

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

EQB Adopts Final Rule to Reduce Mercury Emissions, DEP Rejects Compromise

The Environmental Quality Board this week voted 17 to 3 to approve a final rule on reducing mercury emissions from power plants that a labor and business coalition says will impose [\\$1.7 billion in extra costs](#) on electric customers and generators for no added environmental or health benefits.

The same day, the results of two studies were released by the national Institute of Medicine and the Harvard School of Public Health and published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, that found the health benefits of eating fish regularly outweigh the danger from mercury and other contaminants even for pregnant women and children. (See [Washington Post article](#).)

In the last week, the Department of Environmental Protection rejected a legislative proposal that required the installation of state-recommended mercury emissions control technology on every coal-fired power plant in Pennsylvania to reduce emissions by 80 percent by 2010 and 90 percent by 2015; the same deadlines and reductions required by DEP.

The proposal called for any further reductions required to meet a federal mercury emissions cap could be achieved through market-based emissions allowance trading, similar to the allowance pool created by DEP to make these additional reductions.

DEP rejected the proposal saying it was in conflict with its lawsuit against the federal Clean Air Mercury Rule because it allowed a form of emission allowance trading.

Interestingly, DEP staff, in response to a question from an EQB member, said mercury emissions in Pennsylvania would actually increase if DEP was successful in its challenge of the mercury budget in the federal CAMR rule. The DEP lawsuit alleged, among other things, that EPA allocated too few mercury allowances to Pennsylvania.

“We were disappointed DEP rejected this proposal based on the legal position they’re taking in a lawsuit over the federal mercury rule where a decision may be years away, rather than on an analysis of the impact this plan will actually have on Pennsylvania’s environment,” said Douglas Biden, President Electric Power Generation Association.

“The issue is not whether to reduce mercury emissions, but how to do it,” said Douglas L. Biden, President of the Electric Power Generation Association. “The plan we proposed is good for the environment and good for jobs and electric customers. It significantly reduces mercury emissions within Pennsylvania, but in a way that does not [threaten electric reliability](#), jobs or cause significant increases in electricity costs.”

“This alternative was presented by our labor and business coalition because the rule proposed by DEP and considered by the Environmental Quality Board today would

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impose an additional \$1.7 billion in costs on electric generators and electric customers with no increase in environmental or health benefits over our proposal,” said Biden.

The DEP proposal would also reduce the use of Pennsylvania coal by an estimated 14 percent annually, threaten to close smaller power plants needed to meet peak electricity demands and provides no incentives to over-control mercury emissions on larger power plants.

Facts about the impact of the proposed DEP rule were gathered from five public hearings held by the Senate and House Environmental Resources and Energy Committees and in presentations to the DEP’s own Mercury Rule Work Group.

“This is a substantive rule that has undergone exhaustive review,” Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty said. “What is clear is that the public health and environmental benefits that Pennsylvania will achieve by taking effective action to reduce mercury emissions are significant.”

In a statement read to the Board for Wendell Holland, chairman of the Public Utility Commission, Holland said, “I will vote for this regulation, but I am still unsure that the cost of going beyond the federal (mercury) rule will result in increased health benefits, but I hope so.”

“We are also puzzled why DEP is pursuing a proposal that imposes such high costs on electric generators and customers, and at the same time testifying before the Public Utility Commission expressing concern about the high price of electricity when the rate caps come off in 2009/2010,” said Biden. “These inconsistencies are remarkable, especially considering their proposal has no added environmental or health benefits.”

“We will continue to work to enact a mercury reduction plan that does not threaten electric reliability, jobs or cause unnecessary increases in electricity costs to achieve our shared objective of significant reductions in mercury emissions from power plants.”

For more information on reducing mercury emissions from power plants, visit the [Mercury Emissions Update webpage](#).

