

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

May 7, 2007

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

House, Senate Celebrate 10th Anniversary of the PA Senior Environment Corps

This month marks the 10th anniversary of the [Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps](#) and the House and Senate are both celebrating with the resolutions commemorating May as “Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps” month.

The resolutions were introduced in the House by Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) – [House Resolution 260](#) – and in the Senate by Sen. John Pippy (R-Allegheny) – [Senate Resolution 112](#).

The PA Senior Environment Corps was the first statewide program of its kind in the United States to give seniors a meaningful opportunity to help monitor and protect water quality and to share their concern for and knowledge of the environment with others, especially younger generations.

There are now over 2,900 seniors doing water sampling, mentoring high school students for Envirothon competitions, helping to locate abandoned oil and gas wells, educating the public on how to protect local drinking water supplies and on the proper disposal of household hazardous waste, clearing invasive species from watersheds, photo-documenting the results and progress of abandoned mine reclamation projects and educating the public on West Nile Virus and homeowners on the dangers of radon in 52 counties.

The program has been a model for other states and countries. The program and local chapters have won numerous awards, including being recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme which added the PaSEC to its Global 500 Honour Roll, joining the work of individuals like Jacques Cousteau and Jane Goodall.

For more information, visit the [PA Senior Environment Corps webpage](#) and read the text of the Senate and House resolutions below. The [Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement](#) administers the PA Senior Environment Corps Program statewide with local partners like RSVP.

The Senate also adopted two other water related resolutions this week: [Senate Resolution 110](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) designating May as “Watershed Awareness Week: and [Senate Resolution 106](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) designating May 6 – 12 as “Drinking Water Week” in Pennsylvania.



PaSEC X-Team volunteers Jack McGinley and Leon Oberdick

**Video Blog Feature: [The PA Senior Environment Corps in Action!](#)
A Resolution**

Celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps and designating May 2007 as “Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps Month.”

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps was founded in May 1997 as the first statewide program of its kind in the United States to give seniors a meaningful opportunity to help monitor and protect water quality and to share their concern for and knowledge of the environment with others, especially younger generations; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps has grown from just under 200 volunteers in 1997 to now over 2,900 members throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, volunteers with the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps have taken the initiative to go through special training and have been provided the equipment to monitor water quality in 52 counties; and

WHEREAS, members of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps now monitor water quality at 628 sites throughout the Commonwealth and have generated over 469,000 pieces of water quality data over the last ten years using a quality assurance plan officially accepted by both the Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps created the first Internet-based water quality testing result database allowing citizen monitoring groups to post water sample results and retrieve them for analysis; and

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps members contribute over 37,400 volunteer hours annually to do water sampling and to educate the public and youth about water quality and other issues contributing the equivalent of over \$8 million worth of volunteer time during its 10-year history; and

WHEREAS, volunteers with the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps have expanded their activities to include mentoring high school students for Envirothon competitions, locating and marking over 600 abandoned oil and gas wells, educating the public on how to protect local drinking water supplies and on the proper disposal of household hazardous waste, clearing invasive species from watersheds, photo-documenting the results and progress of abandoned mine reclamation projects and educating the public on West Nile Virus and homeowners on the dangers of radon; and

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps Program was recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme on its Global 500 Honour Roll for the program’s contribution to protecting the environment, joining the work of individuals like Jacques Cousteau and Jane Goodall; and

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WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps was recognized by the President’s Council on Sustainable Development and Renew America as an outstanding example of community participation; and

WHEREAS, members of local chapters of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps have received numerous honors and recognition from county governments, watershed groups and other organizations; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Senate of Representatives congratulates members of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps for their volunteer efforts to protect and monitor water quality in the Commonwealth’s rivers and streams; and be it further

RESOLVED, that members of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps be honored for their initiative to educate the public and young people about the environment and protecting our water, air and land from harm; and be it further

RESOLVED, that May 2007 be designated as “Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps Month” in recognition for the valuable service volunteers with the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps perform for the citizens and the environment of the Commonwealth.

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Session Schedule

The Senate and House return to voting session May 7.

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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- West Branch Susquehanna Symposium Attracts Over 140
- Valley Creek Trustee Council Announces Grant Opportunity
- DEP to Hold Public Meeting on AMD Treatment Plant in Cambria County
- Stream Buffer Planted at Arbor Day Celebration in Bellfonte

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- PUC Commemorates National Drinking Water Week, “Be Water Wise”.
- Overbrook Environmental Education Center Opens in West Philadelphia
- Philadelphia Sustainability Awards Winners Announced
- New EPA Website Makes It Easier To Be Good Environmental Stewards
- EPA Says 2006 Results Show Downward Trend of Air Pollution Continues
- DEP to Again Monitor, Issue Advisories for Unhealthy Ozone Days
- Recycling in Pennsylvania Up Slightly to Just Over 4.8 Million Tons
- 2nd Annual Greater Pittsburgh Recycled Crafts Competition
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event Nets 115,063 Pounds of Material
- First Falcon Egg Hatches in Harrisburg!
- Grants Available From DCNR for Protecting Non-Game Species
- Moraine State Park to Host Wild Resource Festival May 12
- Take a Hike! Over 100 Hikes Scheduled Across Pennsylvania May 26-June 3
- Two Pennsylvania Teams to Compete in 2007 Solar Decathlon
- Rep. Swanger to Hold Biofuels Seminar May 18 in Lebanon
- May 11 Workshop in Norristown on Energy Harvest, PEDAs Grant Writing

Spotlight

- Penn State Program: Climate Change, Climate Justice

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

Video Blog Feature

The PA Senior Environment Corps in Action!

To help celebrate the 10th anniversary of the [Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps](#), *PA Environment Digest* recently went along on water sampling runs by two teams from the Capital Area Senior Environment Corps to let them show you how it’s all done.

And we also interviewed Homer Foster, the 99-year old volunteer who goes out every week to help do chemical and macroinvertebrate samples along the Yellow Breeches in Cumberland County.

Video Blog: [99-Year Old Homer Foster Tells Why He Volunteers](#)

Tag along with the PaSEC water sampling team known as the X-Team, lead by Bill Apgar, and including Homer Foster, Jack McGinley, Leon Oberdick and Stacy Russell, show how they hunt macroinvertebrates on another part of the Yellow Breeches.



PaSEC X-Team Volunteers Jack McGinley, Stacey Russell, Bill Apgar, Homer Foster and Leon Oberdick.

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Video Blog: [X-Team Samples the Yellow Breeches](#)

Video Blog: [Jim Haney, Capital Area PaSEC, Presents a History of the Program](#)

Go along as volunteers Art Sconing, Harvey Baney, Velda Kauffman and Carl Crone take their samples and then analyze them back at their lab in the New Cumberland Senior Center.

Video Blog: [Water Quality Sampling on the Yellow Breeches](#)

Video Blog: [Counting Macroinvertebrates on the Yellow Breeches](#)

Video Blog: [Touring the Lab at the New Cumberland Senior Center](#)

Video Blog: [Volunteers Share Their Experiences](#)

The [Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement](#) administers the PA Senior Environment Corps Program statewide with local partners like RSVP.

Links: [Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the PA Senior Environment Corps](#)

On the Hill

On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House return to voting session May 7.

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; [House Bill 894](#) (Leach-D-Montgomery) authorizing additional reimbursements for school building construction which meets the LEED standards; [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-D-Allegheny) limiting liability of landowners in connection with opening their lands for hunting and recreation; [House Bill 496](#) (George-D-Clearfield) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transport escorts.

Senate

Calendar: [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 Appropriations Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 782](#) (MJWhite-R-Venango) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transport escorts, [Senate Bill 815](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) that would amend the Storage Tank Act to extend the sunset dates on certain programs, [Senate Bill 846](#) (Armstrong-R-Lancaster) the state general appropriations bill.

Bills Introduced

Several more environmental bills were introduced this week...

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Halogenated Solvents: [Senate Bill 827](#) (Dinniman-D-Chester) amending the Air Pollution Control Act to authorizing the regulation of halogenated solvent cleaning facilities.

Mercury-Free Thermostats: [Senate Bill 830](#) (Greenleaf-R-Montgomery) prohibiting the sale or distribution of mercury thermostats and providing for safe disposal.

