

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

July 24, 2006

July 28 Deadline for Best Rates for Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference

This year's [Pennsylvania Conference on Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#) in State College is only six weeks away, but you only have until July 28 to take advantage of early registration rates. And, as they say, when the deals are gone, they're gone!

The conference's primary audience is watershed groups, particularly those who want or need some basic training or refreshers on subjects important to watershed groups. The theme is "Back to Basics" and will offer workshops on a variety of timely subjects... surely something for everyone.

The conference will be at the Atherton Hotel in State College August 24 – 26.

This is the 8th year for Pennsylvania's Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference. Every year it's a bit different from the year before, but always a very worthwhile event. Volunteers from around the state and from many organizations work hard to organize a conference providing relevant, useful information to those working to reclaim abandoned mine land and waters.

The Conference will feature some special entertainment: singer-songwriter Keith Pitzer and his wife Joan on Friday night. Keith's day-job is the executive director of the Friends of the Cheat, a very successful watershed group in northern West Virginia, but his talent most definitely extends to his music.

Now for the savings: Anyone who knows State College can tell you that \$45 per night plus tax (\$55 per night double occupancy) is a great rate for a State College hotel. That's what we've negotiated with the Atherton Hotel for the conference -- but that rate is good only if you register by July 28.

We've also worked hard to keep the conference fee to a bare minimum: just \$50 for both days which, includes your meals.



[Ghost Town Trail](#) going over Laurel Run in Indiana County. *Photo by Bob Eppley.*

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If you wait, you will pay the hotel's regular rate and conference registration increases to \$75.

So register today. Do it for the volunteers, do it for your organization, do it for yourself, do it for fish, but register today for this year's [Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference](#).

For questions and more information, contact Bruce Golden, Regional Coordinator Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, by sending email to: bruce@wpcamr.org or call 724-837-5271.

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Session Schedule

CHANGE: The Senate returns to session September 19 and the House on September 25.

Senate Fall Schedule:
September 19, 20, 25, 26, 27
October 3, 4, 16, 17, 18

House Fall Schedule:
September 25, 26, 27
October 2 (non-voting), 3, 4, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24
November 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 27 (non-voting)

On the Hill

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- PENNVEST Awards \$73 Million in Water Project Grants, Loans

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- 2006 Blue Ribbon Passport AgriTourism Brochure Now Available
- Game Commission Mentored Youth Hunting Program Takes Effect July 22

See & Hear

- Mayflies Cause Mayhem in Kittanning, But That's Good News!

Environmental Heritage

- State Historical Marker to Be Dedicated at Quecreek Mine Rescue Event

Feature

- Backyard Bird Oases, By Joe Kosack, Pennsylvania Game Commission

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On the Hill

July Environmental Synopsis Now Available from Joint Conservation Committee

The July issue of the Environmental Synopsis is now available from the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#).

This month's issue features a look at environmental acronyms, voluntary emissions reduction programs, a case study in growth and resource management and the Endangered Species Act. It also includes highlights from recent Committee activities.

Download your copy of the [July Environmental Synopsis](#).

In Other News

Rising Nation River Journey 2006 Moves Down the Delaware August 4 to 17

The [Rising Nation River Journey 2006](#), a three-week canoe/paddle trip down the Delaware River, will again link the culture of the Lena'pe Indian Tribe, the people and communities along the Delaware and culminate in a reenactment of the signing of Penn's Treaty of Renewed Brotherhood on William Penn's estate in Bucks County.

The first Rising Nation River Journey was held in August of 2002, and like last time, the 2006 Journey will begin in Hancock, New York and end in Morrisville, Bucks County.

The mission of the Journey is "to bring like-minded groups and communities together from the Upper Delaware River Region and the Lower Delaware River region; and to work in conjunction with those groups to form partnerships, projects and programs that move us toward our common goals of protecting and celebrating Pennsylvania's cultural identity, natural resources and beauty; and to acknowledge our place in this Great



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Life as Human Beings and as caretakers of this land, keeping in mind what is in the best interest of the next seven generations.”

The canoe/paddle trip portion of the Journey will last from August 7 to 17. The Treaty of Renewed Brotherhood will be signed at [Pennsbury Manor](#) at noon on August 19.

The Treaty will again be signed by the Lena'pe, environmental groups, churches, historical societies, and sincerely committed individuals, who wish actively to support the Lena'pe culture and to help sustain their people, language, and way of life.

For information on sponsorship opportunities, registration for the canoe trip, schedule of activities along the Journey and more, visit the [2006 Rising Nation River Journey webpage](#) or call the Lena'pe Nation Council at 215-257-0389.

Link: [History of the Lena'pe Indian Tribe in Pennsylvania, Region](#)

River Sojourn to Highlight “Rivers of the Year” Designation by DCNR

Pittsburgh's Three Rivers, which recently received “Rivers of the Year” designation by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, will be the site of the Three Rivers Sojourn – a three day paddling and boating event scheduled for August 10-12.

“The sojourn will be a great opportunity to get out on the rivers and to view the region in a whole new positive light,” said Davitt Woodwell, Vice President for the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

Sojourners will paddle on the Allegheny River from Harmarville to Heinz Field on August 10, and will paddle the Monongahela from McKeesport to Homestead on August 11. The event ends on August 12 with an Ohio River cruise on the [Pittsburgh Voyager](#).

Each day of the trip includes educational presentations and discussions from local experts about the region's history, recreational amenities, and environmental issues. Dinnertime entertainment is planned also. Overnight accommodations are available at Camp Guyasuta in Sharpsburg.

The Three Rivers Sojourn is open to the public. Cost is \$60 per person per day, which includes three meals, snacks, canoe/kayak, and limited shuttle service. Lodging at Camp Guyasuta is an additional cost per day. Space is limited and registration ends on August 4, so participants are encouraged to register early.

Sojourn activities are being coordinated by [Venture Outdoors](#), [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#), [Pittsburgh Voyager](#), [Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds & Rivers \(POWR\)](#) and the [Department of Conservation and Natural Resources](#).

For more information and to register, contact [Venture Outdoors](#) at 412-255-0564.

