conservation Program Executive Director Sara Nicholas.

Events also will include stationary exhibits with live animals and demonstrations, as well as a series of hikes and nature walks. A food vendor, musicians and volunteers will be on hand.

"The accent is on nature-based fun and we're inviting all ages to come out and feed a crayfish; catch stream bugs; pet a turtle; and try some deliciously-prepared, wild edible plants and fungi," Nicholas said. "You can have your face painted with animal tracks, learn how to band songbirds, follow the trail of a white-footed mouse and much more."

Housed within DCNR's Office of Conservation Science, the Wild Resource Conservation Program directs resources toward endangered and threatened species - both plants and animals - and strives to educate the public on recognition and preservation of Pennsylvania's most sensitive flora and fauna.

The Program has reintroduced river otters to Pennsylvania's waterways and ospreys to its skies, while awarding grants to projects studying and protecting plants, birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, amphibians and other species.

A list of events, directions and other festival details can be found at the [Wild Resource Festival webpage](#).

2006-07 Wild Resource Conservation Program Grant Applications Due June 30

The [Wild Resource Conservation Program's 2006 grant application](#) period is now open with applications due June 30.

Projects must directly or indirectly preserve or enhance habitat for Pennsylvania's native flora and non-game fauna or increase understanding by the public or by scientists of biota, their habitat and their interactions.

Proposals should be consistent with the management objectives of the Game Commission for non-game birds and mammals; Fish and Boat Commission for non-game fish, amphibians, reptiles and aquatic organisms; the Department of Conservation and

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Natural Resources for native wild plants, or the WRCP for general habitat projects or for species without an explicit agency having mission responsibility.

Applicants are encouraged to review the newly published [State Wildlife Action Plan](#) for lists of agency conservation priorities.

The WRCP application and forms, along with selection criteria and some guidance, have been modified from the 2005 application. Please read through the application carefully before preparing and submitting a proposal.

Anyone who wishes to discuss their grant idea ahead of time is welcome to contact the WRCP director, Sara Nicholas, as well as any of the WRCP agency coordinators--

- Sara Nicholas, WRCP, snicholas@state.pa.us , 717-783-1337 for overall guidance;
- Chris Firestone, DCNR, cfirestone@state.pa.us , 570-724-8149 for plant projects;
- Dan Brauning, PGC, dbrauning@state.pa.us , 570-547-6938 for mammal and bird projects; or
- Chris Urban, PFBC, curban@state.pa.us , 814-359-5113, for fish, reptiles, amphibians and aquatic insect projects.

For an application and instructions, visit the [Wild Resource Conservation Program's 2006 grant application webpage](#).

Applications Due Sept. 29 for DCNR Conservation Partnership Grants

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources announced this week it will accept applications for the [Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grants](#) until September 29 and is holding a series of 8 grant writing workshops.

Funding for recreation and conservation programs including Community Recreation, Land Trusts, Rails-to-Trails, Rivers Conservation, Pennsylvania Recreational Trails, Snowmobile/ATV and Land and Water Conservation Fund will be the focus of eight workshops and breakout sessions scheduled at the following locations.:

- May 24 - Ramada Inn, Altoona 8:30 a.m.--12 p.m.
- May 30 - Holiday Inn Conference Center, Allentown 8:30 a.m.--12 p.m.
- May 31 - Radisson, King of Prussia 8:30 a.m.--12 p.m.
- June 13 - Holiday Inn, Williamsport 8:30 a.m.--12 p.m.
- June 14 - The Inn at Nichols Village, Clarks Summit 8:30 a.m.--12 p.m.
- June 19 - Four Points-Sheraton, Pittsburgh 8:30 a.m.--12 p.m.
- June 20 - Holiday Inn, Clarion 8:30 a.m.--12 p.m.
- June 29 - Holiday Inn-East, Harrisburg 8:30 a.m.--12 p.m.

The grant application manual for Fiscal Year 2006-2007 as well as forms and additional information regarding directions to the workshops will be posted on [DCNR's Conservation Grants webpage](#).