Game Commissioner Terms: [House Bill 1214](#) (Surra-D-Elk) changing the terms of Game Commissioners from eight years to four years.

Diesel Retrofitting: [House Bill 1224](#) (Gabig-R-Cumberland) providing a tax credit for diesel retrofitting to eliminate idling.

PA Senior Environment Corps Anniversary: [House Resolution 260](#) (George-D-Clearfield) and [Senate Resolution 112](#) (Pippy-R-Allegheny) celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps and designating May as “Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps Month.”

Other Senate/House Bills Moving

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

Senate

Watershed Awareness Week: [Senate Resolution 110](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) designating May as “Watershed Awareness Week” was adopted by the Senate.

Drinking Water Week: [Senate Resolution 106](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) designating May 6 – 12 as “Drinking Water Week” in Pennsylvania was adopted by the Senate.

Independent Counsel: The Senate Appropriations Committee reported out [Senate Bill 105](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) authorizing the Environmental Quality Board to hire independent counsel.

Energy Assistance: [Senate Bill 352](#) (Robbins-R-Mercer) providing additional funds for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program was referred to Senate Appropriations Committee.

Charitable Contributions: [Senate Bill 90](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) clarifying provisions for making charitable contributions to the Wildlife Conservation and other funds on the state income tax form was referred to Senate Appropriations Committee.

Nuclear Plant Fees: [Senate Bill 782](#) (MJWhite-R-Venango) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transport escorts was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and re-referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Storage Tanks: [Senate Bill 815](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) that would amend the Storage Tank Act to extend the sunset dates on certain programs was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

House

Historic Preservation Grants: [House Bill 221](#) (Tangretti-D-Westmoreland) establishing an historic preservation grant program was referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

Landowner Liability: [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-D-Allegheny) limiting liability of landowners in connection with opening their lands for hunting and recreation was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

Mine Safety: [House Bill 483](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) creating the Mine Families First Program to provide assistance to families involved in mine rescue incidents was referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

Nuclear Power Plant Fees: [House Bill 496](#) (George-D-Clearfield) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transport escorts was referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

Ethics Panel Rules Against Rendell Nominees, Senate Sets Vote

The state Ethics Commission ruled unanimously this week that grants awarded to non-profit groups that ended up employing the spouses of DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty and DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis were a conflict of interest under state law, if they happened in the future.

The ruling, however, is not expected to delay a May 8 Senate vote on the nominees, according to a spokesperson for Senate Republican Leadership.

This prospective ruling by the Commission did not rule on the actual events that lead to Gov. Rendell giving the Senate more time to consider the nominations of McGinty and DiBerardinis last week, but offered an opinion on how such conflicts could be avoided in the future.

In the case of Secretary McGinty, a grant was given to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council for a project involving the nutrient credit trading pilot project in the Conestoga River Watershed in Lancaster County, a small portion of which-- \$3,747-- was paid to Dr. Karl Hausker, Secretary McGinty's husband and an economist, for an economic analysis of the credit market.

Secretary DiBerardinis' wife, Joan Reilly, runs a parks program for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, which received \$1.5 million to implement part of the TreeVitalize Program that encourages tree planting in the five-county Philadelphia area.

The Ethics Commission rulings [are available online](#).

Senate Committee Moves Storage Tank, Nuclear Power Plant Fee Bills

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The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee this week reported out legislation to raise fees on nuclear power plants and to change the Storage Tank Act. The bills include:

- [Senate Bill 782](#) (MJWhite-R-Venango) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transport escorts (which was later referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee); and
- [Senate Bill 815](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) that would amend the Storage Tank Act to extend the sunset dates on certain programs.

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

Game Commission to Launch Education Campaign on Deer Management

Testifying before the Senate Game and Fisheries Committee this week, Carl Roe, Executive Director of the Game Commission, said the Commission will be launching a public education program later in the year to explain its approach to [managing Pennsylvania's deer herd](#).



Roe made the comment while presenting the Game Commission's [2006 annual report](#) to the Committee.

The Game Commission bases its deer management system on a series of three indicators evaluated in each of its wildlife management units – herd health, habitat condition and the number of human-deer conflicts.

The Commission has been under significant pressure by some hunters to increase the number of deer available in certain areas of the state saying there are too few deer available to hunters.

However, a [comprehensive study](#) released in March by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources reported less than 25 percent of some 41,650 forest plots surveyed showed any desirable regeneration.

A 2005 study commissioned by Audubon PA, [Managing White-tailed Deer in Forest Habitat From an Ecosystem Perspective](#), made this dramatic statement about the impact of deer on the Commonwealth's forests, "(the) regeneration of most tree species does not occur unless the affected areas are fenced to exclude deer."

Over time, high deer populations have greatly altered forest understories. The abundance of native wildflowers and other forest-floor plants has been greatly diminished, shrub species have been dramatically decreased or eliminated, and the variety of tree species has declined.

Consider these other facts from a House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee hearing on deer and wildlife damage in 2006—

- There is an estimated \$90 million in crop loss and \$73 million in damage to our forests every year by deer, according to the Department of Agriculture;

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- Over \$78 million in property damage occur in the over 39,000 deer/car collisions each year in Pennsylvania, not counting the deaths and injuries to the people involved. This is the highest of any state in the nation;
- The incidence of Lyme disease, a debilitating and sometimes fatal illness spread by deer ticks, has increased by over 9,000 percent between 1987 and 2004, according to the Department of Health; and
- State taxpayers lose \$18 million a year in deferred and lost timber stumpage sales.
For more information, visit the Game Commission's [Deer Management webpage](#).
NewsClips: [Game Commission President Faces Ouster](#)
[Wildlife Management Units Come Under Review](#)
[Deer Oversight a Team Effort](#)
[Suddenly Boop Becomes the Hunted](#)

Video Blog: [Too Many Deer Damaging Forest Ecosystems, Agriculture](#)

Links: [Game Commission Keeps Healthy Forest, Healthy Herd Formula](#)
[DCNR Study of Forest Vegetation Shows Deer Exacting Heavy Toll](#)

House Committee to Consider Climate Change, Energy Office, Electronics Recycling

House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets May 8 to consider several bills related to climate change, creating a State Energy Office, promoting electronics recycling and benefits for certain agency employees. The bills are:

- [House Bill 110](#) (Vitali-D-Delaware) providing for a registry and inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, authorizing a stakeholder process and a report on global warming impacts and economic opportunities;
- [House Bill 786](#) (Hutchinson-R-Venango) extending benefits to certain DCNR law enforcement officers;
- [House Bill 366](#) (George-D-Clearfield) establishing a State Energy Office within the Department of Environmental Protection; and
- [House Resolution 112](#) (Mann-D-Lehigh) directing DEP to implement policies that encourage electronic waste recycling.

The Majority Chair of the Committee is Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) and the Minority Chair is Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

Other News

PA Senior Environment Corp Volunteer, Others Named Leadership Fellows

David Schogel, a retired social worker, and an active member of the [Center in the Park/Senior Environment Corps](#), was named one of 24 Fellows in the [Environmental Leadership Program](#) Delaware Valley Regional Network Fellowship Program for Emerging Leaders.



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Each year, the Delaware Valley Regional Network selects a new class of regional fellows to join ELP's community of environmental professionals from diverse backgrounds, sectors, and areas of expertise. The year-long Regional Fellowship offers unique networking opportunities, intensive leadership and skills training, support, and time for personal and professional reflection.

The Fellowship provides an opportunity for talented individuals to have a unique and substantial impact on environmental and social progress in the Philadelphia metropolitan region through collaboration with other emerging leaders.

This innovative program is designed to build the leadership capacity of the environmental and social change fields' most promising emerging practitioners in the greater Delaware Valley area.

The program defines emerging leaders as practitioners who are relatively new to the environmental and social change fields with approximately three to ten years of experience and define "environmental" broadly to include public health, transportation policy and planning, economic development, and broad-based community organizing.

The program includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, or Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; all counties except Bergen, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex, or Union Counties in New Jersey; and, Kent, Sussex or New Castle Counties in Delaware.