NewsClip: [Boaters Will Honor “Rivers of the Year” in Pittsburgh](#)

Barnes & Tucker Mine Water Treatment Project Will Benefit Farmers

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission this week announced it would use a \$6.1 million grant provided by the Pennsylvania General Assembly and Gov. Rendell to improve water quality in 25 miles of the polluted West Branch Susquehanna River and support Pennsylvania's farmers.

Two projects will be conducted under the grant to secure a total of 15.7 million gallons per day of water to replace the amount used by farmers. The one project would

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treat some 10 MGD of water polluted by abandoned mine drainage and release it into the West Branch. The AMD is harmful to aquatic life and limits some recreational uses.

The remainder of the grant is earmarked for additional cleanup and flow enhancement projects by SRBC aimed at increasing water reserves by another 5.7 MGD.

SRBC Chairman Maj. Gen. William Grisoli, Commander, North Atlantic Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, said, “The Commission is grateful to the Commonwealth not only for understanding the need to secure water for times when the state’s streams are stressed, but also for appreciating the multiple benefits its investment will reap for the environment and for the agricultural community.”

The new funds were contained in the state budget that was approved on July 2. Of the \$6.1 million, SRBC will spend \$3.9 million toward the long-term operation and maintenance of the Commonwealth’s planned Barnes and Tucker abandoned mine remediation project in Cambria County.

For the past 30 years, the Department of Environmental Protection has diverted and treated water from the abandoned Barnes and Tucker mines into the Ohio River watershed. The new project will return the mine’s treated drainage back to the Susquehanna basin.

The treatment project, sponsored by DEP, is currently in the design phase with construction estimated for spring 2008 through spring 2009. The treatment plant is expected to operate for 75 years and result in the treatment and release of up to 10 MGD into the West Branch Susquehanna River – resulting in the restoration of 25 miles of the river.

Concurrent with the Barnes and Tucker project, SRBC will spend the \$2.2 million balance to develop other alternative water sources to secure the remaining water needed toward the total 15.7 MGD of fresh water daily to increase stream flow and enable farmers to continue using water for their operations.

The increased clean water flow into the West Branch is earmarked to replace the amount used by farmers during times of low flow (SRBC regulations require consumptive water users to compensate for their use).

Until these projects are completed, SRBC intends to continue a temporary suspension of its consumptive water use requirements for agricultural water users.

Sen. Wenger (R-Lancaster), who spearheaded the initiative in the General Assembly, said, “Ensuring that our state’s agricultural industry remains healthy and viable for the future is absolutely in everyone’s interest. The Barnes and Tucker project is the major step toward permanently removing the burden of individual farmers to comply with SRBC’s requirements. It’s a win for our farmers, the environment and for the people of Pennsylvania.”

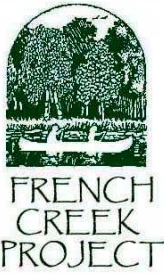
For more information on SRBC and its activities, go to the [SRBC website](#).

NewsClip: [Grant to Be Used in River Cleanup Project](#)

Link: [Mine Water Could Help Provide Make Up Water in Susquehanna Basin](#)

Register Now For
[Pennsylvania Conference on Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#)

French Creek Project Announces Golf Outing to Raise Needed Funds



The [French Creek Project](#) announced this week it will hold its inaugural charity golf scramble on July 29 at the Island Green Golf Course near Cochranton, to raise money for French Creek Project watershed conservation programs.

The 18-hole scramble will feature a chance at one \$10,000 hole-in-one cash prize, line prizes for longest drive and closest to the pin, cash prizes to the top two scoring teams, as well as raffle prizes. Tournament participants will play 18 holes of golf with the use of a cart, and be served snacks, beverages and a sit-down meal.

The entry fee is \$100 per person with all profits being contributed to the French Creek Project.

“We would like to thank the good people at the Island Green Golf Course for hosting this event,” noted Mark Gorman, Director of the French Creek Project. “The setting of the golf course is special in and of itself, being nestled in the kind of rural, wooded farming valley that makes the French Creek region such a special place. It’s that mix of woodland and farms that has helped to protect French Creek and its diverse mussels and fish through the years.”

Individuals and teams can register for the tournament by calling the Island Green Golf Course at 814-425-7704 or in person at the Golf Course. There is a 12-team (48-person) limit and tournament positions will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. The Island Green Golf Course is located at 27815 Deckards Road north of Cochranton, Pennsylvania.

The French Creek Project, started in 1995, is an internationally recognized, award winning organization whose work is driven by a philosophy of “conservation through cooperation.”

The Project works with landowners, farmers, business leaders, local government officials, scientists, conservationists, sports people, and educators to help conserve the 1,270 square mile French Creek watershed in western New York and northwestern Pennsylvania, the most ecologically significant aquatic system in Pennsylvania, and among the richest in the United States.

The Nature Conservancy has named French Creek one of its original “Last Great Places,” and one of the thirty most important bodies of freshwater in the United States, Latin America and the Caribbean.

French Creek Project is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, The Nature Conservancy, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and Allegheny College.

For more information, visit the [French Creek Project online](#) or call 814-332-2946.

2006-2007 Global ReLeaf Grant Applications Due Now, January 15

[Global ReLeaf, a program of American Forests](#), is offering grants towards tree planting projects. Applications are due now for Fall 2006 planting and January 15.

The Global ReLeaf grant program provides private dollars to support local tree planting efforts and help match other funding sources. American Forests raises a dollar for

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every tree planted with Global ReLeaf. This dollar supports both Global ReLeaf staff and the reforestation projects themselves.

Competitive grant requests must maximize the use of total project funds per tree planted. Reimbursable grants are available to support projects restoring damaged forest ecosystems.

For support for fall 2006 planting projects please contact Ethan Kearns at 202-737-1944 x224 or send email to: ekearns@amfor.org as soon as possible

For support for 2007 projects, the deadline for proposals is January 15, 2007.

Further information regarding Global ReLeaf Grants including application forms and criteria can be found on the [Global Releaf webpage](#).

Latest Water Monitoring Matters Newsletter Available Online from POWR

The [July issue of Monitoring Matters](#), a newsletter from the PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers, by and for water quality and watershed monitoring groups, is now available online.

This issue features a wide variety of stories on: the Walnut Creek Watershed Initiative on environmental education in Erie, the Birmingham Environmental Stream Team, the Seechi Dip-In, water monitoring tips and tricks, training and grant opportunities, an overview of the Mountain Watershed Association, and much more.