Deer Management Assistance Program Applications Due July 1

Landowners looking to enroll in the Game Commission's [Deer Management Assistance Program \(DMAP\)](#), which is designed to help landowners manage deer on their properties, have until July 1 to submit an application.

Eligible lands for DMAP are: public lands; private lands where no fee is charged for hunting; and hunting club lands owned in fee title so long as the club was established

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prior to January 1, 2000, and they provide a club charter and list of current members to the agency. Previously, private hunting clubs were required to own a minimum of 1,000 contiguous acres before being eligible.

Coupons for DMAP antlerless deer harvest permits may be issued to landowners at a rate of one coupon for every five acres in agricultural operations or one coupon for every 50 acres for all other land uses.

After August 1, hunters can begin to apply for DMAP antlerless deer permits. Also on August 1, a listing of DMAP properties that have available coupons will be posted on the agency's website.

For more information, visit the [Deer Management webpage](#).

NewsClips: [Game Commission Updates Elk Management Plan](#)
[Game Commission Advises Motorists to Watch for Deer](#)

Harrisburg Falcon Eggs Begin to Hatch!

The first of five Peregrine falcon eggs in a nest on the 15th floor ledge of the Rachel Carson State Office Building in Harrisburg hatched this week and you can watch what happens next online.

"The short period of time between hatchings is encouraging and if this continues, the nestlings will grow and develop evenly," DEP Director of Environmental Education Jack Farster said. "This is an important factor, especially this year as there are 5 eggs."

Since 2000, the adult female falcon has laid four eggs each spring. This is the first year that she laid five eggs. The fifth egg was laid 10 days after the first. If the fifth egg hatches much later than the others, that nestling will be smaller than the others and could be at a disadvantage when the adults feed the nestlings.

To view all of the action, visit [DEP's Falcon webpage](#).

PUC Has Limited Success Reducing 129% Electric Rate Increase in Pike County

Expressing his disappointment in the modest savings provided by a retail aggregation program for Pike County Light and Power customers, Public Utility Commissioner Bill Shane this week committed to continuing to search for alternatives for PCLP customers.

On April 28, the Commission certified the results of a retail aggregation bidding program for the Pike County Light & Power service territory that will provide a modest savings for consumers. The average residential customer will save about \$10 a month.

The savings were not as high as hoped for due to the recent escalation in commodity fuel markets such as oil and natural gas. The prices reflect, among other things, the overall volatility of the world energy market that consumers also are seeing at the gasoline pumps.

When the cap on electric rates came off the Pike County utility late last year, electric rates increased 129 percent when the utility went into the competitive electricity market to buy power.

"Despite the good intentions and significant efforts of all involved, the results have been personally disappointing," said Commissioner Bill Shane in a statement. "Most of the consumers will see some marginal savings compared to Pike's default service rates. However, several hundred residential and commercial customers may experience higher

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rates in 2007. It is obvious to me that the status quo cannot provide any reasonable relief for Pike’s customers.”

“As we proceed, I will explore Commission precedents involving the setting of temporary rates and the transfer of service territories,” Commissioner Shane said. “It appears that there may be other alternatives to an interconnection to the PJM Regional Transmission Organization through First Energy or Sussex Rural Electric Cooperative, which should be explored further. Based upon information conveyed to me, Pike has refused to talk with Sussex.”

In response to the high rates in Pike County, the Commission launched a fact-finding inquiry in order to look for long-term solutions for improving wholesale market access to PCLP customers. The Commission’s investigation results are expected to be released in the near future.

The Commission also took additional steps to encourage future participation in the PCLP service territory by waiving some rules, making it easier for electric generation suppliers who are competing in the Orange & Rockland (PCLP’s parent company) territory in New York. If another competitive supplier enters the market, consumers are free to exit the retail aggregation program at any time, with no penalty.

Energy Harvest, PA Energy Development Authority Grant Applications Due July 14

The Department of Environmental Protection this week announced that applications will be accepted for the Energy Harvest Grant Program and by the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority for renewable energy projects.

