

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

August 14, 2006

Dents Run Renewal Celebration Attracts Over 85 Partners in Elk County

Over 85 people attended the “Dents Run Renewal Celebration” in the Bennett Branch Watershed, Elk County this week to celebrate the mine restoration work completed in the watershed over the last five years.

Over half the restoration work needed in the watershed has been finished or is under contract to be finished. All of the 250 acres of mine land restoration will be completed in 2007.



[See the special photo feature on the Celebration](#)

Emceeding the event was Dr. Colson Blakeslee, an active environmentalist in the region, who serves on the Board of the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Assistance Program and was one of the inspiring forces behind the Dents Run restoration projects and the Bennett Branch Watershed Association.

Each of the speakers at the celebration highlighted the partnerships the Watershed Association, federal, state and county agencies, coal companies have formed to restore the watershed over the last six years.

Speakers included Congressman John Peterson (R-Warren), Rep. Dan Surra (D-Elk), Doug Austen, Executive Director of the Fish & Boat Commission, John Dzemyan, Game Commission, Eric Cavazza, DEP Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation, John Dawes, Western Pennsylvania Watershed Assistance Program, Bill Sabatose, Toby Creek Watershed Association and PFBC vice-chairman and David Hess, former Secretary of DEP.

Also attending were Steve Garbarino, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which provided over \$5 million for reclamation projects in the watershed, Elk County Commissioner June Sorg, John Prushnok, President, P&N Coal Company, which is re-mining and restoring a portion of Dents Run as part of the restoration efforts, Margaret

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Dunn, Stream Restoration, Inc. and Tim Danehy, BioMost, Inc. who designed and are overseeing construction of a passive treatment system for discharges on site 3895.

The celebration was held on the Gilbert Farm on Winslow Hill Road near the Elk Viewing Area outside of Benezette.

About 34 percent of the acid mine drainage affecting the main stem of the Bennett Branch creek comes from the lower part of its Dents Run tributary.

For more information contact Kim Lanich, Watershed Specialist, Elk County Conservation District at 814-776-5373 or send email to: klanich@elkoes.ncentral.com .

NewsClip: [Service Held to Celebrate Work in Dents Run](#)

Link: [PA Wilds Visitor Information webpage](#).

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Session Schedule

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

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- DEP’s DePasquale to Resign to Run for House

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- Lancaster Business Wins 2005 Award for Environmental Excellence, You Can Too!

Opinion

- Alternative Fuels: A Solution to the Energy Crisis, *Seth Obetz, Worley & Obetz*

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

On the Hill

Rep. Smith Proposes Youth Fishing License



Rep. Bruce Smith (R-York) introduced legislation-- [House Bill 2900](#) -- this week that would create a Youth Fishing License for persons 12 to 15 years old to promote youth fishing and a better appreciation for aquatic environments.

The license would cost \$5 and the proceeds would be directed to programs benefiting youth anglers, said Rep. Smith who chairs the House Game and Fisheries Committee.

“This measure has the full support of the Fish and Boat Commission and the Governor’s Youth Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation,” Rep. Smith said. “This is a ‘fun’ raising measure not a fund raising measure as the proceeds from the licenses will be used to promote the joys of fishing. At the same time, it’s educational. More young

students will learn about fishing in their schools, clubs and through community fishing organizations.”

The potential annual revenue from a junior license would be \$2.1 million per year. Over the past few years, an average of \$480,000 annually was spent by the Fish and Boat Commission on programs targeting youth. All additional dollars generated by the junior license will be dedicated to programs for youth.

If House Bill 2900 becomes law, Pennsylvania would join 13 states that require some form of license or permit for their youth anglers. The average cost of a youth fishing license nationwide is \$12.16.

At \$5, a youth fishing license would cost less than a new music CD (\$13); video or computer game (\$39); movie ticket (\$6.50); or admission to an amusement park (as much as \$44).

Rep. Smith said the Fish and Boat Commission is committed to ensuring that cost won’t be a barrier for youngsters who cannot afford a license.

“The commission will work with clubs and organizations to sponsor the purchase of licenses for youngsters who can’t afford them,” Rep. Smith said.

Rep. Smith said that a youth license was proposed as recently as 2004 but the idea was dropped when some lawmakers expressed concern about enforcement and other problems.

Rep. Smith said that he has been assured that enforcement problems have been ironed out and that if Waterways Conservation Officers encounter unlicensed youth they will use it as an opportunity to inform rather than punish.

NewsClip: [Bill Would Create \\$5 Youth Fishing License](#)
[Editorial: Youth Fishing License Should Be Considered](#)

House Environmental Committee Sets Informational Meeting on Mercury Control

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee has scheduled an informational meeting for September 12 to gather information on the costs and benefits of a state-specific rule to reduce mercury emissions from power plants.

This is the second informational meeting the Committee has had on this issue and the fifth Senate and House committee hearing/meeting on reducing mercury emissions from power plants.