For more information contact Angela McCracken, POWR Program Coordinator by sending email to: amccracken@pawatersheds.org or call 717-234-7910.

Agencies Compile Lists of Projects Funded Under Growing Greener II

Several state agencies this week published lists of projects funded under the Growing Greener II bond issue in response to the requirement in the legislation passed last year calling for an annual report on how monies were spent.

The reports posted online so far include:

- [Department of Environmental Protection](#): 61 Projects, Totaling \$14.9 Million.
- [Department of Conservation and Natural Resources](#): \$66.7 Million.
- [Department of Agriculture](#): No funds spend so far, but \$65 million for 2006-07.
- [Department of Community & Economic Development](#): 10 Projects, \$4.6 Million.

No information was posted yet on how the counties have spent their initial allocations of Growing Greener II funds.

Pittsburgh Voyager Environmental Adventure Camps Going Fast!

[Pittsburgh Voyager](#), a nonprofit education center based on Pittsburgh's North Shore, is offering several weeks of Summer River-Ventures day camps.

"Bugs & Boats," August 7-11 for children ages 8-13, includes big-river entomology on the Pittsburgh Voyager fleet, and back-channel rowing, canoeing, kayaking, and dragon boating with the expert crew from the [Three Rivers Rowing Association](#).

Limited spaces are available for kids ages 7-13. "Angler's Adventure," July 24-28 for children ages 7-13, takes day-campers onto the rivers of Pittsburgh for fishing and

environmental science studies, with program support from [Venture Outdoors](#) and the [Fish and Boat Commission](#) staff.

For more information or to register, visit [Pittsburgh Voyager online](#).

PJM Region Sets New Record for Energy Use During Heat Wave

PJM Interconnection, the electric grid operator for 13 states including Pennsylvania, set an unofficial record for peak electricity use of 139,746 megawatts on July 17, prompting a call for energy conservation in the region.

The previous record demand was 133,763 MW on July 26, 2005.

PJM serves 51 million people in a region stretching from New Jersey to Illinois and south to Tennessee.

The cost of electricity during these peak times jumped from the usual 5 to 6 cents per kilowatt hour to 60 cents per kilowatt hour as more expensive and smaller electric generation units were brought online to feed electricity demand.

During a Public Utility Commission public hearing on summer electric reliability back on May 24, [PJM had projected](#) a peak demand of 133,500 MW for this summer with the potential of 141,500 MW.

PJM has about 164,994 MW of guaranteed generation capacity throughout the region, although not all of that capacity is available to all parts of the PJM region due to transmission line limitations.

This higher than anticipated demand put the PJM reserve margin at about 18 percent, just slightly higher than the 15 percent reserve margin it is required to have.

NewsClips: [Every Regional Grid Operator Sets New Demand Record](#)
[FERC OKs Incentives for WV-NJ Transmission Line](#)
[PPL Customers Set Second Record for Electricity Use](#)
[Electric Utilities Report Record Demand](#)
[Heat On, Pleas Go Out from Electricity Providers to Conserve](#)
[Reliant Energy Doubles Funding for Low-Income Energy Assistance In Annapolis, Dimming the Lights – MD Copes with Cost Jump](#)

Oil & Natural Gas Industry Help Make Low-Income Homes More Energy Efficient



The Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania and [Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh](#), the local affiliate of the nation's largest volunteer home rehabilitation organization, this week announced their [Energy Efficient Homes Initiative](#) to incorporate energy efficiency into low-income home renovations.

An energy efficient home rebuild is taking place on July 22 at the home of Gladys Sewell, 1607 Clark Street,

Wilksburg, PA 15221.

The Energy Efficient Homes Initiative incorporates energy efficiency into home renovations that are being provided to low-income homeowners, many of whom are elderly, disabled or have young children. By making homes more energy efficient and

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providing the homeowner with information on how to use energy wisely into the future, low-income homeowners will be able to save energy and save money.

On Saturday, Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh volunteers will continue their mission of providing repairs free of charge to low-income homeowners. In addition, the Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania (a division of API, the national trade association of the oil and natural gas industry), will provide installation materials and energy efficiency practices that will increase energy efficiency by as much as 30 percent in the home.

“This is a very important partnership,” said Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh Board Member Rudy Benedetti. “Giving low-income individuals the tools to dramatically improve energy efficiency enables these individuals and families to save needed resources and apply them to other urgent needs, like food and healthcare. The Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania and the other Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh sponsors and volunteers deserve credit for bringing this forward to a segment of our population where the most energy efficient products are, in most cases, out of their reach.”

“The oil and natural gas industry here in Pennsylvania and across the country practices energy efficiency within its operations, and we know the significant value of such a commitment,” said Rolf Hanson, Executive Director of the Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania.

“In addition, it is extremely rewarding to be able to assist a low income homeowner in having a more energy efficient home and sharing energy efficiency tips so that they can use energy wisely into the future. This has the dual benefit of saving energy and saving the homeowner money.”

API’s national sponsorship will help train the over 250 local Rebuilding Together affiliates across the country to better enable them to include energy efficiency as a core component to the nearly 10,000 houses they revitalize every year.

In addition, the Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania and API will work with Rebuilding Together to distribute energy efficiency information such as pamphlets, consumer tips and checklists, to low-income homeowners and others.

For more information visit [Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh online](#) or contact Craig G. Veith, 703-717-9816 or send email to: craig.veith@craigveith.com.

PUC Proposes Rules for Electric Suppliers Under Alternative Energy Portfolio Act

The Public Utility Commission this week started the rulemaking process that will govern compliance with the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act by electric distribution companies (EDC) and electric generation suppliers (EGS).

“The Commission recognizes the importance of this Act to protecting our environment and promoting economic development and continues to move toward full implementation of this Act without delay,” said Commission Chairman Wendell F. Holland. “We look forward to receiving comments on this proposed rulemaking as we strive to provide a feasible framework for compliance by both electric companies and generation suppliers.”

The Commission voted 3-2 to seek comment on the proposed uniform standards and processes that will determine compliance by EDCs and EGSs. [Commissioner Kim Pizzigrilli](#) dissented on the portion dealing with geographic scope and offered a statement.