\$5 million will be available through the Energy Harvest Program for innovative energy deployment projects addressing the concerns of air quality protection or improvement and watershed protection or improvement.

Eligible proposals include: renewable energy deployment, including biomass energy; waste coal reclamation for energy; deployment of innovative energy efficiency technologies; and distributed generation projects.

Grants may also fund projects that promote awareness and build markets for cleaner or renewable energy technologies. Proposals should manage this Commonwealth's energy resources in a way that also improves the environment, supports economic development and enhances quality of life.

Another \$5 million will be available through the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority for innovative, advanced energy projects and for businesses interested in locating their advanced energy operations.

For purposes of this financial assistance opportunity, eligible projects may include: solar energy; wind; low-impact hydropower; geothermal; biologically derived methane gas, including landfill gas; biomass; fuel cells; coal-mine methane; waste coal; integrated gasification combined cycle; demand management measures, including recycled energy and energy recovery, energy efficiency and load management; and clean, alternative fuels for transportation.

Priorities include solar, distributed generation for critical public infrastructure and clean, alternative fuels for transportation.

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Under this solicitation, the Authority may award financial assistance in the form of grants of up to \$1 million. Funding for projects may be used for capital equipment, construction associated with capital projects and land acquisition.

For grants under this solicitation, the following entities are eligible to apply: corporations, partnerships, associations and other legal business entities; nonprofit corporations; municipalities in this Commonwealth; and any public corporations, authorities or bodies whatsoever.

For more information, visit the [Energy Harvest Program webpage](#) and the [Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority webpage](#). DEP said information on how to apply will be posted starting May 8.

Workshops in Elk, Allegheny, Butler Counties Help Cut Energy Costs

Small and medium sized business in northwest Pennsylvania are invited to attend a free workshop on May 9 in Pittsburgh and May 11 in Ridgway, Elk County, where they can learn about how to reduce energy costs. A special workshop will focus on colleges June 8 in Cranberry.

The Pittsburgh meeting will be held from 8 a.m. to 12:30 at DEP's Southwest Regional Office, 400 Waterfront Dr., Pittsburgh.

The Elk County meeting will be held at 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Northcentral Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission, 651 Montmorenci Road, in Ridgway,

On June 8 there will be a special workshop geared to providing colleges and universities with nuts and bolts information on how to reduce energy costs at the [Regional Learning Alliance Center](#) in Cranberry.

The workshops will offer business owners information on energy supply options, illustrate how to identify energy cost-saving opportunities and explain how to initiate an energy management program. Particular emphasis will be given to easily implemented, cost-effective changes for small commercial and industrial facilities.

DEP's Office of the Small Business Ombudsman is partnering with the [Electrotechnology Application Center](#) at Northampton Community College's Center for Business and Industry to provide the energy management workshop.

Registration for the workshop is free, and the session is open to the general public. Local government officials also are encouraged to attend.

For more information or to request a registration form for the business workshops, contact DEP at 717-783-8411 or visit [DEP's Ombudsman webpage](#).

To RSVP for the workshop for colleges and universities, contact Guy McUumber at 814-332-6352 or send email to: gmcumber@state.pa.us.

Summer Ozone Season Begins in Pennsylvania

Again this year, Pennsylvanians will know when the outside summer air is unhealthy, thanks to daily ozone forecasts anyone can receive by email.

DEP is working with the Susquehanna Valley, Southwest Pennsylvania and Lehigh Valley/Berks County air quality partnerships regions as well as the Southeast Region to develop and distribute the forecasts and other information on ozone and air pollution.

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The daily ozone forecasts will be issued every day at 2 p.m. until the ozone season ends in mid-September.

Ozone in the upper atmosphere protects the skin by shielding it from harmful ultraviolet rays. But ground-level ozone is a key component of smog and forms during warm weather when pollution from vehicles, industry, households and power plants “bakes” in the hot sun.

Young children, the elderly, people with asthma or other lung ailments, and those who work or exercise regularly outdoors are most susceptible to the harmful effects of ground-level ozone.