Through the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement, Schogel has become a certified chemical trainer for water quality testing; with this certification, he recruits other senior citizens to help teach water monitoring and stream assessment to school children.

Schogel is also a PaSEC tour guide for Saylor Grove Wetland and has helped his SEC group to write a proposal to do stream restoration at the historic Rittenhouse Town. Through Philadelphia Green's Garden Tenders and Tree Tenders Programs, he is a founding member of the Hansberry Garden & Nature Center in Germantown where he is currently working to create a sustainable 4H club.

Other Fellows named by the Environmental Leadership Program include:

- **Khiet Luong** is the watershed/[Environmental Advisory Council](#) programs associate at the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) Southeast PA office. His responsibilities include working closely with the Watershed Team and EAC Network Director to support and guide ongoing projects, including watershed partnerships, watershed plan implementation, stormwater management, and other water resource issues;
- **Leanne Krueger-Braneky** is executive director of the [Sustainable Business Network](#) of Greater Philadelphia, a nonprofit network that helps local, independent businesses thrive while they build an economy that values people, the planet and prosperity for all;
- **Soledad Alfaro-Allah** is the education coordinator at [Awbury Arboretum](#) in the Germantown section of Philadelphia;
- **Susan Yi** is an environmental engineer for the [Philadelphia Water Department](#) in the planning and engineering division conducting a pilot scale research project to optimize water treatment control operations; and
- **Marcus Johnson** is a design services coordinator at the [Pennsylvania Horticultural Society](#).

For more information and a list of the Class of 2007, visit the [Environmental Leadership Program](#) and [Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps](#) webpages.

West Branch Susquehanna Symposium Attracts Over 140

More than 140 people participated in the two-day [West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium III](#), including federal, state, and local government agencies, watershed groups and Trout Unlimited chapters, policy-makers, students, and technical experts.

The focus of the event, held at the Genetti Hotel in Williamsport, was the cleanup of abandoned mine drainage in the West Branch Susquehanna River Basin.



“Just take a look at these beautiful forests and mountains the streams flow through and imagine what we could have in this region if only the streams were cleaned up,” described Michael Smith from the Department of Environmental Protection, as he showed a series of slides depicting red discoloration from iron staining in what appears to be pristine wilderness otherwise.

Smith pointed out that the West Branch Susquehanna River upstream of Lock Haven is not dead, but it is not exactly thriving either. Many sections of the West Branch Susquehanna and its tributaries do have clean water and support healthy fish communities, but other sections contain some of the worst acid, iron, and aluminum pollution in the Commonwealth.

Over 1,100 miles of streams are degraded by AMD in the West Branch watershed.

“A tale of two sides” was a common theme brought out again and again by representatives from a dozen volunteer watershed groups as they detailed efforts to restore their local waters polluted by AMD.

Water quality is usually outstanding and many streams support Class A populations of native brook trout above the AMD impacts. Since fish habitat is already in excellent condition throughout most areas of the West Branch that are impacted by AMD, improving water quality on these streams is top priority for these groups.

“Clearfield Creek is the left jab and Moshannon Creek is the right hook that knocks it out,” said Thomas Clark of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, trying to conjure up some laughs on a not-so laughable matter.

Clark described that the West Branch Susquehanna River appears to be recovering until AMD from Clearfield Creek enters, and then severe AMD from Moshannon Creek adds enough pollution that the river doesn’t begin to improve for at least another 50 miles until it reaches Lock Haven.

Fortunately, valiant cleanup efforts are underway like the one led by the Clearfield Creek Watershed Association. Dr. Art Rose, chairman of the association’s technical committee, announced that construction of the Klondike 1 and 2 passive treatment system will begin this summer.

This project, funded by grants from the Growing Greener Grant Program and EPA 319 Program, is the first step to improving Little Laurel Run, a tributary to Clearfield Creek in Cambria County. The group is also planning reclamation of an abandoned surface mine as part of the strategy to restore Little Laurel Run and ultimately benefit Clearfield Creek and the West Branch.

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Additional speakers representing Anderson Creek, Babb Creek, Beech Creek, Bennett Branch, Kettle Creek, and other watersheds described AMD abatement projects that are in the planning, design or construction phases, and numerous other projects that have yet to be funded.

These projects, as well as assessment surveys to locate and measure acid discharges, are funded by grants from state and federal government and private foundations.

“While this event highlighted the restoration successes of volunteer groups that commit countless hours to AMD remediation throughout the West Branch, it also demonstrated that there is much, much more work to be done,” commented Amy Wolfe, Director of Abandoned Mine Programs for Trout Unlimited.

“Ten years ago an event such as this wouldn’t be possible because the technological solutions for cleaning up AMD just didn’t exist like they do today,” continued Wolfe, “and now the challenge is finding the money to implement these projects.”

Other topics presented at the Symposium indicated that restoration of the West Branch Susquehanna River basin might have far-reaching impacts beyond our local streams.

For instance, an overview was given on research underway to study the impacts AMD may have on nutrient retention and how that might affect the health of the Chesapeake Bay. This study is being conducted Dr. Steve Rier of Bloomsburg University and Dr. Matthew McTammany of Bucknell University, in conjunction with the Stroud Water Research Institute.

The two-day event was co-hosted by Trout Unlimited and the West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Coalition. With guidance provided by Trout Unlimited, this Coalition represents many of the volunteer watershed groups, Trout Unlimited chapters, and County Conservation Districts that work to address AMD pollution in widely distributed parts of the West Branch from near Barnesboro and Cresson through Philipsburg and Clearfield, to Renovo, Benezette, and Wellsboro.

The vision of this coalition is to see water quality restored to pre-mining conditions throughout the West Branch Susquehanna and to encourage its protection and preservation. The volunteer effort of the Coalition is part of a long-term effort to enhance the natural potential of the forests, waters, and wildlife of the region.

Stay tuned for the release of a strategic West Branch Susquehanna AMD Remediation Plan later this summer by Trout Unlimited, which is currently being developed by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission with funds provided in part by the Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. An economic benefits analysis is also underway by Trout Unlimited to document the financial benefits that will result from improved water quality in the region.

For more information contact Amy Wolfe, [Trout Unlimited](http://TroutUnlimited.org), 570-726-3118 or send email to: AWolfe@tu.org .

Valley Creek Trustee Council Announces Grant Opportunity

The Valley Creek Trustee Council, consisting of the Fish and Boat Commission and the Valley Forge National Historical Park, have announced the availability of a new grant program for restoration of natural resources within the Valley Creek Watershed.

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Applications are being accepted until October 31 of each year for projects to be implemented the following year. Anyone is eligible to apply. Approximately \$1.5 million is available through the [Valley Creek Restoration Grant Program](#) for qualified stream restoration projects.

Valley Creek is an Exceptional Value stream and a Class A wild trout fishery, as well as being an important resource within Valley Forge National Historical Park.

After contamination of the stream occurred in the mid-1980s, monies to compensate for natural resource damages and lost angler use were received through legal settlements with the responsible parties and placed into a Restoration Fund administered by the Valley Creek Trustee Council.

The grant program is based on the Valley Creek Restoration Plan which outlines the strategy for watershed restoration and provides potential restoration projects. Qualified projects must relate to stormwater management, streambank stabilization, implementation of environmentally sensitive land practices like vegetated stream buffers, easements), projects that directly improve angler access and projects related to the restoration of brook trout in Crabby Creek, a tributary to Valley Creek.

Copies of the Valley Creek Restoration Plan are also available on the website or in CD form from Chuck Marshall, Valley Creek Restoration Coordinator, at cgmarshall@nni.com or 610-647-6432 .

For more information, visit the [Valley Creek Restoration Grant Program webpage](#).

DEP to Hold Public Meeting on AMD Treatment Plant in Cambria County

The Department of Environmental Protection will hold a public meeting May 21 to discuss the relocation of the Barnes and Tucker Dumans Acid Mine Drainage Treatment Plant to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River near the village of Watkins.

The average flow to be diverted is 5,250 gallons per minute with peak flows of 7,000 gallons per minute during low flow conditions in the West Branch of the Susquehanna River.

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m., at the Contres-Greer Social Hall, 1700 Kennedy Ave., Northern Cambria.