Issue Notebook: [PA Mercury Emissions Update](#)

House Democratic Policy Committee Sets Hearing on Climate Change

The House Democratic Policy Committee will hold a public hearing in Harrisburg August 15 on [House Bill 2744](#) (Vitali-D-Delaware) that would offer state financial assistance to municipalities that develop and implement local climate change action plans.

Testifiers are scheduled to include Jim Yienger, director of the ICLEI USA Policy Institute; Lou Thieblemont, mayor of Camp Hill, Pa., which has enacted regulations locally to decrease pollutants; and John Dernbach, a Widener University law professor whose research concentrates on environmental law, climate change and sustainable development. A representative from the Department of Environmental Protection has also been invited to testify.

Rep. Vitali's legislation would initially provide \$300,000 to the Department of Environmental Protection to fund local climate change mitigation grants. Technical assistance would be provided by groups such as the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives, or ICLEI, an organization that is helping local governments around the world develop and implement greenhouse gas action plans.

In Other News

Over \$136,000 in Exelon Grants Awarded to Improve Schuylkill River Watershed

The [Schuylkill River Heritage Area](#) has awarded three grants totaling \$136,106 from the recently established [Exelon Schuylkill River Watershed Restoration Program](#).

This is the first year money has been available through the program, which was created by Exelon Nuclear in January. The Schuylkill River Heritage Area oversees the

fund, distributing money annually to non-profit organizations and government agencies for projects that will enhance the Schuylkill River Watershed.

This year, three projects centering on agricultural improvements, stream bank restoration, and headwaters restoration, were selected. All projects benefit the entire watershed because they reduce the amount of run-off and pollution that enters creeks, and ultimately, the river, which is a source of drinking water for over one million people.

“This allows us to reach out to non-profit organizations who are going to have an immediate impact, as a result of these projects, on the quality of water that will eventually find its way into the Schuylkill River,” said Kurt Zwinkl, executive director of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area.

Projects selected were:

- **Berks County Conservancy**--\$50,931 for agricultural and stream bank improvements on two farm properties in the headwaters of the Maiden Creek watershed;
- **Berks County Conservation District**--\$65,000 for improvements to a tributary of Irish Creek, in Centre Township, addressing non-point source of pollution concerns on a farm property; and
- **Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy**--\$20,175 for reconstruction and stabilization of a headwater tributary of the Unami Creek.

Limerick Vice President Ron DeGregorio said, “We are happy that we are able to provide the funds for these projects and we’re excited about the possibilities created for improvement of the Schuylkill River. I want to commend the committee, and especially the SRHA, for their dedication and execution of this fund. Given its success in just the first year, we can’t wait to see what happens with next year’s fund.”

Recipients were chosen by a committee that consisted of representatives from Exelon, Delaware River Basin Commission, Philadelphia Water Department, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Environmental Protection and the Schuylkill River Heritage Area.

“I would like to thank the committee members for providing their energy, time and expertise to this worthwhile effort to improve water resources in the Schuylkill River Basin,” said Carol R. Collier, executive director of the DRBC.

This year, priority was given to projects aimed at mitigating problems with water quality and quantity.

The annual fund is part of a demonstration project for the water diversion program at Exelon Nuclear’s Limerick Generating Station and is under the purview of the Delaware River Basin Commission.

As part of Limerick’s water diversion program, Exelon Nuclear pumps water daily to operate the plant from various water sources, in order to minimize the environmental impact. Exelon's yearly contribution to the fund is based on the amount of water that is not required to be pumped from the Delaware River to support the Limerick Generating Station's cooling water needs.

This year, Exelon contributed a total of \$158,000 to the fund. The bulk of that went toward funding the three projects, and another \$6,094 was rolled over to be used next year. The remaining money covered costs involved in administering the grants.

For more information, visit the [Exelon Schuylkill River Watershed Restoration Program webpage](#).

\$2.7 million in Grants Announced for 11 Water Quality Projects

The Department of Environmental Protection announced \$2.7 million in grants to fund 11 projects to improvement to aging water and sewer systems, encourage remining operations that help to reclaim abandoned mines, and plug abandoned and orphaned wells that are leaking oil, acid mine drainage or gas.

Included in the funding is \$1.9 million to help communities implement new and innovative technologies to treat drinking water and wastewater.

An additional \$118,700 will fund incentives that are designed to encourage remining operations. Remining has been a successful, cost-effective means of accomplishing abandoned mine reclamation.