The forecast features the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s standardized Air Quality Index (AQI) that uses color to represent ozone concentrations (green signifies good, yellow means moderate, orange represents unhealthy ozone levels for sensitive people, and red warns of unhealthy ozone levels for all). DEP also provides year-round forecasts for fine particulate matter, commonly called PM2.5.

People who do not have Internet access may call a partnership’s toll-free ozone hotlines: Susquehanna Valley, 1-888-772-1306; Lehigh Valley/Berks County, 1-877-517-2969; Southwest Pennsylvania, 1-800-333-7688; and Southeast Pennsylvania, 1-800-872-7261.

To sign up for daily ozone forecasts, get tips on how you can reduce ozone pollution, for educational materials teachers and students can use and for information on how you can join the regional air pollution partnerships, visit the [Air Quality Partnership webpage](#).



Watch this entertaining video designed to teach students about ozone pollution by going to the [Air Quality Partnership webpage](#) (look in upper right corner)

EPA Recognizes Health Philadelphia Organizations for Protecting the Environment

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognized Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Pennsylvania Hospital, and the Women’s Health and Environmental Network for their efforts to protect the environment.

“These organizations deserve credit for exploring ways to reduce pollution at their facilities and others in the healthcare industry,” said Donald S. Welsh, EPA’s mid-Atlantic regional administrator. “They’re spreading the understanding that having hospitals with healthy environments goes hand-in-hand with protecting people’s health.”

The three winners are participants in EPA’s [Hospitals for a Healthy Environment](#) (H2E), a voluntary program focusing on pollution prevention and waste reduction at health care facilities. By becoming an H2E partner, a hospital commits to setting priorities and goals to reduce its environmental impact on patients, workers, and the surrounding community.

Partners and champions work together on a wide array of environmental issues, including eliminating mercury, reducing regulated medical waste, recycling, and green cleaning.

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For example, Jefferson and Pennsylvania hospitals have virtually eliminated the use of mercury thermometers and blood pressure cuffs containing mercury from their facilities, have increased recycling, and are better managing waste.

The organization WHEN is an H2E champion and works to get area hospitals to reduce environmental harm to patients by changing hospitals' practices and educating staff and patients.

EPA also presented certificates to the Department of Environmental Protection's Southeast Regional Office, Catholic Health East, and representatives of 17 Delaware Valley area hospitals that have joined the H2E program.

The H2E partnership organization was established in 1998. In addition to EPA, the national partnership includes the American Hospitals Association, the American Nurses Association, and Healthcare Without Harm.

For more information, visit the [Hospitals for a Healthy Environment website](#).

GIS and Community Demographics Workshops in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia

Four one-day workshops are planned in Pittsburgh (June 6 and 7) and Philadelphia (June 8 and 9) to introduce participants to the fundamentals of using Geographic Information Systems and community demographics.

This fast paced, hands-on workshop teaches the fundamentals of how to use a Geographic Information System (ArcGIS 9.1) in a way that is particularly relevant to social service providers, planners and researchers.

Participants learn to make thematic maps of their community, geocode addresses and perform spatial queries and analysis. Participants also learn to extract and map Census variables such as race, poverty, language, education, health and many other demographic variables.

Exercises are designed for beginners. Intermediate Excel skills required. Each student is assigned a computer on which to work for the day.

To register online or for more info visit the [New Urban Research website](#) or telephone us 877-241-6576.

Out-of-State Waste Disposed in PA Down for 4th Year in a Row

The Department of Environmental Protection this week reported that the total amount of waste disposed of in Pennsylvania landfills dropped for the fourth consecutive year, decreasing from 25.18 million tons in 2004 to 24.55 million tons last year.

Out-of-state waste also declined for the fourth consecutive year, decreasing by 465,520 tons to 9.65 million tons --- the first time imported waste has been below 10 million tons since 1998. Imports last year represented 39.3 percent of the waste stream to Pennsylvania landfills, down from 40.2 percent in 2004 and 47.1 percent at its peak in 2001.