[Commissioner Terrance J. Fitzpatrick](#) dissented and issued a statement outlining his reasons.

The rulemaking reflects the Commission's understanding that the Act is intended to promote the efficient utilization of the region's alternative energy resources in a manner that will yield significant economic and environmental benefits for Pennsylvania.

The Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act generally requires that a certain percentage of all electric energy sold to retail customers be derived from alternative energy sources such as solar, wind, hydropower, geothermal, biomass, and demand side management resources.

The law applies to both EDCs and EGSs who must demonstrate their compliance on an annual basis. The level of alternative energy required gradually increases according to a 15-year schedule.

The proposed rulemaking addresses provisions such as:

- EDC and EGS obligations;
- Fuel and technology standards for alternative energy sources;
- Alternative energy system qualification, credit certification and credit program administrator;
- Alternative compliance payments;
- Mechanisms for circumstances beyond the control of the EDC or EGS (force majeure);
- Cost recovery; and
- Banking of alternative energy credits.

The proposed rules will be published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin. Comments are due 60 days from that publication date. Specific instructions on how to submit comments as well as the deadlines for submission will be available as part of the Commission's entered order.

Visit the [PUC's Alternative Energy webpage](#) for more information.

Applications Due for Community Wind Energy Projects August 16

The [TRF Sustainable Development Fund](#) is soliciting applications for wind energy production incentive grants to support new community wind projects that will begin commercial operation by December 31, 2007.

Applications are due August 16.

SDF will host a Pre-Application Conference Call for anyone interested in submitting a 2007 Community Wind Application at 11 a.m. July 28. Participation is recommended but not mandatory.

Please e-mail Roger Clark at roger.clark@trfund.com by July 26 to indicate that you would like to participate in the conference call. He will then send you a return e-mail with the conference call information.

The grant program is designed so the financial benefits of community wind projects are primarily local. The program also limits the size of the community wind projects to a minimum of 500 kW and a maximum of 10 MW.

SDF's preferred form of financial support for community wind projects is wind energy production incentives paid as the project generates electricity. The total amount of the production incentive grant will be negotiated by SDF and the successful applicants.

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In the alternative, an applicant may suggest an alternative form of the financial support. In the past, SDF has been willing to pre-pay the financial assistance provided the applicant provides an irrevocable letter of credit to ensure that SDF can get its money back if the project is not built or fails to earn the full production incentive.

All other things being equal, SDF will seek those projects that generate the maximum amount of wind energy per dollar of subsidy from SDF. SDF reserves the right to negotiate the amount of the financial assistance to maximize the effectiveness of the 2007 assistance.

Questions about the application should be sent by e-mail to Roger Clark of TRF Sustainable Development Fund at roger.clark@trfund.com.

Applications and other information is available online through the [SDF website](#).

August 14 Deadline for \$500 Hybrid Car Rebates

The deadline for applying for \$500 rebates on purchases of hybrid electric vehicles from the Department of Environmental Protection is August 14.

To qualify for the rebate, the hybrid electric vehicle must be registered in Pennsylvania and operate, primarily, within the Commonwealth. The rebate will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis as long as funds are available. Rebate request forms and required documentation must be submitted no later than six months after the vehicle is purchased.

Rebates will be provided only for the purchase of the cleanest and most fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles. These “full hybrid” vehicles use the hybrid technology to significantly increase fuel economy while significantly reducing emissions. “Mild hybrids” that use the hybrid technology to increase a vehicle’s power and performance rather than significantly reducing emissions will not qualify for the rebates.

For more information visit DEP’s [Hybrid Rebate Program webpage](#) or call Cleo Arp, Grant Officer, at 717-772-8912.

Penn State Finds Corn Waste Potentially More Than Ethanol

After the corn harvest, whether for cattle feed or corn on the cob, farmers usually leave the stalks and stems in the field, but now, a team of Penn State researchers think corn stover can be used not only to manufacture ethanol, but to generate electricity directly.

"People are looking at using cellulose to make ethanol," says Dr. Bruce E. Logan, the Kappe Professor of Environmental Engineering. "You can make ethanol from exploded corn stover, but once you have the sugars, you can make electricity directly."

Logan's process uses a microbial fuel cell to convert organic material into electricity. Previous work has shown that these fuel cells can generate electricity from glucose and from municipal wastewater and that these cells can also directly generate hydrogen gas.

Corn stalks and leaves, amassing 250 million tons a year, make up a third of the total solid waste produced in the United States. Currently, 90 percent of corn stover is left unused in the field. Corn stover is about 70 percent cellulose or hemicellulose, complex carbohydrates that are locked in chains. A steam explosion process releases the organic

sugars and other compounds in the corn waste and these compounds can be fed to microbial fuel cells.

The microbial fuel cells contain two electrodes and anaerobic bacteria - bacteria that do not need oxygen - that consume the sugars and other organic material and release electrons. These electrons travel to the anode and flow in a wire to the cathode, producing electrical current. The water in the fuel cell donates positive hydrogen atoms that combine with the electrons and oxygen to form water.

The microbial fuel cells were inoculated with domestic wastewater and a nutrient medium containing glucose, the researchers report in the journal *Energy and Fuels*. Once established, the bacteria colonies were fed the sugary organic liquid obtained from steam exploding of corn stover.

The researchers, who include Logan, Yi Zuo, a Penn State graduate student in environmental engineering, and Pin-Ching Maness, senior scientist, National Renewable Energy Laboratory, report that "the conversion of organic matter to electricity, on the basis of biological oxygen demand removal, was relatively high with greater than 93 percent of the biological oxygen demand removed."

In essence, there is no organic matter left to cause problems when disposing of the remaining liquid because there is nothing left to oxidize. The process converts all the available energy to electricity. The electrical production is about one watt for every square meter of surface area at about 0.5 volts. A typical light bulb uses 60 watts. To increase wattage, the surface area needs to increase. To increase voltage, fuel cells can be linked in series.

"Producing electricity from steam exploded corn stover adds to the energy diversity of our portfolio," says Logan. "Electricity can be used to pump water uphill for later use, directly run light, heat and equipment or electrolyze water to create hydrogen."

The Penn State researcher and colleagues have also used microbial fuel cells and wastewater to produce hydrogen gas directly.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Science Foundation funded this research.