NewsClips: [Benefits of Fish Exceed Risks, Studies Find](#)

[Editorial: Touting the Benefits of Fish](#)

[State Toughens Rules to Reduce Mercury Output of Power Plants](#)

[State Environmental Board OKs Tougher Mercury Emission Limits](#)

[State Board OKs Mercury Regulations](#)

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

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Session Schedule

The Senate and House return to session October 23, in the case of the Senate for one day and the

House two days (at least at this writing).

The Senate also announced it will be in session on November 20 and 21.

On the Hill

- On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced
- Senate Hearing on Hazardous Sites Cleanup Financing Hears Few Funding Solutions

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- House Members Introduce Package of Energy Bills Based on Committee Hearings
- AAA Supports House Action to Give Pennsylvanians Vehicle Choices

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

- Sen. Wenger Talks About Farm Conservation Needs and REAP Proposal
- Environmental Issues Forum Features Environmental Training Center

Other News

- PUC OKs Penn Power Plan to Lift Rate Caps, 20-33 Percent Increase Results
- Awards Presented by Northeast Environmental Partners, PA Environmental Council
- Westmoreland Banquet Recognizes Award Winners, Locally Produced Foods
- Four PA Companies Receive Waste Minimization Awards From EPA
- DEP Announces Grants to Help Small Businesses Enhance Energy Efficiency
- Water Resources Education Network Seeking Grant Applications
- Floodplain Restoration, Legacy Sediments Workshop Set for October 26
- Environmental Permitting Workshops Set by Professional Engineers
- Cooking Grease to Fuel Buses at Wissahickon Charter School
- DCNR Commits \$1.2 Million to Lackawanna Land Protection
- PA CleanWays Hosts Dump Cleanup in Dauphin County November 4
- DEP Names Tom Callaghan New Manager for Pottsville District Mining Office
- Third Young Peregrine Falcon from Rachel Carson Building Dies

Feature

- Ospreys Call Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Home for the Next Few Weeks, *By Patrick McShea, Division of Education at Carnegie Museum of Natural History*

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

On the Hill

On the Agenda

Action is scheduled on several environmental bills next week. Here's the rundown...

In the Senate, the Rules Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1305](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) requiring notice of the General Assembly for budget transfers by the Governor,

On the House Calendar, [House Bill 2067](#) (Allen-R-Schuylkill) setting limits on state spending through a constitutional amendment; [Senate Bill 884](#) (Brightbill-R-Lebanon) limitations on state spending; [Senate Bill 940](#) (Vaugh-R-York) would set aside up to \$200,000 per year from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Fund to reimburse Land Trusts for expenses incurred in acquiring agricultural conservation easements; [House Resolution 692](#) (Ross-R-Chester) directing the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee to study and report on the methods of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Senate/House Bills Moving/Bills Introduced

Bills extending the recycling fee, setting uniform environmental covenants on brownfield sites, putting mine families first during mine emergencies and others moved in the Senate and House this week. Two moved to the Governor's desk. Here's the rundown...

On the Governor's Desk

Regulatory Impacts: [House Bill 236](#) (Pickett-R-Bradford) requiring the review of regulations for their impact on small business by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission was passed by the Senate unamended and now goes to the Governor for his action.

Clean Streams Penalties: [House Bill 2042](#) (Reichley-R-Berks) that would increase penalties for water pollution under the Clean Streams Law was passed by the Senate without amendment so it now moves to the Governor for action.

Senate

Recycling Fee: [House Bill 1902](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) extending the \$2/ton Recycling Fee sunset date through 2012 was referred into and from Senate Appropriations and amended and passed by the Senate and now returns to the House for concurrence in Senate amendments.

Infrastructure Record Disclosure: [House Bill 854](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing the Terrorism Infrastructure Disclosure Protection Act prohibiting the release of certain infrastructure records was reported from Senate Appropriations and amended on Third Consideration and passed by the Senate and returns to the House for a concurrence vote.