The watershed restoration projects include:

- **Allegheny County:** Herron Property, North Fayette Township - \$42,689 to plug three abandoned gas wells to eliminate a potential health and safety hazard near a residential area;
- **Cameron County:** Allegheny Enterprises Inc. - \$32,078 to address ongoing abandoned mine discharges that are currently degrading the Sinnemahoning Creek;
- **Clearfield County:** Bell Resources Inc. - \$34,517 to reclaim over a mile of dangerous highwall, reclaim 68 acres of abandoned mine land and eliminate an abandoned mine discharge; and Junior Coal Co. - \$33,343 to reclaim over a mile of dangerous highwall, reclaim 150 acres of abandoned mine land and eliminate two abandoned mine discharges;
- **Fayette County:** Charles L. Swenglish & Sons Coal Co. - \$18,854 to address ongoing abandoned mine discharges that are currently degrading Rubles Run, which flows into the Cheat River; and
- **McKean County:** Bouquin Property, Foster Township - \$537,311 to plug 90 abandoned oil wells some of which are leaking oil, eliminating environmental, health and safety problems.

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

Free Native Trees Available Through “Trees for Streams” Program

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation is now accepting applications from watershed and community groups and private landowners for free native trees and shrubs under the [Trees for Streams Program](#). Applications are due not later than September 15.

Research conducted by the [Stroud Water Research Center](#) found that planting streamside, particularly forested buffers is the single most important step in protecting and enhancing the quality of Pennsylvania’s streams and rivers. (See: [Forested Buffers: the Key to Clean Streams.](#))

Groups must order a minimum of 300 trees and shrubs to be picked up at the [Octoraro Native Plant Nursery](#) in Lancaster County.

Streams must be in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to be eligible for the program. Buffers 35 feet or wider (per side) are preferred. Training is available for inexperienced groups. Apply early, supply is limited and is on a first come, first served basis.

“The Trees for Streams program has been a big success, allowing CBF to provide the expertise and trees to over 100 watershed and community groups, along with individual

landowners during the last four years,” said CBF PA Watershed Restoration Scientist David Wise. “Streamside buffers are essential for healthy streams and waterways.”

Trees for Streams is supported by both State and Federal funding, specifically through the Department of Environmental Protection’s Growing Greener grant program, as well as through a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant program.

In addition to offering free trees and plants, CBF also helps pay for protective tree tubes to improve plant survival. Tree tubes help guard seedlings from damage by deer and small rodents.

Please visit the [Trees for Streams Program webpage](#) or contact Cathy Hiebert at 717-234-5550 or chiebert@cbf.org for more information.

Applications Now Being Accepted for Coastal Zone Management Grants

The Department of Environmental Protection is now accepting applications for [2007 Coastal Zone Management grants](#). Applications are due October 30.

Projects must meet [eligibility requirements](#) in the Lake Erie and Delaware Estuary coastal zones and must address one or more of the following coastal zone program areas: hazard areas, dredging and spoil disposal, fisheries management, wetlands, public access for recreation, historic sites and structures, port activities, energy facilities placement, intergovernmental coordination, public involvement and ocean resources.

To request an application or for more information, go to the [Coastal Zone Management webpage](#) or contact the Department of Environmental Protection, Water Planning Office at 717-772.4785 or Fax 717-783.4690

Bakerton Rod & Gun Club Dedicates Mine Drainage Treatment System



The Bakerton Rod and Gun Club this week dedicated an acid mine drainage treatment system along Chest Creek that feeds a fishing pond for youth members.

The site is in Cambria County and the headwaters of the West Branch of the Susquehanna.

“This project demonstrates well what citizen action can accomplish,” according to John Dawes of the [Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program](#).

Working with many agencies starting with the Cambrian County Conservation District staff---Mark Stockley and Rob Piper, the group secured funding from the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program as well as from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and in-kind support from the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service and the federal Office of Surface Mining.

Dave Contorchick, of the construction committee and Dan Kinney, Club president, provided leadership for the project from the Club. Representing the Department of Environmental Protection at the event were Scott Horrel, DEP District Mining Office, and Paul Zeph. Sen. John Wozniak (D-Cambria) also attended along with John Dawes from the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program.

Brian Auman from the [Susquehanna Greenway Project](#) who taught the group about the watershed concept, despite the distant location of this site from the Susquehanna also took part.

The limestone drain treats the up to 50 gallon per minute mine discharge that is highly acid and contains significant amounts of aluminum at a total cost of about \$22,230. The project is expected to last 10 years with minimal maintenance.

For more information, visit the [Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program website](#).

Johnstown to Hold First Annual Riverfest August 19

Everyone's invited to join the celebration of Johnstown's resurgent rivers, August 19 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., at the [Johnstown Riverfest](#).

During the program, a recognition award will be given to Congressman John Murtha (D-Cambria) for his support of environmental issues and projects in the 12th Congressional District.

During the event, children and adults will be able to visit exhibits presented by local conservation groups and artists, as well as enjoy live entertainment throughout the afternoon/evening.

A charity run for the Charcot-Marie-Tooth Foundation will also be held at 10:00 a.m. on the hillside footpath of the Inclined Plane.

Sponsors contributing \$400.00 will be eligible to enter the "Anything that Floats Regatta" which will run the Stonycreek River from Hornerstown to the Inclined Plane.