For more information, contact Dr. Logan by sending email to: blogan@psu.edu or 814-863-7908.

Link: [Microbial Fuel Cell Research at Penn State](#)

Little Conservation Changes on Farms Can Make A Big Difference

Using conservation practices on the farm can make a big difference in energy bills and fuel use, water use and more, according to the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Here are a few examples and how much you can save:

- Switch from conventional tillage to no-till – and save up to 3.5 gallons of fuel per acre with a value of \$6.83 per acre (as of February 19).
- Move to low-pressure irrigation systems – and save \$40 per acre for medium-pressure systems and \$52 per acre for high-pressure systems.
- Replace old or inefficient irrigation pumps – and if producers achieve a 10-percent improvement in water-use efficiency, they could reduce diesel consumption by 8 gallons per acre, saving \$15,600 on 1,000 acres.

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- Better manage pesticide applications through precision agriculture – and pay for the cost of a basic auto-steer guidance system in two years by saving \$2,000 in pesticide costs per year on 3,000 acres of cropland.
- Plant windbreaks and shelterbelts to reduce heating and cooling costs – and save up to 20 percent on energy bills for the farmstead.
- Adopt management-intensive grazing practices – and save up to \$6.50 per acre in energy costs and another \$38 in reduced harvest costs.

DCNR Awards \$4.8 Million in PA Wilds, Recreation Trail Grants

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week awarded \$1.8 million in grants for recreation and tourism projects in the [Pennsylvania Wilds](#) area of the state and another \$3 million for trail projects.

The 33 Pennsylvania Wilds grants provide support for strategic community planning and infrastructure improvements, such as trails, parks and river access points, that will make communities attractive places for economic investments.

The Pennsylvania Wilds covers Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga and Warren counties.

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

DCNR also awarded \$3 million in grants that will fund a variety of planning, development and equipment-purchase efforts to benefit hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, ATV riding, off-road motorcycling and trail users with physical challenges.

Projects include the:

- Design and construction of five, county, multi-use trail facilities;
- Construction of the Dunmore School District fitness and nature trail in Lackawanna County;
- Financial aid to hiking, rail-trail, snowmobile and ATV organizations; and
- Rehabilitation and improvements to existing ATV trails and rider facilities in the Bald Eagle and Tiadaghton state forest districts.

The largest grant -- \$1.9 million -- went to the Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority for further development of Rock Run Recreation Area, an all-terrain vehicle site in Chest Township, Cambria County, and Chest Township, Clearfield County.

[A list of the projects funded is available online.](#)

New Recreation Plan for the Pennsylvania Wilds Unveiled by DCNR



Standing at the newly completed trailhead of the southern portion of the Pine Creek Trail, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis this week unveiled a recreation plan for the 12-county region in north-central Pennsylvania known as the [Pennsylvania Wilds](#).

The goal of the Pennsylvania Wilds initiative is to increase outdoor recreation and heritage tourism across north-central Pennsylvania consistent with responsible stewardship of the region's

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public lands. DCNR provides outdoor recreation opportunities on the 27 state parks and 1.3 million acres of state forests in the Pennsylvania Wilds.

The overall objective of the 108-page plan, prepared by Texas-based contractor Fermata, Inc., is to improve access to recreation opportunities while maintaining DCNR's stewardship responsibilities. The planning process included:

- An inventory of the recreational assets and natural features of state parks, state forests, state game lands, Allegheny National Forest and the major corps of engineer facilities in the region;
- An assessment of recreational experiences at key state park and state forest locations;
- An analysis of the outdoor recreation activity trends in Pennsylvania and the five surrounding states;
- Special studies of Cherry Springs State Park, Potter County, and the Pine Creek Valley;
- Public outreach and feedback through a project Web site and a series of public meetings; and
- Development of recommendations for staffing and organization, customer service and information, and infrastructure investments.

The plan recommends establishing state park and forest model and signature recreation sites for each key recreation activity identified as important to the region, including sightseeing, hiking and backpacking, wildlife viewing and photography, canoeing and kayaking and biking. It suggests that DCNR make infrastructure investments to support the model sites in order to deliver a quality recreation experience.

The investment recommendations include a gateway visitor center and accompanying nature lodge at S.B. Elliott State Park in Clearfield County; an elk watching and wildlife education center near Benezette, Elk County; a wildlife watching center and trail at Sinnemahoning State Park in Cameron and Potter counties; and improvement projects in the Pine Creek Valley, Cherry Springs State Park, Cook Forest State Park and Kinzua Bridge State Park.

The plan also recommends improving visitor services through better signage, interpretive programs, a website, publications, maps, and expanded recreation programming.

For more information and a copy of the plan, visit the [PA Wilds webpage](#).

Commonwealth Finance Agency OKs Agriculture, Tourism, Brownfields Grants

The Commonwealth Finance Agency this week announced \$13 million in grants to support tourism and agriculture projects and \$46 million in Business in Our Sites funding for economic development and brownfields projects.

Among the agriculture and tourism grants were:

- The Punxsutawney Chamber of Commerce which will receive a \$23,214 planning grant for the development of the Punxsutawney Tourism Development Strategic Plan. The study will create strategies to market the borough as “The Weather Capital of the World,” with the funding being used to identify stakeholders; conduct interviews and focus groups; and perform a destination audit. The total project cost is estimated at \$46,500.
- The CFA will guarantee \$2 million of a \$6 million loan from Legacy Bank to Keystone Biofuels Inc., a for-profit manufacturer of biodiesel in Shiremanstown, Cumberland

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County, for financing the expansion of its biofuel production plant. The funds will be used to purchase additional plant equipment and tanks, including waste water treatment equipment, a production storage tank, a glycerin storage tank, boiler equipment and other piping. The expansion is expected to grow the plant's capacity from one-million to seven-million-gallons-per-year.