Historic Preservation Grant Program: [Senate Bill 1232](#) (Piccola-R-Dauphin) establishing an historic preservation grant program was amended to cure some technical issues, but then held in the Senate Appropriations Committee. An amendment offered by Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) to remove funding for the program from the Growing Greener II Program was tabled.

Miner's Day: [House Resolution 795](#) (DeWeese-D-Greene) designating December 19 as "Coal Miner's Day" was adopted by the Senate.

House

Mine Families First: [House Bill 2619](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) creating a Mine Families First Program to provide assistance to persons whose family members are trapped or waiting for rescue during an underground mine emergency was reported from House Appropriations, amended and passed by the House and now goes to the Senate for consideration.

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The House amendment adds unrelated provisions related to surface property owner's royalty rights related to methane wells.

Environmental Covenants: [House Bill 1249](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) providing for uniform environmental covenants to secure brownfield cleanups was referred into and out of the House Appropriations Committee, passed the House and now goes to the Senate for consideration..

Fishing License Point of Sale: [House Bill 2824](#) (B.Smith-R-York) providing for point of sale fishing licenses passed the House and moves to the Senate for consideration.

America Recycles Day: [House Resolution 889](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) designating November 15, 2005 "America Recycles Day" in Pennsylvania was adopted by the House.

Mercury Thermostats: [House Bill 2658](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) prohibiting the sale and restricting the disposal of mercury thermostats was amended to add a requirement for a manufacturers collection program and reported from House Consumer Affairs Committee

California Car Standards: [Senate Bill 1025](#) (Madigan-R-Bradford) to establish a Clean Vehicle Program that gives automakers two options to comply— use the California II or federal Tier II vehicle emissions standards and forming a stakeholders group was reported from House Transportation Committee.

Multi-Municipal Agreements: [House Bill 2063](#) (Boyd-R-Lancaster) that provides for multi-municipal Planning Code implementation agreements to deal with a local issue was reported from House Appropriations.

Natural Gas Decoupling: [House Bill 2954](#) (Evans-R-Erie) prohibiting revenue decoupling in setting rates for the sale of natural gas was amended and reported from House Consumer Affairs.

Healthy Schools: The House Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee reported out [Senate Bill 1209](#) (Waugh-R-York) Healthy Foods, Healthy Schools.

New Diesel Technology: [House Bill 2997](#) (Beyer-R-Monroe) providing a tax credit of up to \$5,000 for new diesel technology was reported from the House Insurance Committee.

NOTE: Links to Senate and House bills in past editions of the *PA Environment Digest* might not work because the webmasters of the General Assembly's website changed the URLs. You can find bills by going to the [Pennsylvania General Assembly website](#) and putting in the bill number in the box at the top of the page.

Bills Introduced

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Solar Incentive Program: [Senate Bill 1352](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) establishing a Solar Energy System Incentives Program within the Department of Environmental Protection and the Public Utility Commission.

Weatherization Program: [House Bill 3009](#) (Kenney-R-Philadelphia) providing for a Low-Income Weatherization program and funding.

Energy-Efficient Home Assistance Program: [House Bill 3013](#) (Watson-R-Bucks) establishing an Energy Efficient Home Assistance Program to award grants of up to \$5,000 for energy efficiency or alternative energy systems by the Housing Finance Agency.

Solar Sales Tax Exemption: [House Bill 3015](#) (McGill-R-Montgomery) providing for a sales and use tax exclusion for the purchase of non-business solar energy systems or other Energy Star rated products.

Stormwater BMPs: [House Bill 3018](#) (Gannon-R-Delaware) providing a tax credit for the installation of stormwater management best management practices.

Lending Electricity Meters: [House Bill 3024](#) (Leach-D-Montgomery) establishing a lending program in libraries for electricity meters and creating a grant program.

Energy Freedom Support Account: [House Bill 3026](#) (Benninghoff-R-Huntingdon) establishing the PA Energy Freedom Support Account within the Energy Development Fund to finance municipal energy efficiency improvements.