For too many years – particularly in Johnstown – waterways have been ignored, considered too polluted and useless. Yet the Stonycreek River has made a remarkable comeback from the days when abandoned mine drainage destroyed most of the Stonycreek's aquatic life and replaced it with a layer of orange-colored iron oxide.

Today, 15 species of fish and other aquatic life can be found throughout the Stonycreek, from its headwaters near Berlin, Somerset County, to the Point in Johnstown, where its waters merge with the Little Conemaugh River to form the Conemaugh River.

Because of the dramatic improvement of the Stonycreek and other tributaries downstream, the Conemaugh's water quality also has improved markedly and now supports aquatic life from beginning to end. The Little Conemaugh, unfortunately, remains practically lifeless due to a double-whammy of AMD and raw sewage.

These all are reasons to have a festival! With demonstrations, exhibitors and entertainment, the public can help celebrate the recovery of the Stonycreek and Conemaugh rivers – and explore the resulting potential for river-based recreation.

The Riverfest will also examine the challenges that remain – on the Little Conemaugh and throughout the watershed.

[Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project](#) and [Westsylvania Heritage Corporation](#) have been the forces behind this event.

Contact Dan Sewak at 814-532-5049 for more on the Riverfest activities.

Congressman Murtha's Environmental Record

There are a number of reasons for the Stonycreek River's remarkable revival in northern Somerset and southern Cambria counties: a drastic reduction in coal mining activity, stricter state regulations and enforcement, more responsible coal operators, and citizen involvement – just to name a few.

But when names are linked to the river's comeback, two belong near the top of the list: the federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund and Congressman John Murtha of Johnstown.

To date Congressman Murtha has obtained more than \$50 million from the AMRF for projects tackling abandoned-mine drainage and other damage done by generations of coal mining within the 12th District.

The most dramatic example is the [Oven Run Project](#). As recently as the early 1990s, Oven Run effectively killed the Stonycreek River just downstream from Kantner in central Somerset County. Murtha helped the all-volunteer Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project to obtain \$5 million to develop six pond-systems to treat the killer stream. Today, fish swim in the final settlement pond of Oven Run – and in the Stonycreek below it.

Congressman Murtha also obtained funding for “resource recovery” – experimental ways that pollution remediation can pay for itself. Examples include efforts to recover iron oxide and aluminum from acid mine drainage.

But the Congressman's environmental initiatives in the 12th District are not limited to abandoned mine problems.

His efforts have resulted in \$550 million for sewage and water-infrastructure projects, which are necessary for economic growth, but also clean up the environment. He has obtained funds to finance programs such as Natural Biodiversity, which seeks to control invasive and destructive plants like Japanese knotweed.

More than \$50 million has been brought into the district for recreation, park and green-space protection through his efforts.

And he is supporting environmental education through Saint Vincent College, the Kiski Basin Initiative and the Armstrong Environmental Trust.

Congressman Murtha has received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and was named Riverperson of the Year by the Three Rivers Regatta.

2nd Annual Pinchot Festival of Wood Set for August 12-13 at Grey Towers



The 2nd Annual [Festival of Wood](#) is being held at Grey Towers, the former home of Gifford Pinchot, the first head of the U.S. Forest Service and Governor of Pennsylvania, in Milford, Pike County.

The Festival serves as an educational event, heightening awareness about the importance of wood in our society and how professional and scientific forestry helps meet that continued need. But it's also fun!

There will be wood games and activities for children, handmade wood crafts, sales and demonstrations, music and entertainment as well as refreshments. Tours of the Pinchot Grey Towers home are also available.

[Gifford Pinchot](#) was picked by Gov. Theodore Roosevelt to create the U.S. Forest Service in 1898 and was a contemporary of Sierra Club founder John Muir, Frederick Law Olmsted the Landscape Architect that created Central Park in New York, J. Horace McFarland, another Pennsylvanian who founded the Cities Beautiful movement at the turn of the 19th Century and was a founder of the conservation movement.

For more information, visit the [Festival of Wood webpage](#).

New Issue of Green Building Alliance Cornerstone Newsletter Now Available

The [summer 2006 issue of The Cornerstone](#) from the Green Building Alliance is now available and features a profile of The Pittsburgh Project Guest House.

The Guest House is a 27,000 square foot dormitory built by The Pittsburgh Project, a neighborhood-based Christian community development group founded in 1985 that has a Gold LEED rating pending.

Other articles include: Green School Cleaning Programs, Green Mortgage-Backed Securities, information-packed bullets on useful training, publications and conference opportunities available.

Download the [summer 2006 issue of The Cornerstone](#) now.

DEP Accepting Grant Applications for E85, Biodiesel Use

The Department of Environmental Protection [announced it is accepting applications](#) under its Alternative Fuels Incentive Program for grants to promote the use of E85 and biodiesel fuels through October 2.