The state received waste from 18 states, the District of Columbia, Canada and Puerto Rico last year. Leading importers remained New Jersey, 5.7 million tons; and New York, 3.5 million tons.

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In-state waste deposited in Pennsylvania landfills also declined after two consecutive years in 2003 and 2004 when the amount of municipal waste climbed because of several natural disasters that hit the Commonwealth.

The amount of waste that originated in Pennsylvania totaled 14.9 million tons last year, a decrease of 164,682 tons from the 15.1 million tons landfilled in 2004.

Pennsylvania has 49 landfills and five waste recovery facilities that accept municipal waste from residences and commercial facilities and residual waste from factories, manufacturers, farms and mining operations.

The state remains the nation’s largest waste importer.

In Virginia, which is second in the amount of out-of-state waste, landfills accepted 7.8 million tons of trash imports in 2004, the most recent year for which statistics are available. The amount represented an 18 percent increase from 2003. The majority of the trash imports came from Maryland, New York and Washington, D.C.

DEP said more detailed information on disposal reports will be posted on the [Municipal Waste webpage](#) under Municipal Waste Reporting Results.

2005 PENNSYLVANIA: 14.9 million OUT-OF-STATE: 9.65 million TOTAL: 24.55 million	2002 PENNSYLVANIA: 14.1 million OUT-OF-STATE: 11.7 million TOTAL: 25.8 million
2004 PENNSYLVANIA: 15 million OUT-OF-STATE : 10.1 million TOTAL: 25.18 million	2001 PENNSYLVANIA: 14.2 million OUT-OF-STATE: 12.6 million TOTAL: 26.8 million
2003 PENNSYLVANIA: 14.8 million OUT-OF-STATE : 10.6 million TOTAL: 25.4 million	2000 PENNSYLVANIA: 14.3 million OUT-OF-STATE: 12.2 million TOTAL: 26.5 million

NewsClip: [Clinton County Landfill Adds 40 Years of Capacity
Trash Influx Slows, But Far From Over](#)

Hard to Recycle Collection Event in Pittsburgh May 20



While spring cleaning is in full swing, take advantage of the May 20 collection event for hard to recycle materials at [Construction Junction](#) in Pittsburgh, the first of several events set for this year.

The first 25 people to drop off computer equipment, including cell phones, will receive a free Best Buy Gift Card.

For the fifth consecutive year, the [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) is hosting a series of collections for

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cell phones, tires, computer equipment, large appliances, and latex paint.

The collections, slated for May 20, July 15, and September 16, help teach the importance of recycling and waste reduction. All materials collected at these events will be recycled, refurbished, or disposed of responsibly.

PRC is offering a one-stop drop off for these items at a reduced cost for what individuals would normally pay for disposal of these materials. PRC is accepting cash only-no checks or credit cards, please. See the fees below.

- Tires: \$1 without rims. NEW THIS YEAR: \$2 with rims. Tires must be 18" or smaller;
- Latex Paint: \$1/can (up to a gallon) or \$1/gallon for cans over a gallon;
- Appliances: Air conditioners \$15; Other freon items \$10; Stoves, washers, dryers and other large appliances \$5 NOTE: Individuals may drop off only appliances at Appliance Warehouse, (523 Bingham Street - South Side) during the same timeframe for the same fees; and
- Electronics: CPUs, monitors, VCRs, DVD players, stereos \$5; Mice and keyboards \$1; Cell Phones are FREE, courtesy of Verizon Wireless; Complete computer system (including CPU, monitor, mouse, and keyboard) \$10; Printers - small \$10, large \$15; Televisions up to 19" in size \$15; 20" and up \$20.

Participant fees are subject to change.

Phone books, mixed paper, cardboard, plastic bottles (#s 1-5) and aluminum and metal cans will be accepted at no charge on collection day.

For more information call 412-488-7490 x243 or visit the [PRC website](#).

The Pennsylvania Resources Council's mission is to promote conservation of our natural resources and protection of scenic beauty through public education and outreach in a collaborative effort with government agencies, business, charitable foundations and other nonprofit organizations.