Open Lands: [House Bill 3028](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) limiting liability of landowners who make their land available for hunting and public recreation.

Electric Rate Caps: [House Bill 3030](#) (Ross-R-Chester) providing that electric suppliers must have a portfolio of contracts over a series of years to meet customer demand before the electric rate caps are removed.

Neighborhood Energy Tax Credit: [House Bill 3040](#) (Mustio-R-Allegheny) creating the Neighborhood Energy Assistance Tax Credit.

High-Performance State Building Standards: [House Bill 3047](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) requires facilities leased or owned by the Commonwealth to comply with certain energy and environmental standards.

High-Performance Building Tax Credit: [House Bill 3048](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) providing owners and tenants with a tax credit for construction of a high-performance, energy efficient building.

Alternative Fuel Tax Credit: [House Bill 3049](#) (Civera-R-Delaware) authorizing tax credits for qualified alternative fuel distributors.

State Energy Efficiency Initiatives: [House Bill 3052](#) (M. Wright-R-Bucks) providing for a reduction in energy use in state buildings for energy efficiency in the state motor vehicle fleet and in state procurement.

Storage Tanks: [House Bill 3053](#) (Micozzie) providing an additional member for the Underground Storage Tank Indemnification Board.

Composition of Storage Tank Board: [House Bill 3052](#) (Micozzie-R-Delaware) changing the composition of the Underground Storage Tank Indemnification Board by removing the Service Station Dealers and Automotive Repair Association and the Petroleum Retailers and Auto Repair Association and adding the PA Gasoline Retailers Association and Allied Trades.

Landslide Investigation: [House Resolution 897](#) (Petrone-D-Allegheny) directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct an in-depth investigation into the landslide in Kilbuck Township, Allegheny County.

Senate Hearing on Hazardous Sites Cleanup Financing Hears Few Funding Solutions

At a hearing by the [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee](#) this week, Environmental Protection [Secretary Kathleen McGinty](#) revived [Gov. Rendell's 2004 plan](#) to impose a new fee on chemicals reported on the federal Toxics Release Inventory as one option on how to fund the state's Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund.

Gov. Rendell and the Senate and House put in place a stopgap measure for funding the Hazardous Sites Program over the last two fiscal years by taking \$50 million from the popular Growing Greener watershed, nutrient and sediment reduction and abandoned mine reclamation programs and putting it in the HSCA Fund. But that temporary measure ends June 30, 2007 and the Fund will be out of money.

Although some replacement funding was provided for watershed and abandoned mine reclamation programs through the \$625 million Growing Greener II, that funding is also due to run out in just four years.

Add to these funding dilemmas, the fact that starting July 1, 2007, the Rendell Administration expects to start paying back the Growing Greener II bond issue with funds taken from the Growing Greener watershed, nutrient and sediment reduction and abandoned mine reclamation program.

Secretary McGinty noted in the past the Rendell Administration proposed additional fees be imposed to support HSCA, in one case a 15 cent per pound of emissions reported on the federal Toxics Release Inventory report and in another using a portion of [the state's Recycling Fee](#). The Secretary emphasized the importance of having some form of dedicated funding and reiterated a commitment to the 15 cent TRI fee.

Sen. White noted she had proposed [Senate Bill 149](#), which the Senate passed last year, to restore the funding earmark for HSCA from the Capitol Stock and Franchise Tax that was eliminated in 2002.

Secretary McGinty said 240 DEP positions were funded by HSCA to accomplish several purposes: cleanup of hazardous waste sites, emergency response and making the required match for federal Superfund cleanups in Pennsylvania.

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Since funding was cut back over the last two years, Secretary McGinty said DEP has not taken on any new hazardous sites cleanups and reduced efforts on existing sites to the minimum needed to protect public health and safety. No funds have been spent to cleanup brownfield sites.

Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) chairs the Committee and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) is Minority Chair.