A copy of the project proposal is on file for public review at DEP's Cambria Office, 286 Industrial Park Rd., Ebensburg, between the hours of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Comments may be sent to J. Scott Horrell, Environmental Program manager, at the above DEP address up to ten days following the meeting.

Link: [Mine Water Could Help Provide Make Up Water in Susquehanna Basin Drought Barnes & Tucker Mine Water Treatment Project Will Benefit Farmers](#)

Stream Buffer Planted at Arbor Day Celebration in Bellefonte

Over 50 volunteers, including 35 Bellefonte High School students, braved drizzly conditions and planted over 700 native trees, shrubs, and live dogwood stakes within Joseph A. Masullo Memorial Park in Bellefonte Borough creating a much needed 25 foot wide riparian buffer along approximately 600 feet of stream.

The planting was organized by the [ClearWater Conservancy](#) as part of their 2007 Beatty Memorial Arbor Day event

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Sue Hannegan, Bellefonte Borough's Assistant Manager, visited the site as the planting was wrapping up and was impressed by the efficiency of the student planters.

"Bellefonte Borough appreciates the cooperation and donations given to this worthy project and looks forward to the positive impact it will have on the Spring Creek corridor and the newly acquired and newly named Masullo Memorial Park," said Hannegan. "Another recommendation of the Bellefonte Waterfront Master Plan has been accomplished and in the process we all learned a little bit more about streambank conservation. We will definitely be watching the progress of those live stake dogwood branches as they take root and grow!"

ClearWater Conservancy's Arbor Day event was sponsored by SPE Federal Credit Union, Trautman Arbor Care, and Blackhawk Homestead Nursery.

Joseph A. Masullo Memorial Park located at the foot of Reynolds Avenue and at the confluence of Logan Branch and Spring Creek.

Link: [PA Landscape and Nursery Assn. Highlights Arbor Day, Supports REAP](#)

PUC Commemorates National Drinking Water Week, "Be Water Wise".

Showing consumers how to "Be Water Wise," the Public Utility Commission will commemorate National Drinking Water Week, May 8-10, in the Commonwealth Keystone Building Atrium in Harrisburg.

The Senate this week also adopted [Senate Resolution 106](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) designating May 6 – 12 as "Drinking Water Week" in Pennsylvania.

Through a partnership with Home Depot, the PUC will urge consumers to "Prepare Now: Be Water Wise." Consumers will have the opportunity to learn more about simple steps that can be take around the home to reduce water usage.

"By becoming more water wise, consumers can not only protect this valuable natural resource but they also can protect their personal resource – money." said Commission Chairman Wendell Holland. "In commemorating National Drinking Water, the Commission strives to provide consumers with the tools they need to make educated decisions around their household. Saving water is easy and there are many products available that don't require changing the way we live."

From May 8 to 10, exhibits from water companies, state agencies, and organizations will be on display in the Atrium of the Commonwealth Keystone Building in Harrisburg. The public is welcome to tour the exhibits.

The PUC and Home Depot will highlight home improvements such as low-flow showerheads, simple adjustments to bathroom fixtures and frontload washing machines that allow consumers to conserve this valuable resource while saving money.

As the PUC encourages consumers to "Be Water Wise," the event also will highlight [WaterSense](#) – a program launched earlier this year by the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection for residential consumers. Products bearing the WaterSense mark are guaranteed to meet thresholds for conservation, much like the EnergyStar program for electricity.

All of these measures not only conserve water, but they save consumers money in the long run. Water consumers will be encouraged to learn more about the law related to utility shut-offs and how the law impact water consumers.

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Because coverage has focused on natural gas and electric users, most consumers don't realize how provisions in the utility shut-off laws also apply to water customers.

Information about customer assistance programs designed to help low-income consumers with their bills also will be available.

The Pennsylvania celebration builds upon national efforts to highlight the need for safe drinking water worldwide. On May 1, the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissions, of which the PUC is a member, will cosponsor a premiere screening of the water documentary *Running Dry* in Washington, D.C.

Running Dry explores the global water crisis and illustrates the reality that a child dies every 15 seconds due to inadequate access to clean water and sanitation. It is part of a comprehensive public information/education program regarding the global humanitarian water crisis.

NewsClip: [More Efficient Water Fixtures Cut Water Consumption](#)

Overbrook Environmental Education Center Opens in West Philadelphia

A former quarry and commercial site was transformed into the [Overbrook Environmental Education Center](#), which opened recently for the first time.

The Overbrook Center is a community-based Technology and Literacy Center developed by JASTECH development Services, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to environmental education, conservation, public health and personal enrichment.

The Center will teach environmental awareness and conservation in urban communities with grants from the Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Brownfields, the City of Philadelphia, and others.

The building promotes sustainable design and construction by conserving natural resources, and improving the environment through choice of location, development practices, water and energy usage methods, and choice of building materials.

For more information, visit the [Overbrook Environmental Education Center website](#).

Philadelphia Sustainability Awards Winners Announced

Ten Winners and one People's Choice Winner were awarded in the first-ever [Philadelphia Sustainability Awards](#) this week to honor those who are making the Philadelphia region a better place to live – now and for future generations.

The 10 Winners include:

The Engineering and Design Institute at the Philadelphia University – Provides support and education for the green building movement in the region by training more than 1,000 professionals and bringing more than \$4 million to the region in sustainable projects.

Jackie O'Neil's Zero Energy Home – A prototype affordable home produces all its own electricity through solar panels, not relying on any outside sources of energy. By using energy efficient windows, heating/cooling and appliances, the house now produces more energy than it uses.

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Judy Wicks, founder of the [White Dog Café and Foundation](#) – Purchases local food and renewable energy, and assists other businesses with their sustainable efforts. She is internationally known for her sustainable business practices.

[Liberty Property Trust](#) – A Philadelphia-based developer known nationally as the leader in green building development. Developed One Crescent Drive at the Navy Yard and the Comcast Center, which will be the nation’s tallest green building.

[PhillyCarShare](#) – Provides low-emission vehicles to thousands of Philadelphia drivers, reducing fuel consumption and carbon emissions. The results so far have been 1.2 million miles driven in hybrids, and 440,000 gallons of gas saved. Additionally, more than 2,100 votes were cast online for the People’s Choice Award. The clear winner with about 30 percent of the votes was PhillyCarShare.

[Police Forensic Science Center](#) – Installed efficient systems such as heating, cooling and electricity, and manages stormwater on site. The building has seen a 67 percent reduction in its annual utility bill.

[Re:Vision Architecture](#) – Provides guidance and professional services for the region’s most ambitious and often controversial green building projects.

[RecycleBank](#) – Motivates recycling in participating neighborhoods by crediting household recyclables with “RecycleBank dollars,” redeemable at local retailers. Recycling rates jumped to 90 percent in participating neighborhoods, compared to average Philadelphia rates of just 6 percent.

[The Food Trust](#) – Connects regional farmers to farm markets and assists supermarkets in underserved Philadelphia neighborhoods, and educates kids on making healthier food choices.

[Upper Dublin Township](#) – Implements sustainable practices such as renewable energy purchases, open space preservation and recycling.

Winners were announced at a green carpet ceremony that featured Charleston, SC Mayor Joseph Riley as the keynote speaker, and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis as an honorary guest. Philadelphia Mayor John Street was also honored for the City’s commitment to climate change policies, riverfront redevelopment and the City’s GreenPlan for sustainable use of open space.

“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.”

Coordinating organizations include PEC, City of Philadelphia, Delaware Valley Green Building Council, PennFuture, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, The Reinvestment Fund, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, American Institute

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of Architects, and the Academy of Natural Sciences. The William Penn Foundation and The Reinvestment Fund have generously funded this project. The HUB Cira Centre sponsored the Juror session.

A panel of five distinguished jurors convened to deliberate and decide on 19 finalists and 10 winners. 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 & Sustainable Development Process Systems for the Rohm and Haas Company; Rebecca Flora, Executive Director of the Green Building Alliance in Pittsburgh, PA; Sandy Wiggins, Founder and Principal, Consilience LLC and Chair of the U.S. Green Building Council.

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

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

New EPA Website Makes It Easier To Be Good Environmental Stewards

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week launched a new [Environmental Stewardship website](#) to help business, government and private citizens make intelligent choices on sustainable environmental benefits.