Grants funds can be used to cover the added cost to purchase E85 and biodiesel of up to 5 cents per gallon for up to 12,500 gallons in any one year period.

Eligible applicants include tax-exempt entities such as school districts, local governments, transit authorities, colleges and universities and nonprofit entities.

For more information, visit the [Alternative Fuels Incentive Program webpage](#) or contact Cleo Arp by sending email to arp@state.pa.us or call 717-772-8912.

Growing Greener Cities, Symposium on Urban Environmental Issues October 15-17



Keynote Speaker
Wangari Maathai

The Institute for Urban Research at the University of Pennsylvania and the Media and Policy Center Foundation along with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society are sponsoring a [Symposium on Urban Environmental Issues](#) in Philadelphia.

Inspired by the PBS film series [Edens Lost & Found](#), the gathering will feature Wangari Maathai, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 for her contributions to sustainable development, democracy and peace.

The symposium will be held on the University of Pennsylvania campus at Houston Hall and Irvine Auditorium.

For more information and a program schedule, please contact Priscilla Becroft at 215-988-8772 or send email to: growinggreener@pennhort.org.

Wilson Sponsors “Life After Cheap Oil” Conference September 15-16

Wilson College in Chambersburg will host an international conference on the topics of peak oil, global climate change, and sustainable energy called “[Life After Cheap Oil: Sustainable Solutions to Global Crises](#).”

The purpose of the conference is to educate a broad audience on the coming world energy crisis and the problem of global climate change, while presenting real examples of sustainable solutions for life after cheap oil.

A diverse mix of academic lectures, expert speakers, and hands-on workshops will enable participants to leave the conference inspired and ready to make positive changes in their own lives, on their campuses, and in their workplaces.

For more details, visit the [“Life After Cheap Oil: Sustainable Solutions to Global Crises” webpage](#).

\$2 Million in Land Use Planning, Technical Assistance Grants Available

The Department of Community and Economic Development announced this week that \$2 million in grants are available from the [Land Use Planning, Technical Assistance Grant Program](#). Applicants will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted.

LUPTAP provides grant funds for the preparation and implementation of county and municipal comprehensive plans, to support feasibility studies for transit revitalization investment districts, which are designed to spur transit-oriented development near public transit facilities. A planning study is required before an area can receive transit revitalization investment district designation.

To promote cooperation between municipalities, priority in LUPTAP funding is given to a county government acting on behalf of its municipalities, any group of two or more municipalities, or a body authorized to act on behalf of two or more municipalities.

For more information about LUPTAP, visit www.newpa.com or call 1-866-GONEWPA (1-866-466-3972).

New Multi-State Guide to Farmland Preservation Published

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation has released a new guide that takes a comprehensive look at farmland preservation in the Chesapeake Bay region to enable both farmers and citizens to take action to slow the loss of farmland to development.

[“A Guide to Preserving Agricultural Lands in the Chesapeake Bay Region: Keeping Stewards on the Land”](#) provides state-specific details on easements, development rights, planning and zoning regulations, and state and federal land preservation programs.

“This loss of farm and forest land endangers the fabric of rural life, local economies, and the health of the region’s rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay,” said Lee Epstein, Director of CBF’s Lands Program. “This guide outlines the methods, tools, and programs available to help save farmland, and how citizens and farmers can seek change in their own communities.”

Agriculture is vital to the health of the region’s waterways, because well-managed farmland provides a crucial filter to reduce pollution, which developed land, does not. On-the-ground agricultural conservation practices also provide some of the most cost-effective methods to reduce nitrogen pollution, one of the most important problems facing the Bay.

“There is increasing competition for open land, and this endangers a way of life, local economies, and the health of the Bay,” said Lee Epstein, Director of CBF’s Lands Program. “This guide will show farmers and citizens the methods, tools, and programs available to help save farmland and how to seek change in their own communities.”

[“A copy of “A Guide to Preserving Agricultural Lands in the Chesapeake Bay Region is available online”](#)

Call April Sheesley, CBF, for more information at 443-482-2150.

ClearWater Conservancy Purchases Musser Gap, Centre County

The [ClearWater Conservancy](#) this week announced the purchase of the 423-acre Musser Gap for natural resource conservation from a private landowner who had planned to develop the property.

In early 2007, Musser Gap will be incorporated into Rothrock State Forest, providing public access to its impressive network of trails.

Musser Gap is part of the [Tussey Mountain Important Bird Area](#), as designated by Pennsylvania Audubon and is adjacent to the Rothrock State Forest and [Stone Mountain Important Bird Area](#), and is also within the one-year zone of contribution of the State College Borough Water Authority’s Harter and Thomas well fields, which supply drinking water to approximately 38,000 residents of the Centre Region.