[A complete list of agriculture and tourism projects funded is available online.](#)

Among the brownfield projects funded under Business In Our Sites were:

- The Redevelopment Authority of Beaver County which received a \$36,500 planning grant for an environmental study for a property adjacent to the Rochester Waterfront Revitalization site in East Rochester Borough. In July 2005, the authority received a \$171,390 planning grant for a feasibility study to create a mixed-use retail, commercial, residential and recreational development. The study determined the need for the abutting property to be part of the project. The funds will be used for a demolition plan, infrastructure design and traffic study.
- The Borough of Franklin, Cambrian County will receive a \$175,000 planning grant to help with the redevelopment of the former Bethlehem Steel Franklin Mills site. The money will be used for evaluation of existing utilities, geotechnical assessment, pre-demolition surveys and planning. The total planning cost is estimated to be \$200,000. Upon completion, 200-500 new jobs are expected to be created.
- The Redevelopment Authority of Luzerne County will receive a \$175,000 planning grant for redevelopment of the Ashley Rail Yard in Ashley Borough. The funds will be used, primarily, for environmental assessments to the 80-acre site that are necessary before development can be determined or begin. The total planning cost is estimated at \$375,000.
- The Scranton/Lackawanna Industrial Building Company will receive a \$151,000 planning grant for predevelopment planning for the Archbald Business Park in Archbald Borough. The 171-acre site is used, primarily, for heavy manufacturing, but has the potential to diversify. The funding will be used to finance a marketing feasibility study, real estate appraisals and engineering research. Upon completion of the project, 500 new jobs are expected to be created.

A complete list of [Business In Our Sites projects funded is available online.](#)

The Commonwealth Financing Authority is a seven-member board created to administer and fund projects under Gov. Rendell's economic stimulus package.

The CFA oversees Business In Our Sites, the Tax Increment Financing Guarantee, First Industries Fund, New PA Venture Capital Investment, New Pennsylvania Venture Guarantee, Building PA, PennWorks and the Second Stage Loan programs.

For more information on these projects and programs, visit www.newPA.com or call 1-866-GO-NEWPA (1-866-466-3972).

PENNVEST Awards \$73 Million in Water Project Grants, Loans

The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority this week awarded more than \$73 million in drinking water, wastewater, stormwater project grants and loans.

Of the money awarded, \$69.6 million was in the form of low-interest loans, while the additional \$3.8 million is in the form of grants that will fund 22 clean water projects across Pennsylvania.

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The awards approved by the PENNVEST Board of Directors ranged from a \$227,600 loan for rehabilitation of sanitary sewers in a Washington County community, to a \$10,771,070 loan for a treatment plant expansion project in Allegheny County which allow for an extension of an area hospital, which will increase its workforce by 570 positions over the next three years.

[A complete list of projects funded is available online.](#)

The deadline for applications to make the next PENNVEST meeting for consideration is August 29.

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

2006 Blue Ribbon Passport AgriTourism Brochure Now Available

The Department of Agriculture this week announced the new [Blue Ribbon Passport](#) brochure is available that invites visitors to see Pennsylvania's fairs, farm markets, farm stays and wineries.

The brochure is a comprehensive guide to dozens of agritourism attractions and includes money-saving discounts at select stops.

The Blue Ribbon Passport program was designed to help visitors plan road trips along two major interstate routes – I-78 in the Allentown area north of Philadelphia, and I-79 between Pittsburgh and Erie.

Now in its third year, the passport takes the form of a brochure that doubles as a "ticket" to savings at select destinations along those corridors. Visitors simply present their brochure at a participating location and receive either a discount, special offer or a free gift.

Copies of the Blue Ribbon Passport brochure are available statewide at Pennsylvania Welcome Centers, by calling 1-800 VISIT PA or in downloadable form at www.blueribbonpassport.com.

Game Commission Mentored Youth Hunting Program Takes Effect July 22

Joined by a coalition of sportsmen, the Game Commission and Sen. Bob Robbins (R-Mercer) this week announced that experienced hunters, who have historically helped pass along the state's rich hunting heritage, now have another way to introduce youths to hunting by serving as a mentor in the new [Mentored Youth Hunting Program](#) (MYHP)

The program officially begins July 22.

"Pennsylvania's hunters, this Saturday, will have an unprecedented opportunity to introduce those under the age of 12 to hunting," said Carl Roe, Executive Director of the Game Commission. "The Mentored Youth Hunting Program will require one interested adult for every young person yearning to become a hunter. Hunting is deeply woven into the cultural fabric that is Pennsylvania, and it is important that we recruit new hunters to carry on this tradition."

On June 6, the Board of Game Commissioners unanimously approved regulations to establish the MYHP. However, the final regulations are scheduled for publication in the [Pennsylvania Bulletin on July 22](#), which means the program will be officially underway and mentors will be able to begin taking youth hunting.

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As part of a nationwide effort, Pennsylvania was the first state to pass legislation designed to encourage more young people to take up hunting to increase hunter numbers. The measure was part of a national Families Afield campaign promoted by the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance, the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the National Wild Turkey Federation. In Pennsylvania, the state's leading sportsmen's organizations formed a coalition to promote the measure.

"In Pennsylvania, hunting and trapping have an annual \$4.8 billion economic impact and are responsible for supporting more than 45,000 jobs," said Sen. Robbins, who sponsored the enabling legislation for the Mentored Youth Hunting Program. "As such, it is important that we not only work to retain hunters, but to attract the next generation in Pennsylvania. That is what the Mentored Youth Hunting Program is all about."

Representatives of those organizations who served on the MYHP ad hoc committee and joined in the announcement were: Ron Fretts, National Wild Turkey Federation; Greg Caldwell and Jon Pries, Pennsylvania Chapter of the NWTF; Melody Zullinger, the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs; Jen Sager, the United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania; Patrick Domico, Central Counties Concerned Sportsmen; Tom Baldrige and Kory Enck, National Rifle Association; and John Kline and Monica Kline of Kline Associates. Those committee members unable to attend today's event were: Kip Adams, Quality Deer Management Association; and Rob Sexton, U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance.

For more information, visit the "[Mentored Youth FAQs](#)" section of the Game Commission's webpage.

See & Hear

Mayflies Cause Mayhem in Kittanning, But That's Good News!



A blizzard of mayflies have invaded Kittanning in Armstrong County along the Allegheny River again this year. Although they are a nuisance to many, Mayflies are actually a sign that water quality has improved in the river.

Millions of Mayflies made driving and even walking hazardous in Kittanning, but after a few days they all died and all that was left was to cleanup.

To watch the KDKA-TV story online, visit the

[Mayfly Mayhem in Kittanning webpage](#).