Simple, everyday decisions by organizations and individuals on such issues as recycling, reuse or choice of fuel support pollution prevention and environmental stewardship.

The website will enable users to find EPA partnership programs, such as the Energy Star energy saving program, which best align with their needs and interests. Businesses can search for EPA programs based on their industrial category, environmental issue of interest, and geographic area.

One specific webpage, for example, shows businesses how they can help employees reduce the environmental impacts of commuting.

The website also provides information links individuals can use to protect the environment in different settings, such as home, work, school and shopping. One Web site shows citizens how they can use pesticides safely.

This tool is the latest in a series of steps EPA has taken to support environmental stewardship.

For more information, visit EPA's [Environmental Stewardship website](#)

EPA Says 2006 Results Show Downward Trend of Air Pollution Continues

An early look at air quality and emissions [data for 2006 shows](#) continued improvement in the nation's air quality over the long term, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reported this week.

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Emissions of six key pollutants have dropped by more than half since 1970 and the national average concentration for each criteria pollutant is below the level of its air quality standard.

While emissions of six key "criteria" pollutants and the compounds that form them continue to decline, the United States has continued to grow.

Total emissions of the six key pollutants dropped 54 percent between 1970 and 2006. During the same time period: the U.S. gross domestic product increased 203 percent, vehicle miles traveled increased 177 percent, energy consumption increased 49 percent, and U.S. population grew by 46 percent. In addition, emissions of air toxics in 2002 were 35 percent lower than 1990 levels.

Under the Clean Air Act, EPA sets national air quality standards for six key pollutants, including nitrogen dioxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter and lead. Each year, EPA examines the levels of these pollutants in the air and the emissions from various sources to see how both have changed over time and to summarize the current status of air quality.

While national average concentrations of the six key pollutants are below national standards, results vary by site. Annual pollution levels at some monitoring sites do remain above one or more of the national air quality standards, with ozone and particulate matter remaining as the most persistent problems.

For more information, visit EPA's [2006 air quality data webpage](#).

DEP to Again Monitor, Issue Advisories for Unhealthy Ozone Days

The Department of Environmental Protection this week announced the beginning of the 2007 ozone season, which runs through mid-September.

DEP publishes [daily ozone reports](#) using weather forecasts to predict when concentrations of ground-level ozone may reach unhealthy levels or exceed federal health-based standards.

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. It forms during warm weather when pollution from vehicles, industry, households and power plants "bakes" in the hot sun, making it hard for some people to breathe.

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.

DEP is partnering with the Susquehanna Valley, Southwest Pennsylvania and Lehigh Valley/Berks County air quality partnerships to provide daily ozone forecasts. Residents can receive early warnings about bad air days by signing up to receive the daily forecasts via e-mail.

The forecast features the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's standardized Air Quality Index 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 everyone). DEP also provides year-round forecasts for fine particulate matter, commonly called PM2.5.

DEP meteorologists issue daily ozone forecasts at 2 p.m. for the Susquehanna Valley, Southwest Pennsylvania and Lehigh Valley/Berks County air quality partnership

regions. The southeast region maintains its own forecasts through the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

Individuals who do not have Internet access can call the 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.

Some tips to follow during high ozone days include the following:

- Refuel vehicles after dark. Avoid spilling gasoline and stop fueling when the pump shuts off automatically;
- Conserve energy. Don't overcool homes. Turn off lights and appliances that are not in use. Wash clothes and dishes only in full loads;
- Limit daytime driving. Consider carpooling or taking public transportation. Properly maintain vehicles; and
- Limit outdoor activities such as lawn mowing or sports to the evening hours.

To help make people aware of ozone and particle pollution, DEP maintains relationships with various community groups, businesses and local governments, forming air quality partnerships in southwestern Pennsylvania (Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington and Westmoreland counties), the Delaware Valley (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties), the Susquehanna Valley (Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon and York counties) and the Lehigh Valley/Berks County region (Lehigh, Berks and Northampton counties).

These partnerships inform people about the dangers of ground-level ozone and fine particle matter, and encourage them to take voluntary actions to reduce their contributions to air pollution.

To find out about the partnerships or to sign up to receive the forecast by e-mail, go to the [Air Quality Partners webpage](#).

NewsClip: [Allegheny County Loses EPA Matching Funds for Air Quality Wind Blows Polluted Air Our Way](#)

Recycling in Pennsylvania Up Slightly to Just Over 4.8 Million Tons

Pennsylvanians recycled a record 4.86 million tons of municipal waste in 2005, saving consumers and industries nearly \$263 million in disposal waste costs and providing materials to businesses with an estimated market value of \$577 million.

In 2004 Pennsylvanians [recycled 4.8 million tons](#).

According to reports filed by Pennsylvania counties for 2005, the most recent year for which statistics are available, the state diverted 4.86 million tons of municipal waste from disposal at landfills and waste-to-energy facilities, which continued an upward trend that began with passage of the state's recycling law in 1988.

Municipal waste includes typical refuse from households, businesses, schools and institutions, as well as industry offices and lunchrooms.

The economic benefit of recycling in 2005 can be calculated, in part, by using published commodity prices for goods, such as steel cans, glass, plastic bottles and corrugated paper.

An analysis of the nearly 1.5 million tons of Pennsylvania's 2005 recycling materials – with specific and identifiable prices – reveals that those materials were worth \$130.3 million.

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If the 3.4 million tons of other materials that remain were valued at even half this amount, the total would be \$577.4 million. This does not include the estimated value of avoided disposal, which can be calculated as more than \$262 million at the estimated statewide average disposal cost of \$54 per ton.

The environmental benefits of recycling extend beyond diverting materials from landfills and incinerators.

Pennsylvania recycling saved energy: Pennsylvania's 2005 recycling efforts saved almost 98 trillion BTUs of energy, enough to power more than 940,000 homes for one year in Pennsylvania, or the equivalent of conserving 786 million gallons of gasoline.

Pennsylvania recycling reduced air and water pollution: Pennsylvania recycling in 2005 eliminated more than 2.5 million metric tons of air emissions, including greenhouse gas emission reductions of 1.9 million metric tons of carbon equivalent -- a savings of approximately 2.4 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions in the commonwealth.

Part of the air emissions savings total was 7,731 metric tons of sulfur oxides, an important ingredient in acid rain formation. Nitrogen oxides, a precursor to smog, were reduced by 8,814 metric tons, an amount equal to 5.5 percent of these emissions from Pennsylvania electrical utilities.

Water pollutant reductions totaled nearly 9,000 metric tons.

Recycling in 2005 eliminated more than 2.5 million metric tons of carbon equivalent -- a savings of approximately 3 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions in the Commonwealth.

Pennsylvania recycling conserved natural resources: By recycling nearly 1.2 million tons of steel cans, appliances and similar materials, Pennsylvania industries saved 1.5 million tons of iron ore, 829,786 tons of coal and 71,124 tons of limestone. Through recycling newspapers, phone books, office paper, cardboard and mixed paper, the state saved the equivalent of 78 million tree seedlings grown for 10 years.

For more information, visit DEP's [Recycling in PA webpage](#).

NewsClip: [Recycling Push Hopes to Green Up Lancaster County](#)

Link: [GreenTreks Network Recycling Resources Webpage](#)

2nd Annual Greater Pittsburgh Recycled Crafts Competition

In recognition of Earth Day on April 22, the [Mall at Robinson](#) partnered with the [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) and the [Air & Waste Management Association](#) to host a recycled craft competition for elementary, middle and high school students in the Greater Pittsburgh Area.

An opening reception was held at the Mall where panel of judges selected 10 semi-finalists from the elementary and middle school division and three semi-finalists from the high school division. The semi-finalists include:

Elementary & Middle:

Forbes Elementary (Penn Hills)

- “The Keys to Great Music” – Francesca Fello (4th grade)
- “Miranda the Mouse” – Sarah Depew (4th grade)
- “Shiny, the Rainbow Fish” – Aleena Gula (4th grade)
- “Hally the Hippo” – Kayla Houghtelin (4th grade)

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- “Caylee’s Court” – Caylee Walker (4th grade)
St. Edmund’s Academy (Squirrel Hill)
- “El Ciudad de Reciclaje” – Adam Harvey (4th grade)
St. James School (Wilkinsburg)
- “The Endangered Puma” – Malisa Branch (8th grade)
- “The Real Endangered Eagle” – William Young / Assante Stovall (6th grade)
Finley Middle Ringold (Finleyville)
- “Keep Recycling” – Jarod Tkach / Nick Scabilloni (8th grade)

High School:

- Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (Coraopolis)
- “Phoenix” – Mallory Praskovich (12th grade)
- “Demeter” – Kristin DiSanto / Brittany Smith (11th/12th grade)

The semi-finalists’ work will be displayed at the AWMA Conference at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center from June 26-28, and judges will select the top three from the elementary and middle school division and one finalist from the high school division.