Conserving Musser Gap protects vital water resources, important wildlife species, and treasured recreational opportunities for future generations. Mountain gaps serve as primary contributors to groundwater recharge in the Spring Creek Watershed. Additionally, any contamination introduced through these mountain gaps would quickly reach the groundwater aquifers that they feed.

Tussey Mountain is a noted flyway for spring-migrating raptors. Each year the [Tussey Mountain Hawkwatch](#) records the highest number of spring-migrating golden eagles east of the Mississippi. The mature and largely-unfragmented deciduous forest also provides important habitat for nesting forest-interior Neotropical migratory birds.

The Conservancy extended a special thanks to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the State College Borough Water Authority, the Townships of Ferguson, Harris, Patton, College, and Halfmoon, the Borough of State College, and the Huplits Foundation for the significant financial contributions that made this land acquisition project possible.

To donate ClearWater’s Land Conservation Program, which made the protection of Musser Gap a reality, the Conservancy has launched a \$250,000 Campaign for Conservation.

According to Walt Ebaugh, volunteer campaign chair, “our Campaign for Conservation will raise the money we need take on the next large land conservation projects in the places that matter most in central Pennsylvania.”

Other current conservation initiatives include the Scotia Barrens, the Spring Creek corridor, and several specific conservation easements on lands with important natural resource values.



To contribute to the Campaign for Conservation, please make checks payable to ClearWater Conservancy, 2555 North Atherton Street, State College, PA 16803. Visit the [ClearWater Conservancy website](#) for more information

NewsClip: [Conservancy Secures Musser Gap](#)

New EPA, Industry Partnership Will Cut Mercury Emissions by 75 Tons

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, automakers, the scrap and steel industry announced a new [National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program](#) this week that will help cut mercury air emissions by up to 75 tons over the next 15 years.

The Program is designed to remove mercury-containing light switches from scrap vehicles before the vehicles are flattened, shredded, and melted to make new steel.

Although the U.S. automobile industry halted use of mercury-containing light switches in 2002, an estimated 67.5 million switches are currently in use in older vehicles and available for recovery.

Each year, the steel industry recycles more than 14 million tons of steel from scrap vehicles, the equivalent to nearly 13.5 million new automobiles, making vehicles the most recycled consumer product and the steel industry one of the largest consumers of recycled materials in the world.

Together with existing state mercury switch recovery efforts, this program will significantly reduce mercury air emissions from the furnaces used in steel making -- the fourth leading source in the United States after coal-fired utility boilers, industrial boilers and gold mining.

The participating organizations will take these steps:

- Ten automakers created the End of Life Vehicle Solutions Corporation (ELVS), which will provide dismantlers with information and supplies needed for switch removal, collect and transport switches to proper recycling and disposal facilities, and track program performance.
- Participating dismantlers will remove mercury-containing switches and ship them to ELVS, giving the dismantlers the ability to market reduced mercury scrap and earn recognition and certain financial incentives.
- Participating scrap recyclers will build awareness of the mercury switch removal program in their own industry and in the dismantling industry, which is their chief supplier of scrap vehicles.
- Participating steelmakers will educate and encourage their supply chain to participate, and will take steps to purchase scrap metal generated from participating dismantlers and recyclers that have removed the mercury-containing switches.

Domestic releases and uses of mercury have decreased significantly over the last 25 years. U.S. mercury air emissions have been reduced by 45 percent since 1990, and mercury use in products and processes decreased 83 percent between 1980 and 1997.

The National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program is the result of a two-year collaborative effort involving EPA, the End of Life Vehicle Solutions Corporation, the American Iron and Steel Institute, the Steel Manufacturers Association, the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, the Automotive Recyclers Association, Environmental Defense, the Ecology Center (Ann Arbor), and representatives of the Environmental Council of the States.

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Sen. Musto (D-Luzerne) has introduced [Senate Bill 524](#) that would create a program in Pennsylvania to collect and properly dispose of mercury switches from vehicles.

For more information, visit the [National Vehicle Mercury Switch Recovery Program webpage](#).

August Issue of EE Connections Newsletter Online From Environmental Ed Center

Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education



The August issue of [EE Connections newsletter](#) from the [Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education](#) is now available online. The highlights from this month's issue include—

General News: American Water's Environmental Grants Fund Three Pa Watershed Projects, DCNR Awards \$23 Million for Recreation and Conservation Projects, New Visitor Activity

Center at Pocono Environmental Education, Eco-Friendly Coffee Cup
Sierra Club Launches "Smart Energy Summer" Campaign, Take an Online Video Tour of the Tom Ridge Environmental Center, Chesapeake Bay Foundation Unveils New Website, Go Green Initiative Reports Remarkable Results, Cloverdale Books Call for Manuscripts, EPA Watershed Funding Webpage Puts Funding Opportunities in One Place

K-12 News: Cook Forest State Park Teacher Workshop, The USGS and Science Education, NOAA'S Educational Opportunities for Students, Consumers Guide to After-School Science Resources

Higher Education: EETAP Online EE Courses, Design Competition for Sustainability

Professional Development: Pa Electric Power Generation Conference Set for September, Green Building Alliance Promotes Workshop in Pittsburgh Region, Mark Your Calendars for PAEE'S 2007 Conference: No Child Left Inside, ASTROBLAST 2006, 5th Annual Pennsylvania Statewide Project Grass Conference

Grants/Awards: President's Environmental Youth Awards Deadline Extended, The Fund for Wild Nature, Red, White and Green Climate Change Grant, Starbucks Foundation Grants

To get your own copy, send an email to: info@pcee.org or visit the [EE Connections sign-up webpage](#).