Link: [Watch the Entire Hearing Online Through the Committee's Webpage.](#)

House Members Introduce Package of Energy Bills Based on Committee Hearings

As a result of six public hearings on energy issues at the beginning of this year by the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, members of the House introduced a package of bills addressing a variety of energy issues. Here's the rundown—

Pollution Reduction/Energy Efficiency: [House Bill 2990](#) (Hershey-R) establishing an energy efficiency and pollution reduction initiative and creating a Keystone Energy and Environmental Excellence Award.

Air Quality Improvement Tax Credit: [House Bill 2771](#) (Pyle-R-Armstrong) would establish a tax credit for power plants that burn bituminous coal and install certain air pollution control equipment which was reported from House Transportation with a request it be re-referred to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Weatherization Program: [House Bill 3009](#) (Kenney-R-Philadelphia) providing for a Low-Income Weatherization program and funding.

Energy-Efficient Home Assistance Program: [House Bill 3013](#) (Watson-R-Bucks) establishing an Energy Efficient Home Assistance Program to award grants of up to \$5,000 for energy efficiency or alternative energy systems by the Housing Finance Agency.

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Alternative Fuel Tax Credit: [House Bill 3049](#) (Civera-R-Delaware) authorizing tax credits for qualified alternative fuel distributors.

State Energy Efficiency Initiatives: [House Bill 3052](#) (M.Wright-R-Bucks) providing for a reduction in energy use in state buildings for energy efficiency in the state motor vehicle fleet and in state procurement.

Earlier this year, the Committee and House approved [House Bill 1964](#) (Ross-R-Chester), that will help reduce Pennsylvania's dependence on foreign sources of energy by establishing tax credits for alternative energy businesses and [House Bill 2253](#) (George-D-Clearfield) would create a State Energy Office and Energy Advisory Council within the Department of Environmental Protection.

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee is chaired by Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware) and the Democratic Chair is Rep. Camille George (D-Clearfield).

Links: [House Hears About Energy Efficiency, Research, Alternative Fuels](#)
[House Committee Told Conservation Most Cost Effective Help on Energy](#)

AAA Supports House Action to Give Pennsylvanians Vehicle Choices

AAA supported action taken by the House Transportation Committee this week to give [Senate Bill 1025](#) (Madigan-R-Bradford) a vote by all House members. Senate Bill 1025, a bipartisan effort, allows lawmakers adequate time to evaluate the cost and benefits of unique California vehicle emission standards.

In the interim, it extends Pennsylvania's use of the federal auto emissions standard, known as "Tier II".

Under federal law, states must adopt either the federal standard or the California standard. Forty states, including Pennsylvania, currently operate with the federal standard. An appointed committee within the state environmental department has adopted regulations to bring the California program to Pennsylvania.

AAA supports keeping the federal car standard in Pennsylvania. "This is not a debate between a dirty car and a clean car," said Ted Leonard, Executive Director of the PA AAA Federation. "Both the federal and California standards produce clean cars; otherwise the federal EPA would not have approved Pennsylvania's air improvement plans that contain the federal standard."

"More significantly," Leonard noted, "the evidence to date is that California's program is more costly, offers minimal potential benefit over the federal standard, and restricts consumer choice." If it adopts the California standard, the Commonwealth will be

ted inextricably to any and all future changes made by the unelected California Air Resource Board, into which Pennsylvania has no input.

The California regulations, beginning in 2009, have been estimated to increase the cost of cars at least \$1,000-\$3,000 per comparable model. Under California imposed requirements, Pennsylvania consumers would have fewer choices because some car models especially fuel-economical, light-duty diesel passenger vehicles will not be allowed in Pennsylvania.

Under Senate Bill 1025, Pennsylvanians wishing to purchase a California car locally or even bring it to the Commonwealth will still have the freedom to do so.