Winners will receive a ribbon, certificate and other prizes in a special awards ceremony.

“This was a great opportunity to instill the benefits of recycling in our younger generations. Sustainability is such an important value that we all need to embrace, and this event is just one way we can help educate the community on the many options they can participate in to help conserve resources,” said Shema Krinsky, marketing director, Mall at Robinson. “Sustainability is one of our core values and we continuously strive to help make the areas we live and work better places.”

“We were delighted to again partner with the Mall at Robinson and the Air & Waste Management Association to provide this opportunity for area students to express their knowledge and creativity about recycling,” said David Mazza, Western Regional Director for PRC. “Recycling conserves natural resources, saves energy and landfill space, and has a positive impact on the overall environmental health of the region.”

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event Nets 115,063 Pounds of Material

The [Southwestern PA Household Hazardous Waste Task Force](#) collected 115,063 pounds of material for safe disposal from 1,322 participants at their April 28 event.

By comparison, the 2006 Allegheny County collection attracted 1,041 participants, who dropped off 90,748 pounds of household hazardous waste.

Even though it rained most of the day, more than sixty dedicated volunteers gave up their Saturday to staff the collection.

Since May 2003, the Task Force has sponsored 20 highly successful household hazardous waste events in eight western Pennsylvania counties. In 2006, the Task Force met and surpassed two important milestones, namely the 10,000th household served, and the 1 millionth pound of household hazardous waste collected.

This year the Task Force was the recipient of the 2007 Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence.

For more information, visit the [Task Force website](#).

First Falcon Egg Hatches in Harrisburg!

On May 3 the first of five eggs laid by the peregrine falcons nesting on the Rachel Carson Building in Harrisburg hatched. At regular intervals the remaining eggs should hatch over the next few days.

The chicks, called eyases, will then start to grow at an extraordinary rate with mom and dad kept very busy hunting for food.

On May 24, if all goes well, the eyases will be large enough to band and you can watch the banding and the chicks grow on live online video.

Online Video: [DEP Falcon webpage](#).

Grants Available From DCNR for Protecting Non-Game Species

People and organizations who work to protect Pennsylvania's non-game animals, native plants and their habitat are invited to apply for a share of \$1 million in grants from the [Wild Resource Conservation Program](#).

Applications are due June 30 for work to be performed between January 2008 and June 2009.

“Field research and on-the-ground restoration efforts protecting some of our most vulnerable species are supported through these grants from the Wild Resource Conservation Program,” said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. “Over the years this program has helped reintroduce river otters and fishers in Pennsylvania; preserve and protect our rare plant species; and bridge the gap between scientific discovery and sound conservation policy.”

Launched in 1982, the program, funded through Growing Greener and voluntary contributions, supports research and protection efforts to conserve Pennsylvania's diverse native wildlife resources, including bird and mammal species, amphibians and reptiles, insects and wild plants.

A manual that includes information on how to apply, along with selection criteria, is available on the [Wild Resource Conservation Program webpage](#).

Paper copies of the manual can be ordered from the Wild Resource Conservation Program, P.O. Box 8764, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8764. Questions on the grant program can be directed to WRCP Interim Director Greg Czarnecki at 717-783-1639.

Moraine State Park to Host Wild Resource Festival May 12

Buoyed by success at other state parks, organizers of the [Wild Resource Festival](#) this week announced plans to broaden the scope and audience of their annual salute to nature by hosting a festival at Moraine State Park in Butler County on May 12.

“From songbirds in the trees, to mushrooms enriching the forest floor, Pennsylvania's vast natural heritage has been showcased at Bald Eagle and French Creek state parks during previous Wild Resources Festivals,” said Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. “Now, it is Moraine's chance to shine after being selected to host a Wild Resource Conservation Program festival this year.”

Festival activities will also be held June 9 at French Creek State Park in Chester and Berks counties. The festivals in eastern and western parks are part of the Wild

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Resource Conservation Program's 25th anniversary celebration. Two festivals give more people the opportunity to participate.

"Whether they're seeking a closer look at a raptor or a peek at a normally nocturnal flying squirrel, visitors to either festival can sample a broad spectrum of the outdoor world around them," said Secretary DiBerardinis. "After last year's event at French Creek drew more than 800 people, we knew it was time to expand our efforts westward, and Moraine's 16,725 acres and 3,225-acre Lake Arthur provide the ideal venue."

Sponsored by DCNR's Wild Resource Conservation Program, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission, the two Wild Resource Festivals will be offered free to the public from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

"We are hoping for widespread public participation in these 'celebrations of nature,' featuring no less than 35 environment-based demonstrations and hands-on activities that are unique to the two parks and geared for the entire family," said Sally Just, director of DCNR's Office of Conservation Science. "We are proud of the many prominent naturalists, botanists, biologists and other speakers who will be introducing park visitors to our wealth of outdoor riches."

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. Both festivals will be highlighted by presentations on the rare northern flying squirrel, the program's featured species for 2007 that will be included on patches and in educational materials.

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

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

Take a Hike! Over 100 Hikes Scheduled Across Pennsylvania May 26-June 3

After setting a lofty goal of finding ways to tell Pennsylvanians "to take a hike," organizers of the May 26 to June 3 [Hiking Week](#) this week announced they have surpassed the 100-hike mark.

The annual endeavor encourages healthy exercise and showcases the state's bountiful outdoors.

"At least 100 organized hikes across the state for all ages and abilities was the noble goal set by the Keystone Trails Association, and our invaluable partners in this increasingly popular statewide event not only met that benchmark, they continue to add to it," said Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis.

The nine-day Hiking Week observance is marking its sixth year, and the co-sponsoring trail association and DCNR still are inviting suggestions for hikes that could be added to this year's schedule.

"Early this year, the trail association and DCNR set the ambitious goal of scheduling 100 hikes for this year's PA Hiking Week — and we did it," said [Keystone Trails Association](#) President Paul Shaw. "We already have 104 different events on the calendar, including several hikes in one event, and we're hoping more will be planned on the thousands of miles of trails available in Pennsylvania."

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Festivities planned by DCNR and the Keystone Trails Association will take place in parks, forests, cities and towns across the state. All of the scheduled hikes have leaders and include a variety of lengths and difficulties — from easy strolls along urban greenways to strenuous treks in some of Pennsylvania’s rugged mountain areas.

To have organized Hiking Week outings added to the official schedule, organizers should contact the [Keystone Trails Association](#) at 814-395-9696

For more information, or for a complete calendar of events closer to the starting date, visit DCNR’s [Hiking Week webpage](#).

Two Pennsylvania Teams to Compete in 2007 Solar Decathlon

Teams from [Carnegie Mellon](#) and [Penn State](#) universities are among 20 selected by the U.S. Department of Energy to compete in the third annual [Solar Decathlon competition](#) to be held October 12-20 on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Participating teams will design, build and operate the most attractive and energy efficient solar-powered home.

This year, teams have been selected from the United States, Puerto Rico, Germany, Spain, and Canada. The Solar Decathlon complements President Bush’s Solar America Initiative, which seeks to make the solar energy cost-competitive with conventional forms of electricity by 2015.

“I am eager to see these students demonstrate how we can better harness clean and renewable solar energy to transform the way we power our homes and businesses,” Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman said. “The technologies and approaches we will see on the National Mall are central to reaching the President’s goal of increasing our nation’s energy security by pushing forward revolutionary technologies that will allow us to become less reliant on imported sources of energy.”