Pennsylvania NRCS Office Has New Director - Craig Derickson

The Pennsylvania Natural Resources Conservation Service welcomed a new State Conservationist this week - Craig Derickson.

"With years of experience in agricultural research, soil science, and policy development, Craig brings with him an extensive background in natural resources conservation," says Gary Smith, Assistant State Conservationist. "We are glad to welcome Craig to our team."

A native of Nebraska, Derickson began his career in conservation with the University of Nebraska Agronomy Department in 1978. After 7 years, he joined NRCS, then named Soil Conservation Service, as a soil scientist in western Nebraska. Since then, he has held numerous other positions within the agency, including District Conservationist, Assistant for Field Operations, State Resource Conservationist, Midwest Regional Technology Coordinator, National Program Manager for CSP and, most recently, Branch Chief for Stewardship Programs at the NRCS National Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

He holds a Bachelors Degree in Agriculture from the University of Nebraska and a Masters Degree in Administration from Doane College in Nebraska. Craig is also a member of several conservation organizations, including the Soil and Water Conservation

Society, the Society for Range Management and the National Association of Conservation Districts.

"I am honored to be the next State Conservationist in Pennsylvania," Derickson says. "This state has a very rich bounty of natural resources from the Chesapeake Bay watershed in the Southeast, to the Great Lakes in the Northwest, and all the beauty of the mountains and streams in between. I am really looking forward to spending time with employees, partners and clients to further the cause of conservation and productive agriculture -- helping people help the land."

See & Hear

How You Can Protect Our Watersheds - Part I



GreenTreks Network, Inc.
Telling Stories that Change the World

Learn how you can protect your watershed by watching how other groups, students, local governments, conservation districts and businesses are doing the same!

[Protecting Our Watersheds Part I](#) is one of a series of four programs produced by the GreenTreks Network that you can watch online to see how others are working to protect one of Pennsylvania's most precious resources—water.

Enjoy the program!

Quick Clips

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

[Volunteer Cleanup Pays Off for State](#)

[Tennent Team Wins Envirothon Competition in Northampton](#)

[Pitt Trains Budding Engineers to Think Green](#)

[Rendell Partners with Kentucky, Ohio to Attract FutureGen Coal Plant](#)

[Grants Will Aid Chesco Efforts to Save Land](#)

[Op-Ed: Gas Price Fluctuations Start with Commodity Exchange](#)

[Wind Energy Company Sells Out to Spanish Firm](#)

[Group Wants to Recycle Pitt Students' Throwaways](#)

[Rail Trail Proposal Moves Forward](#)

[Bird-Watching Offers Relaxation, Inspiration](#)

[Op-Ed: Manage the Ecosystem, Not Just Species \(Deer\)](#)

[Editorial: Monroe's Perilous Roads \(Deer\)](#)

[Game Commission Updates Elk Management Plan](#)

[Game Commission Advises Motorists to Watch for Deer](#)

[Outdoors: Conservationists Say Fowl Exchange Program is Success](#)

[Decline of Barn Owls Prompts Conservation Discussion](#)

[Garden Fair to Showcase Harrison Hills Revitalization](#)

[Windber Center Exhibits Quecreek Artifacts](#)

[Blackeslees Mourned by Advocates of Preservation](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Miner Minds the Environment](#)

[Chesapeake Bay Efforts Move Upriver](#)

[Trees Planted as Part of CREP Program](#)

[\\$100,000 Grant to Reclaim Abandoned Mine in Clarion County](#)

[Westmoreland Land Reclamation a Work in Progress](#)

[Funds Secured to Rehabilitate Pennypack Creek](#)

[April's Rainfall Wasn't Enough](#)

[USGS Releases Digital Groundwater Quality Data for PA](#)

[PA Water Pollution Trading Program Seeks Wall Street Advice](#)

Watershed Awareness Month Activities

This special Calendar section is devoted to activities going on in and around Watershed Awareness Month in May. If you have events to add, send them to:

DHess@HolstonCrisci.com.