DEP's DePasquale to Resign to Run for House

Eugene DePasquale, DEP Deputy Secretary for Community Revitalization and Local Government Support, will resign from his position to run as the Democratic candidate to replace retiring Rep. Steve Stetler (D-York) in the House.

His resignation will be effective September 1.

See & Hear

Visit the American Water Hydro School Online

There are plenty of websites focused on water, but how many make learning about watersheds interactive and fun?

The [American Water Hydro School](http://www.amwaterhydroschool.org) is making it easy for children to gain knowledge while playing online games, conducting activities in the field, and telling others what they are doing to protect their local waterways.

A multi-year partnership with American Water and GreenTreks is helping create a new generation of “watershed heroes.”

The site is not for kids only; it’s also a valuable teaching resource.
www.amwaterhydroschool.org.

Award-Winning Performance

Lancaster Business Wins 2005 Award for Environmental Excellence, You Can Too!

[Granger Energy’s Lanchester Landfill Gas Utilization Project](#) won a 2005 Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence for implementing the first multiple-customer landfill-gas-to-energy project in the Commonwealth. [Apply now for a 2007 award.](#)

The project takes methane gas produced at the Lanchester Landfill and pipes it to commercial customers who use it to fuel their facilities.

“This is yet another example of how Pennsylvania is working with residents and businesses to make environmental protection an engine to fuel economic growth,” said DEP Deputy Secretary Daniel Desmond. “This project takes what once was considered a waste and uses it as an alternative energy source.”

The methane gas had been flared at the landfill until Granger developed a plan to pipe it 13 miles underground to customers who use it as a cost-effective fuel source. Enough landfill gas will be used annually to save 122,800 barrels of oil, offset the use of 250 railcars of coal, provide greenhouse gas reduction benefits equal to planting 15,600 acres of forest, remove emissions of 11,500 cars or heat 33,900 homes.

Granger Energy was one of 12 winners of the Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence in 2005.

[Apply now for a 2007 award.](#)

Opinion

Alternative Fuels: A Solution to the Energy Crisis

By Seth Obez



Alternative fuels are the talk of the nation these days, but few people know where to access them or if their vehicle is compatible with these fuels. Even before

the technical questions arise, however, we must wonder: are alternative fuels the way out of our energy crisis?

The answer is that they are very much a critical part of the solution. While it is true that alternative fuels such as ethanol and biodiesel have been undergoing an evolutionary process to improve their viability and economics (just as oil did a century ago), they have now reached the mainstream through advanced refining technologies and the pioneering efforts of courageous consumers and companies.

It is also true that ethanol and biodiesel can only hope to replace a portion of our ever-growing thirst for petroleum. However, even replacing 10% of our petroleum consumption could displace most of our reliance on Persian Gulf oil. In fact we are behind the times. For example, Brazil is now largely energy independent, producing virtually all of their energy needs from agricultural products, domestic oil reserves and energy conservation techniques.

Only with passionate commitment from consumers, auto manufacturers, energy suppliers and government we can accomplish this essential and patriotic goal. Our energy independence is within the following deliverables:

- Consumers and voters will drive our country's success. We must each do our part by utilizing alternative fuels and supporting energy conservation.
- As the first major industry to move towards energy security, the auto industry must continue the production of creative alternatives to petroleum-powered automobiles and trucks.
- Energy companies are conduits for renewable fuels. They must take up the banner and transform their gas stations into renewable fueling stations.
- Past and present administrations have valiantly defended our interests in foreign oil. We can choose to blame the government but, in reality, each time we buy a gallon of gasoline we are contributing to the crisis. We must change and government can put its' resources into building infrastructure at home for renewable fuels and energy conservation.

There are 8 million alternative fuel automobiles (AFA's) on the road in the U.S., with 269,444 in Pennsylvania. There are sixty different models that are either currently available to the public or in production for the next model year. They run on fuels such as biodiesel, ethanol, hydrogen, fuel cells, natural gas and gas/electric hybrid technology. Government at all levels is off to a good start, offering various incentives for those who purchase AFAs. But while state and federal policymakers are encouraging consumers to drive AFAs, they must remove the existing barriers that are holding back the auto industry from bringing additional models to the public more quickly.