For nine days, the National Mall will be transformed into a showcase for cutting-edge solar and building technologies. For the past two years, teams have been working on the design, research, and testing necessary to construct and power the homes. Homes will be shipped to Washington, DC, and beginning October 3, a “solar village” will take shape.

Beginning on October 12, teams will be judged in 10 areas encompassing architecture, engineering, livability, comfort, power generation for space heating and cooling, water heating, and powering lights and appliances.

The Decathlon’s prototype solar homes are zero-energy, yield zero carbon, and will include the latest high-tech solutions and money-saving benefits to consumers, without sacrificing comfort, convenience, and aesthetics.

Each house must also produce enough “extra” energy to power an electric car. An overall winner will be announced October 19.

In both 2002 and 2005, the Solar Decathlon drew more than 100,000 visitors to National Mall. Visitors can tour the homes daily to learn about design and construction techniques. Advanced technologies on display will also include: translucent walls used for day lighting; structural insulated panels for improved insulating value; solar heated floors; fiber optic cables attached to solar collectors to transmit light inside a house; and integrated solar photovoltaic power generation systems.

The Solar Decathlon is sponsored by DOE’s Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, in partnership with its National Renewable Energy Laboratory, who manages the event.

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The American Institute of Architects, BP, Sprint, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, and the National Association of Home Builders are title sponsors.

For more information, visit the [Solar Decathlon website](#) and the [Carnegie Mellon](#) and [Penn State](#) solar decathlon team webpages.

Online Video: [Penn State's First Solar Decathlon Home Subject of Video](#)

Link: [Pittsburgh Solar Decathlon Project Team Heads for Washington](#)

Rep. Swanger to Hold Biofuels Seminar May 18 in Lebanon

Rep. RoseMarie Swanger (R-Lebanon) and the Penn State Cooperative Extension will hold a free biofuels seminar May 18, at the Penn State Extension Office in the Lebanon County Agricultural Center, 2120 Cornwall Road, Lebanon.

The event will be held from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The agenda includes discussions on corn ethanol and soy diesel and their impact on Pennsylvania markets and local producers.

“We have assembled an excellent panel of speakers,” said Rep. Swanger. “There will be something for everyone, from the farmer who is the key to the source of these fuels to the company that will produce the fuels to the consumer who wants us to be less dependent on foreign oil.”

The seminar is free and open to the public, but seating is limited. If interested in attending, contact Swanger’s district office at 717-277-2101.

May 11 Workshop in Norristown on Energy Harvest, PEDA Grant Writing

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 May 11 starting at 9:00 a.m.

The program will be held at the Montgomery County Human Services Center, 1430 DeKalb St., Norristown.

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

Advanced registration is encouraged by contacting Richard Sheckler at 484-250-5940

Spotlight

Penn State Program: Climate Change, Climate Justice

"We can't all have the things we want and grow to a population of nine billion and continue to survive," Nancy Tuana warned.

Tuana, Penn State professor of philosophy and director of the Rock Ethics Institute, spoke last Wednesday evening as part of a panel discussion titled "[Climate Change, Climate Justice](#)," a collaborative event sponsored by WPSU's Common Ground Lobby

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Talks, Penn State's Rock Ethics Institute, and Research Unplugged. An audience of over 100 people gathered in the lobby of the Outreach Building in University Park to take part in an examination of the ethical, religious, and social justice implications of climate change.

In addition to Tuana, the panel—moderated by WPSU's Patty Satalia—included Richard Alley, Evan Pugh professor of geosciences at Penn State and a lead author of the 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report; Joy Bergey, global warming outreach coordinator for the environmental group, PennFuture; Jeff Schmidt, senior director of the Sierra Club's Pennsylvania chapter; and Robert McKinstry, Goddard Chair in forestry and environmental resources conservation in Penn State's School of Forest Resources.



"What did you come out in the rain tonight to learn?" Satalia asked the audience at the program's opening. One man, from Austria, said he came to "see what America is doing to contribute to the global effort." Another said he wanted to "see if there is any hope for my grandchildren and their children," while another audience member said that she wanted to know "how climate change was going to affect animals such as the polar bears."

The panelists addressed these concerns and others.

To set the stage, a short film was presented in which Penn State geoscientists, meteorologists, and geographers outlined the current scientific consensus on global warming, explaining lines of evidence pointing to a warming trend which, by the end of this century, will likely cause temperatures to rise between four and seven degrees Fahrenheit.

Such an increase would melt ice caps and swell ocean levels, endangering coastal areas in Florida, Louisiana, and California within the United States, and threatening to completely engulf poor, heavily populated coastal countries such as Bangladesh, potentially displacing tens of millions of people.

"We see that humans are changing the air's composition," Alley noted at the film's conclusion. "The science is solid. Now it is back to the people and policy makers to decide what to do."

"What can we do as individuals to minimize the effects of global warming?" asked one audience member. The panel offered several suggestions such as switching to fluorescent light bulbs, eating lower on the food chain, riding bikes rather than driving cars, and substituting wind and solar power for oil.

McKinstry added, "We need cooperation from the national, state, and local government to solve the problems associated with climate change." He also noted that all sectors of the economy—transportation, forestry, waste management—need to discuss options.

"If you start on a smaller scale—in your community—you can create a political domino effect," Schmidt said, citing the successful implementation of the "Cool Cities Campaign," an initiative to promote innovative energy solutions by local governments that has caught on in over 500 American cities.

The campaign works to encourage the construction of energy-efficient buildings, the employment of hybrid cars for city fleets, and the use of green energy providers for

municipal needs. As an example of how energy-efficiency can save money, Schmidt cited the city of York—one of eight Pennsylvania cities participating in the campaign—for having recently switched to LED- powered traffic lights, a move that will save the city \$70,000 annually.

Although some of the largest energy consumers within Pennsylvania have taken steps toward using renewable energy resources, the panelists made it clear that Pennsylvania is one of the nation's—and, in fact, the world's—top offenders when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions.

Largely because of the Commonwealth's dependency on coal, Bergey said, Pennsylvania is the third largest generator of emissions, behind only Texas and California, states with much higher populations. "Pennsylvania emits more waste than 150 developing countries combined, creating one percent of the world's total emissions," she noted.

In response to an audience member's comment that making energy-efficient changes in the home remains, for many people, an expensive luxury, McKinstry said that the average citizen may soon enjoy many of the same tax breaks given to companies that choose to be energy-efficient.

He noted that bills proposed in the Pennsylvania legislature would give \$100 tax credits for upgrading to energy-efficient appliances (microwaves, refrigerators, and washer/dryers with an "energy star" logo); \$500 credits for purchasing hybrid cars; and half of the installation costs for solar panels on homes (up to \$15,000). Panelists urged audience members to contact their state representatives and push for passage of these bills.

Pennsylvania's Clean Energy bill, signed into law by Gov. Rendell in 2004, requires that by the year 2020, 18 percent of energy used in the state be harvested from renewable and alternative sources such as solar, wind, biomass, and coal waste.

Schmidt added, "We're aiming for an 80 percent reduction by 2050. But it's easier to swallow if we look at it as a two percent decrease per year. I think we can make it."

Bergey spoke of her work with interfaith religious groups concerned about climate change. "The Bible tells us that we should seek justice and walk humbly and practice kindness," she noted. "And we are not on the path to justice. We are hurting people, and we know we are hurting people, and we aren't changing our ways. Evangelicals see this as a moral issue because it will first and foremost affect the poor—those least able to help themselves—and as Christians, we are taught to help them."

Developed countries "have the greatest influence on climate change," Tuana added, citing that although the United States accounts for just five percent of the world's population, it is responsible for 22 percent of its greenhouse-gas emissions.

At the policy level, options for reducing our carbon footprint are wide-ranging, and some are hotly contested. "Nuclear energy has to be part of the puzzle if we want to get emissions down to where we need them to be," McKinstry noted. Biofuels are another area of exploration. "We can't afford to abandon any CO₂-saving measure," McKinstry said. "There is no silver bullet solution. It's more like a Chinese menu. We need to choose ten different options from each of five different columns."

"We need to continue to develop options," concurred Alley. "Then, once the options are developed, we need to have a discussion about what to do with them." One common theme emerged during the evening: The need to act locally to influence national policy and create plausible alternatives. "There is hope, but we need political help," Bergey said.