Armstrong County (New)

- **May 13** – [Crooked Creek Environmental Education Center](#) is holding an open house from 10:00 to 3:00 p.m. Watershed and other environmental groups from around the county will have displays, educational programs and more. Call 724-763-6316 or send email to elcaet@alltel.net.

Beaver County

- **May 13, 20, June 3** – [Tire Collection Events](#) at various locations around the county starting at 9:00 a.m. at all locations.

Blair County

- **May 12** – Water Festival sponsored by the [Blair County Conservation District](#), the Altoona City Authority, the Allegheny Ridge Corp and local watershed groups to educate the public of all ages on the value and necessity of protecting water through fun indoor and outdoor activities. Contact: Becky Albaugh, 814-696-0877 ext. 5 or send email to: americorps@blairconservationdistrict.org.

Clinton County (New)

- **May 20** – Join Clinton County CleanScapes and DCNR to remove flood debris from the Torbert Island Natural Area. Contact Project Director Elisabeth Lynch by sending email to elynch@clintoncountypa.com for more information.

Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)

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Erie County

- **May 20** – 4th Annual Bike Around the Bay event for Earth Force youth program, 10, 30 and 50 mile routes - all proceeds go to Earth Force youth program – Call 814-835-8069 or bab@lea.earthforce.org
- For more information on Erie County events, send email to: ssmith@lea.earthforce.org.

Fayette County

- **May 8** – **Fayette County Children’s Water Festival**. Penn State Fayette-The Eberly Campus. 1,000+ sixth graders will hear presenters, participate in demonstrations and visit exhibitors organized by 150 volunteers and is funded by the Conservation District, Western PA Conservancy, local water suppliers, watershed groups, school districts, DEP, Ohiopyle State Park and local businesses. Contact: heatherdfowler@yahoo.com .
NewsClip: [Fayette Water Festival-GreenTreks Network](#)

Lancaster County

- **May 9**- [Lititz Run Watershed Alliance Watershed Day](#) for 350+ 5th graders in Warwick School District spend a day filled with conservation/wetland/watershed information and activities. Volunteers from numerous businesses and organizations who volunteer every year. Lancaster County Conservation District, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, Game Commission, Johnson & Johnson, Merck, Severn Trent, Lititz Sportsmen’s Assoc. Trout Unlimited, and numerous others sponsor the event. This event is not open to the public limited to the children and their teachers.

Luzerne County

- **May 13** – Back to Nature at Nescopeck State Park: 10AM – 3PM at Nescopeck State Park, Drums, PA. Guided Hikes, Canoe Demos, Get to Know Your Local Conservation Groups, Fly Fishing Demos, Children’s Area with Crafts and Activities (Fish Prints, AMD Tie Dye T-shirts and more...). For more information call 570-403-2006.

Monroe County

- **May 20** – [Tobyhanna Creek/Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Association](#) Wetland Trail Ribbon Cutting. Pocono Mountain West High School. 10:00 a.m. Contact: 570-643-2001 or send email to: mlord@ptd.net .
- **May 20** – [Aquashicola Pohopoco Watershed Conservancy](#) Open House. Polk Township Park (Rt. 534 in Kresgeville). 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Contact 610-681-4873 or send email to: info@apwc-pa.org .
- **May 21** – Bank and Stream Life in Our Watershed Program by [North Pocono CARE](#). Learn how you can help to preserve this heritage by visiting the Thornhurst Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company Annual Auto, Truck and Motorcycle Show. 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Contact: 570-472-3274 or send email to: NPCARE@att.net .
- **May 27** – [Broadhead Watershed Association](#) River Ramble III. Pick up your map and directions and set off on this self-guided tour of creeks and other waterbodies in the Broadhead Watershed. An “after-Ramble” gathering is planned at 4:30. Meet at the Barrett Friendly Library in Mountainhome at 1:00 p.m. Contact: 570-839-1120 or send email to: broadheadwater@enter.net .