NewsClips: [Mayflies a Source of Pride](#)

[Swarms of Mayflies on Wing Over Lake Erie](#)

[Mayflies a Bonanza for PA Anglers](#)

Links: [Mayfly Monitoring and Outreach – PA Sea Grant Program](#)

[Mayflies in June and July - DCNR](#)

Register Now For
[Pennsylvania Conference on Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#)

Environmental Heritage

State Historical Marker to Be Dedicated at Quecreek Mine Rescue Event



The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and the Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation will hold a ceremony July 29 to dedicate an official State Historical Marker to commemorate the successful efforts to rescue nine miners trapped in the Quecreek Mine in July 2002.

The dedication will take place beginning at 9:30 at the mine rescue site on the Arnold Farm at 151 Haupt Road in Somerset.

“We were honored the state Historical and Museum Commission approved a State Historical Marker this year to remember the efforts of all those involved in the Quecreek Mine Rescue,” said Bill Arnold, President of the Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation. “This is the fourth anniversary of the rescue and each year more and more people want to learn about what happened here and this marker will help us tell the story.”

On July 24, 2002 miners broke through into an abandoned, water-filled mine flooding the Quecreek Mine with over 50 million gallons of water. Nine miners scrambled to safety, but nine were trapped in a pocket of air in the dark, cold, water-logged mine. They were rescued four days later through the combined efforts of state and federal mine rescue agencies and hundreds of workers and volunteers.

Laura Fisher, from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, will be on-hand for the dedication.

The text on the blue and gold historical marker reads--

QUECREEK MINE ACCIDENT AND RESCUE

On July 28, 2002, nine coal miners, trapped for four days due to flooding of the Quecreek Mine, were saved via a rescue shaft drilled here. Combined efforts of local, state, and federal agencies, mining and other industries, local mine workers, emergency responders, and community members led to the rescue. The incident prompted changes in mine safety, mapping, and drilling methods. It roused national media and public attention.

The PHMC Historical Marker Program began in 1914 to commemorate a person, event or site that has a meaningful impact on its times and is of statewide or national, rather than only local significance. Nominations for markers are reviewed and approved by a panel of independent historical experts from across the state.

“The Quecreek Mine Rescue was a unique event in the history of Pennsylvania and the country,” said Arnold. “That fact was brought home to us this year as we saw the

tragic loss of life in mine accidents in West Virginia, Kentucky and even our own state. We should never forget what a miracle this rescue was.”

The Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation is a non-profit charitable organization that relies on support from the public to educate the public about the rescue and to maintain and operate the mine rescue visitors’ area.

Contact the Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation by writing: 151 Haupt Road, Somerset, PA 15501 or calling 814-445-4876 or by visiting: www.QuecreekRescue.org .

NewsClips: [Editorial: Mine Safety](#)
[Sago Mine Report Urges Big Safety Changes](#)
[Report Faults Seals in Sago Mine Blast](#)
[Small Methane Blast Burns 2 Miners in Greene County](#)

Feature

Backyard Bird Oases

By Joe Kosack

Wildlife Conservation Education Specialist
Pennsylvania Game Commission



Game Commission Photo

A surefire way to attract songbirds - and often other wildlife - to your backyard is by adding a birdbath or small pond, according to Game Commission biologists. During the dog days of summer, water has almost magical powers of attraction on many birds, because it's something they use regularly.

It's not that birds are big drinkers, or hygiene extremists. A belly full of water and wet feathers definitely are not conducive to flight, a bird's chief mode of transportation and first line of defense.

Drinking and wading in water can help birds manage their body temperature when the sun is baking backyards and suburban settings. In fact, water can be as or more important than food to some birds when the heat is on.

Birds typically do just fine regulating their body temperatures through breathing; they do not sweat. As cooler, fresh air circulates through a bird's respiratory system, it shuttles away the warm, moist air that radiates from its overheated body tissues. As a general rule, the smaller a bird, the greater its body's loss of water via breathing - and need to replenish what it has expelled. This can be accomplished through eating juicy fruits and berries, or bugs, or at a puddle or backyard birdbath.

"Adding a water source to your backyard will almost always draw birds and provide countless hours of bird-watching pleasure," said biologist Doug Gross, an endangered bird specialist for the Pennsylvania Game Commission. "Water will pull in everything from bluebirds and American goldfinches to ruby-throated hummingbirds and robins.

"The big decision is determining what you want. You can definitely add a commercial birdbath to your yard for under \$20. But, you also can spend hundreds of

dollars - even thousands - putting in or contracting to have put in a water garden, lawn pond or fountain, and landscaping around it. Try to invest in something durable, and then let your personal taste and budget guide you the rest of the way. Remember, though, birds really don't care about style or originality. They're just looking for a watering hole!"

A water source can be made more attractive to birds by adding a water dripper, mist sprayer or a cascading trickle. Birds seem to key on moving water and the sound of it, particularly when it's found or heard in an area where water is hard to come by. Once located by birds, a properly maintained water source rarely sits idle. Birds usually wait in nearby trees for their turn to access the water for drinking or bathing.

Birdbaths, pond kits and an assortment of attachments and enhancements can be acquired at local home-improvement, garden and department stores as well as via the Internet. Do a web search on the Internet for "birdbaths" or "bird ponds" and you'll be looking at pages upon pages of purchase possibilities and ideas.

Goldfinches, house finches, blue jays, and grackles often visit birdbaths in small groups. Mourning doves and cardinals frequently come in pairs. Robins often solo, as do catbirds, tufted titmice and gray squirrels. Communal bathing is a necessity in backyard Pennsylvania. But just because the water is shared, doesn't mean all birds bathe well together. Some do, some don't, and their tolerances vary, from species to species, and from individual to individual.

"Birds are like people in many ways," Gross said. "They have preferences and peculiarities just as we do. Some don't handle the close quarters of birdbaths well. Others sit on the rim and absorb tidal-like splashes from bathers. It's entertaining - and often educational - to watch their behavior and interactions."

Of course, the wild card about having a backyard bird oasis is that water and watering birds attract other birds, often songbirds that you don't usually see at a birdfeeder. Bath splashing and feather flapping may pull in a Baltimore oriole or Carolina wren, a wood thrush or a Cerulean warbler, or something that you never knew was passing through your yard or your region of the state.