Currently automakers face regulations that prohibit them from reaching their full potential for creative design and production of energy saving vehicles. The auto industry is forging ahead with the effort to change and lawmakers can make that easier by reevaluating current regulations in light of the amazing new technologies that exist and removing barriers.

There are critics of alternative fuels—and constructive criticism is welcome—but inevitably the end of the petroleum age looms.

When I look into the eyes of my eleven-month-old child I am reminded of why we are willing to take the risk and make the investment in alternative fuels. While I believe we can all make a difference, even in the near term, it is truly the next generation for which we

need to commit ourselves. We created the energy crisis – it should not be their burden to bear.

To find out more information about alternative fuels, where to get them, and the vehicles which they power, go to: www.biodiesel.org , www.e85fuel.com or www.discoveralternatives.org .

Seth Obetz is with the firm of [Worley & Obetz](#), a Lancaster County-based business offering a wide variety of energy services including bio-based home heating oil, diesel and other fuel products and services.

Quick Clips

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

[Green Thumbs Up for Plan to Expand Northampton Nature Center](#)
[Northampton County Eyes 126 Acres for Open Space](#)
[Editorial: Washington County Greenways Project Deserves Attention](#)
[DCNR Issues 19 Conservation Grants in Allegheny County](#)
[Project to Separate Coal Ash at PPL Plant](#)
[Group Needed to Educate, Promote E85 Refueling Stations](#)
[Editorial: Urgent Energy Challenge](#)
[Ethanol Plant Builder Eager to Start](#)
[DOE to Guarantee \\$2 Billion in Loans for Clean Energy](#)
[Dauphin County Task Force on Illegal Dumping](#)
[Anti-Graffiti Crews Take on Urban Scrawl](#)
[Truck Stop Using Anti-Idling Technology Opens in Carlisle](#)
[DEP- Take County Off of U.S. Bad Air List](#)
[Outdoors: Quit Hunting? I Don't Think So](#)
[Wildlife: Monarch Butterfly Migration a Miracle](#)
[Wildlife: Disputes Over Deer Part of Our History](#)
[Lyme Disease Becoming More Common Here](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Time to Rescue the River](#)
[To Restore Shad to the Schuylkill River](#)
[Three Rivers Sojourn Begins](#)
[Residents Propose Equinuck Watershed Alliance](#)
[Newcomers- It's Your Water Too, Please Help](#)
[Designers Get Started on Sunbury Riverfront Project](#)
[\\$1.3 Million to Fix Flood Damaged Toby Creek](#)
[Festival to Promote Flooding Task Force](#)
[Correcting Catfish Creek](#)
[Volunteers Practice Flood Response](#)
[Rising Nation River Journey](#)

Regulations

The Department of Environmental Protection published proposed revisions to the State Implementation Plan covering [RACT under the 8-Hour Ozone Standard](#) for comment and the Department of Agriculture published an advanced notice of final rulemaking on [commercial manure hauler and broker certification](#) extending the comment period to August 28.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – August 12, 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 notice of final the General Plan Approval/Operating Permit for [Dry Abrasive Blasting Operations](#), a draft policy on locational data for water use systems and a final policy on radon certification. The Independent Regulatory Review Commission published comments on [changes to DEP Storage Tank Regulations](#). See details here.

Draft: DEP ID: 392-0830-001. Locational Data Policy for Water Allocation Program and the Water Use Data System. This guidance implements the Department's Locational Data Policy (Document ID# 013-0830-003) by establishing a consistent method for locating and documenting latitude and longitude coordinates and elevation data for water resources facilities. Comments due: September 11.

Final: DEP ID: 294-2309-001. Radon Certification Policy. This document contains guidelines used by the Bureau of Radiation Protection to administer a radon certification program for persons conducting radon gas and radon progeny testing and laboratory analysis and mitigation of radon contamination in buildings.

[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](#)

- [Schedule of No-Cost Internet Training on Site Remediation](#)

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

- **August 15** – **CANCELLED**. Environmental Quality Board meeting. Next scheduled meeting in September 19.
- **August 15** – House Democratic Policy Committee hearing on [House Bill 2744](#) (Vitali-D-Delaware) providing grants to local governments to develop and implement local climate change action plans. Room 205 Ryan Building. 10:00.
- **August 17** – **CANCELLED**. DEP [Small Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board meeting](#). Next scheduled meeting is November 16.
- **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** – [State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators conference call](#).
- **August 29** – DEP [Small Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board](#) work group meeting on emergency notification. 12th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **August 29** – DEP [Stormwater Manual Oversight Committee](#). Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **September 6** – DEP [Section 111\(d\) hearing on plan to control mercury emissions](#) from power plants in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Norristown.
- **September 13** – **CANCELLED**. [DEP Water Resources Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **September 15** - DEP [Small Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board](#) work group meeting on emergency notification. 10th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **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 13** - [DEP Water Resources Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **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](#)