Added Tuana, in her closing statement: "Live and vote as if life depends on it."

NewsClip: [Editorial: Act Locally on Climate, Ride the Bus](#)

Quick Clips

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

[11 Hailed for Work to Aid Environment](#)

[Huntingdon Farm Wins Award for Environmental Excellence](#)

[Environmental Excursion Gives Students Insight on Animals](#)

[Home-Schooled Students Are Tops At Envirothon](#)

[Clearfield Students Compete in Annual Envirothon](#)

[Cumberland County Students Take Part in Envirothon](#)

[Lycoming Students Vie for Envirothon Honors](#)

[College Students Plant Hundreds of Trees](#)

[Local Students Field Tested](#)

[Earth Day Cleanup is an Inspiration to All Communities](#)

[Game Commission President Faces Ouster](#)

[Wildlife Management Units Come Under Review](#)

[Deer Oversight a Team Effort](#)

[Much Needed Projects Get Funds in Crawford](#)

[Linn Conservancy Uses Land, Water to Spread Word](#)

[Low-Profile Nature Preserve Feels Growing Pains](#)

[Rails-to-Trails Path in the City Will Take About \\$2.5 Million for Completion](#)

[Editorial: Need for Power Lines Could Be Offset With More Regional Generation](#)

[State Supports Expanded Landfill at Greene County Power Plant](#)

[Palmerton Interns Will Help Study Contamination](#)

[Green Roof Research Takes Root](#)

[PPL Raises Rate Hike Estimate for 2010](#)

[Why Methane Gas Bonanza is No Boon to Landowners](#)

[Plant Would Make Fuel From Coal for Military](#)

[Editorial: Ethanol Mixed Blessing, Not Silver Bullet](#)

[Firm to Help Convert Cars to Run on Waste Cooking Oil](#)

[Landfill Might Turn Trash Into Truck Fuel](#)

[Ethanol Surge Expected to Hike Corn, Feed Prices](#)

[Wind Farms Could Pose Threat to Birds, Bats, Panel Says](#)

[Editorial: Expand Wilderness Protection for Allegheny](#)

[Region Readies for Birding Event](#)

[Wildlife-Rich Crow Trail Offers Accessible Hike](#)

[Getting Their Wings](#)

[Centralia: A Town Divided By Fire](#)

[As Never Before, A Green Race in Philly](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

- [POWR Issues White Paper on Water Allocation in PA](#)

[Norfolk Southern Tells DEP Trout Stream Cleanup Tops \\$2 Million](#)

[Revitalized Natural Habitat Attracting More Wildlife to Lititz](#)

[Sewickley Creek Watershed Assn. Participates in Great PA Cleanup](#)

[Editorial: Farm Bill Reform](#)

[Op-Ed: Farm Bill Not Just for Farmers](#)

[Editorial: A Sign of Spring That Swims Upstream](#)

[Peters Creek Effort Benefits the Environment](#)

[Lawmakers Working on Game Commissioner Removal](#)

[River threats Outlined, Tough Challenges Ahead Say Symposium Speakers](#)

[Going Green Earns Green for Farmers](#)

[Sunbury's Flood Mitigation Project May Finally Begin](#)

[Schuylkill Sojourn Ready to Launch](#)

[Passing the Acid Test: Local Streams Getting Healthier](#)

[Plants, Turtles and Frogs, Oh My](#)

[\\$352,000 Innovative Technology Grant Helps Borough Meet Water Needs](#)

[New Report Confirms Economic, Environmental Benefits of Water Resource Investments](#)

[While Air Temperatures Are Warm, Water Still Cold](#)

Regulations

The Department of Environmental Protection published notice of changes to the ozone nonattainment area for [Clearfield/Indiana](#) and [York/Adams](#) counties. The Fish and Boat Commission published notice of additions to the [Class A Wild Trout Streams](#) and changes to the [Classification of Wild Trout Streams](#). The Public Utility Commission published advance notice of proposed rulemaking on implementation of the [Confidential Security Information Disclosure Act](#).

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – May 5, 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 [three new guidance documents](#) this week on coal and mineral industry inspections, incidental coal extraction and a final policy on oil and gas well bonds as well as general permits for [Beneficial Use of Alternative Fuels](#) and [Waste Foundry Sand](#) and a general permit covering [Earth Disturbance Associated with Oil and Gas Exploration](#). Details below...

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Draft: DEP ID: 562-3000-102 Coal and Industrial Mineral Mining Inspections, This guidance document (formerly titled "Inspection") defines the content and frequency of inspections of coal and industrial minerals mining activities by inspectors of the Department's Bureau of District Mining Operations. Comments due June 4.

Draft: DEP ID: 563-2000-003 Incidental Coal Extraction for Government-Financed Construction Projects or Government-Financed Reclamation Projects. The regulations at 25 Pa. Code Section 86.6 allow for an exemption from the permitting requirement for the extraction of coal incidental to government-financed construction projects and government-financed reclamation projects under certain circumstances. Comments due June 4.

Final: DEP ID: 550-2501-101 Guidelines for Submitting Oil and Gas Well Bonds. This document provides instruction to bond applicants and financial guarantors for submitting proper documents and financial instruments for oil and gas well bonds.

[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](#)

- [No Cost Internet-Based Environmental Cleanup Training](#)
- **May 7** – Senate Appropriations Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 782](#) (MJWhite-R-Venango) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transport escorts, [Senate Bill 815](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) that would amend the Storage Tank Act to extend the sunset dates on certain programs, [Senate Bill 846](#) (Armstrong-R-Lancaster) the state general appropriations bill. Room 461. Off the Floor.
- **May 8** – House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Bill 110](#) (Vitali-D-Delaware) providing for a registry and inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, authorizing a stakeholder process and a report on global warming impacts and economic opportunities, [House Bill 786](#) (Hutchinson-R-Venango) extending benefits to certain DCNR law enforcement officers, [House Bill 366](#) (George-D-Clearfield) establishing a State Energy Office within the Department of Environmental Protection, [House Resolution 112](#) (Mann-D-Lehigh) directing DEP to implement policies that encourage electronic waste recycling. G50 Irvis Building. 10:00.
- **May 9** – House Game and Fisheries Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1214](#) (Surra-D-Elk) changing the terms of Game Commissioners from eight years to four years, [House Bill 1116](#) (Kortz-D-Allegheny) authorizing the Game Commission to issue gift vouchers for hunting licenses, [House Bill 1078](#) (Hanna-D-Clinton) increase

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funding for deterrent fencing for wild animals and establish an elk damage compensation fund, [House Resolution 193](#) (Haluska-D-Cambria) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the future value of assets on Game Commission land, [House Bill 948](#) (Rohrer-R-Berks) authorize the Fish and Boat Commission to issue vouchers for licenses, . Room 205 Ryan Building. 9:00.

- **May 10** – [Delaware River Basin Commission](#) meeting to discuss, among other topics, the status of the [Flood Mitigation Task Force Report](#). West Trenton, NJ.
- **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 11** – [Chesapeake Bay Commission](#) meeting. Washington Plaza Hotel, Washington, D.C. 9:00.
- **May 14** – Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee Listening Session. Mercer County Conservation District, 747 Greenville Road, Mercer. 10:00.
- **May 15** – Department of Community and Economic Development [public hearing](#) on the state Weatherization Assistance Program. Conference Room 4W-1, 4th Floor, Keystone Building. 10:00.
- **May 17** – **CANCELLED**. DEP [Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board](#) meeting. Next scheduled meeting is August 16.
- **May 21** – Environmental Issues Forum. [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) meets to hear a presentation on the federal Abandoned Mine Land Fund. Hearing Room 2, North Office. 12:00.
- **May 22** – House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee hearing on dairy pricing. Hearing Room 1, North Office. 9:00.
- **May 23** – DEP [Cleanup Standards Scientific Advisory Board](#) Applicability and Attainment Subcommittee meeting. 14th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 a.m.
- **May 24** – House Game and Fisheries Committee public hearing on [House Bill 251](#) (Godshall-R-Montgomery) Amending Title 34 related to game feeders. Hearing Room 1, North Office. 9:00.

[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.

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 Crisci Associates and the public. Crisci Associates is a Harrisburg-based government and public affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Crisci Associates call 717-234-1716.

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