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Philadelphia County

- **May 23** – [Saylor Grove Wetland Dedication](#), Philadelphia Water Department. Lincoln Dr. & Wissahickon Dr. and Rittenhouse Ave, Philadelphia. 6-8:00 p.m. Contact: Tiffany.Ledesma@phila.gov 215-499-3756.

Schuylkill County

- **May 21** – Bear Creek Festival: 12PM – 4PM at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds, Rte 895 Summit Station, PA. The 5th Annual Festival provides live entertainment, hands on activities for children, great food, watershed educational programs and great family fun! Call 570-622-4124x113 or e-mail Porcupine Pat at porcupinepat@yahoo.com

Venango County

- **May 13** – South Sandy Creek Watershed Association [recycling and reptile program](#) at the Mineral Township Building along Rout 965. Contact: Valerie Tarkowski at 814-425-7308 or send email to: penguin42@earthlink.net.

York County

- **May 9**- York County Envirothon grades 3 & 4
- **May 9**- York County Envirothon grades 3 & 4
- **May 13**– Restoration Monitoring Workshop, 8 am to 4 pm, at Penn State York
- **May 18**– CCWA’s 9th Annual Meeting, 7 pm, at York Water Company’s Lake Redman facility
- **May 22**– What’s the Big Deal about Invasives? Workshop, 7-9 pm at ANNEX, sponsored by MAEscapes

For more information on York activities is available from Gary Peacock, York Watershed Specialist, by sending email to: GPeacock@Yorkccd.org .

Regulations

The Environmental Quality Board meets for the first time this year on May 17 to consider a proposed rule to limit mercury emissions from power plants, proposed increases to mine reclamation fees, proposed mine opening blasting regulations and a petition to redesignate Gallows Run in Bucks County. [Follow this link to meeting materials](#).

The Department of Agriculture also started the final review of the CHEMSWEEP Pesticide Disposal Program regulation changes by submitting copies to the House and Senate oversight committees and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – May 6, 2006](#)

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

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection [published a final version](#) of the Public Water Supply Manual – Part II Community System Design Standards. DEP also published an industry-wide [coproduct determination for reclaimed asphalt pavement](#).

Final: DEP ID: 383-2125-108. Public Water Supply Manual--Part II Community System Design Standards. This document provides detailed design and construction standards for all community water systems. It also contains instructions for submitting a public water supplier's permit application. Substantive revisions were recently made to the document to incorporate updates related to new technology and National design standards.

[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](#)

- [Notice of Regional State Water Plan Advisory Committee meetings.](#)
- **May 10** – [Delaware River Basin Commission meeting](#). 25 State Police Dr., West Trenton, NJ. 10:15.
- **May 18-19** – [2006 Pennsylvania Heritage Partnerships Conference](#). Preservation PA. Franklin, Venango County.
- **May 20** – Dauphin County Community Recycling Event. HACC Parking Lot. 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m.
- **May 22** – Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee Environmental Issues Forum to hear presentation on LaFarge Alternative Energy Initiative. Room 205 Ryan Building. 12:00.
- **May 26** - DEP [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Steering Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 to 1:00.
- **June 12** – [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) Environmental Issues Forum – Jim MacKenzie, [Octoraro Native Plant Nursery](#) “Going Native – Opportunities for Using Native Plants in Pennsylvania.” Room 205 Ryan Building. 12:00.

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- **June 26** – Governor’s Renewable Agriculture Energy Council meeting. Room 309 Agriculture Building. 10:00.
- **July 19** – Governor’s Invasive Species Council meeting. Agriculture Building, 2301 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg.
- **October 31-November 5** – [National Historic Preservation Conference](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation. Pittsburgh.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#)

(courtesy [PA Organizations for Watersheds & Rivers](#))

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

Helpful Web Links

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

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

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

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

Stories Invited

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

PA Environment Digest is edited by David E. Hess, former Secretary Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and is published as a service to the clients of Holston & Crisci and the public. Holston & Crisci is a Harrisburg-based government and public affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Holston & Crisci call 717-234-1716.

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