One of the great things about establishing a backyard water source when compared to bird-feeding is that you don't have to figure out what is the best seed-combination, what feeder to use or remove it if bears starting visiting the area. All you have to do is fill 'er up and refill when needed. With birdbaths, however, it is important to freshen up the water regularly -even daily - in hot weather to reduce bacteria and viral threats to birds.

Another maintenance-must for birdbaths is using a scouring pad on the dish area once every week or two in summer to remove algae that forms. Failure to do this will often lead to a thick, slimy deposit in the base of the dish that reduces its appeal, both to birds and people. Use a scouring pad or scrub-brush and a hose to clean algae; add dishwashing liquid for tough cases. Plastic usually cleans up easier than concrete and terracotta baths, but it isn't as solid and is more prone to topple. During winter months, terracotta may crack if water freezes in it.

"When selecting your water source, it's important to decide what it is you expect it to provide," Gross explained. "If you're trying to provide a songbird water hole, shallow - about two inches - is better than deep. If you want fish and aquatic plants, deeper is better than shallow. Both types will be beneficial to birds."

"If your desire is to have a fancy goldfish pond, please be advised that deeper ponds with fish will attract wading birds, particularly great blue herons. Placing the pond

closer to your home will help, as well as planting cattails, lilies or iris and placing rocks in the pond for fish to use for cover. But know that great blue herons are patient hunters and that brightly-colored goldfish aren't exactly very challenging prey for a hungry heron."

The general location of the pond/birdbath should be in a low-traffic area of the yard and devoid of hiding places for housecats. Limit or eliminate the bath's exposure to sun, which will keep the water cooler - and less prone to evaporate - and fresher. It's also best to avoid placing water sources near large picture windows, to reduce take-off and in-flight collisions. Birds cannot see glass.

Birds that are shaking off their bath and preening also desire nearby perches. Some birds do this on the rim of the bath, but if your bath has a lot of traffic, or you have a pond - no rim - its closeness to trees and shrubs will make it more obliging and help keep wet birds out of harm's way.

One of the most important factors that will influence your birdbath's ability to attract birds has little to do with design, or even location. But it's directly related to your actions.

"If you keep your birdbath filled with fresh water, the birds will come and keep coming; which means you may have to refill it daily or even more frequently," Gross pointed out. "Birds are quick to recognize reliable watering holes and readily rely upon them. And when they're backing up in the trees to come in and use your birdbath, you can bet a lot of what's in the bath will be soaked up on the ground. That's why quick refills are a good thing and why birdbaths are best placed in a rock gardens!"

The addition of a birdbath or pond, fountain or water garden can greatly improve the wildlife habitat in your backyard, as well as enhance your property's aesthetic beauty and provide an invaluable necessity to songbirds.

"There's no better time to add one than in July and August," Gross said. "So get going; do something 'wild,' and then sit back and enjoy what you have created. Birdwatching, after all, can be very therapeutic and is always conversational."

Visit the [Game Commission's Wildlife webpage](#) to learn more about how you can get involved in safe wildlife viewing.

Quick Clips

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

[Groups Help Keep Highways Litter-Free](#)

[Allentown Plans Greater Anti-Litter SWEEP](#)

[Going Green to Redesign Comfort](#)

[Foundation Building in Berwick to Keep Environment in Mind](#)

[School Trumpets Outdoor Classroom Project](#)

[Counting on Butterflies](#)

[Mosquito Invasion Puts the Bite on Us](#)

[And Gypsy Moths Could Be Next](#)

[Carnegie Museum Scientists Help to Identify Invasive Species](#)

[Editorial: The Ethanol Ruse](#)

[Rich Expects Coal to Fuel Plant to Start in 2007](#)

[A Look at the FutureGen Project](#)

[Fill It Up, Please – With Coal](#)

[BP and GE to Develop Hydrogen Power Plants and Technologies](#)
[Lebanon Refuse Authority Loses Waste Hauler's Lawsuit](#)
[Garbage In, Diesel Out](#)
[Prices Surging, Oil, Gas Companies Expand Horizons in PA](#)
[Dentist Lowers Energy, Water, Waste Costs](#)
[Win Over Deer Feeds Fight with Neighbors](#)
[Snake Hunts Endangered in PA](#)
[Outdoors: Healthy Outdoors Benefits Everyone](#)
[Biologists Studying Elk Movement, Survival](#)
[Baptists Warn Environmental Politics Could Divide Evangelicals](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Students on Susquehanna Expedition Return Home](#)
[Philly Youth Learn About Schuylkill River](#)
[Indiana County Sites May Soon be Growing Greener](#)
[Sinnemahoning Portage Creek](#)
[Grassroots Groups Dig Into Control Streams Feeding Susquehanna](#)
[FEMA, State to Cover Flood Recovery Cost](#)
[Recent Rainfall Leaves Bays Murky](#)
[Bucks Hearing Pushes to Ease Future Flooding](#)
[Flooding Affected Nearly 7,800 PA Homes](#)
[Officials Call for Flood Control](#)
[State to Begin Earlier Trout Season in Some Counties](#)
[Earlier Trout Season? Silence Greets the Plan](#)

Regulations

The Department of Transportation published a set of final revisions to the state [Vehicle Emission Inspection Program](#) and a [corrective amendment](#) to the same regulations.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – July 22, 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 guidance document on tracking and resolving water quality violations.

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FINAL: DEP ID: 362-4000-006. [Guidelines for Identifying, Tracking and Resolving Violations for Water Quality](#). This document establishes guidelines for the implementation and execution of compliance and enforcement activities used by the Department for the Water Quality Program.

[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](#)

- **July 25** – **CANCELLED**. [DEP Stormwater Manual Oversight Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00. Next scheduled meeting is August 29.
- **August 3** – DEP [Critical Water Planning Area Subcommittee](#) meeting. 10th floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **August 22** – House Local Government Committee public hearing on [House Bill 2564](#) (Maitland-R-Franklin) amending the Municipalities Planning Code to provide for local impact fees. Chambersburg Administration Building. 10:00.
- **August 29** – **CANCELLED**. State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators conference call.
- **September 13** – [DEP Water Resources Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **September 19-20** – [State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators](#). 10th Floor Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 and 8:30 respectively.
- **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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Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)