"We think Senate Bill 1025, which keeps the federal car standard, is a better choice for Pennsylvania," said Leonard. "According to the federal EPA, the California car offers minimal future air quality improvement; at most 1-2 percent, and then only by the year 2020. California's program will be costly, restrict Pennsylvanians' vehicle choices and cedes absolute control to an unelected California committee. We're pleased to see the Transportation Committee give this bill a vote in the House and we strongly encourage its passage."

Video Blog

Sen. Wenger Talks About Farm Conservation Needs and REAP Proposal

[Sen. Noah Wenger](#) (R-Lancaster/Chester), Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, talks about legislation he sponsored to provide tax credits to farmers who install best management practices to reduce nutrient and sediment going into our rivers and streams.

The Resource Enhancement and Protection Act (REAP) was introduced as [Senate Bill 1286](#) by Sen. Wenger, Sen. Waugh (R-York), Sen. O'Pake (D-Berks) and others and as [House Bill 2878](#) by Rep. Stern (R-Blair), Rep. Hershey (R-Chester) and Rep. Daley (D-Washington).

For more information on the legislation visit www.CBF.org/REAP.

Video Blog: [Sen. Noah Wenger](#).

NewsClip: [Program Would Give Tax Credit for Conservation Practices](#)

Issue NoteBook: [Resource Enhancement & Protection Tax Credit Proposal](#)

Video Blog

Environmental Issues Forum Features Environmental Training Center

The [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee's](#) October Environmental Issues Forum on October 16 featured a presentation by Alison Shuler, co-director of the [Environmental Training Center and Small Public Water Systems Technology Assistance Center](#) and Brenda Firestone, Senior Project Associate, at Penn State's Middletown campus.

The ETC is part of the university's Environmental Engineering Department and works with the federal Environmental Protection Agency and Department of

Environmental Protection. The ETC provides a variety of training for water and wastewater operators and conducts research and academic programs regarding water quality and water systems.

Video Blog: [Rep. Hutchinson Talks About Environmental Forums](#)

In Other News

PUC OKs Penn Power Plan to Lift Rate Caps, 20-33 Percent Increase Results

The Public Utility Commission this week [certified that the process](#) used to determine the provider of last resort (POLR) prices for Pennsylvania Power Co. (Penn Power) customers was transparent and non-discriminatory, and reflected market-based prices.

The market-based prices mean the average residential heating customer will see about a 20 percent increase in their total bill; the average residential non-heating consumer will see about a 33 percent increase in their total bill.

The Commission voted 4-0 that the competitive bidding process produced electric generation prices for Penn Power that reflect prevailing market prices. The competitive bidding process was conducted by an independent group on behalf of Penn Power.

The 1996 electric competition law requires electric companies, or a Commission approved alternative supplier, to provide default electric generation service to customers who have not selected an alternative generation supplier. This is commonly called provider of last resort service, or POLR. The POLR prices for electric generation service are required to reflect “prevailing market prices,” according to the law.

The electric generation prices for Penn Power customers have not increased since 1992. Those 1992 rates are set to expire December 31, 2006. The rates were capped as a result of settlement agreements reached during the state restructuring proceedings. During the same period, inflation went up about 45 percent while the prices of natural gas and coal, both of which are used in the generation of electricity, doubled.

Customers do have the right to choose an electric generation supplier other than Penn Power. The current number of licensed alternative electric generation suppliers offering services in Penn Power territory is limited.

While the Commission has licensed many electric generation suppliers, the price caps that have been in place have deterred these generation suppliers from offering service in the Penn Power territory. However, the new market-based pricing may trigger electric generation supply marketers to come into the territory and begin to offer alternative products.

NewsClip: [Electric Rates to Start Rising After Auctions](#)

Awards Presented by Northeast Environmental Partners, PA Environmental Council

The [Northeast Pennsylvania Environmental Partners](#) annual Environmental Awards dinner this week attracted over 300 people to recognize eight award winners, including Edie Stevens, winner of the Thomas P. Shelburne Environmental Leadership Award.



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The featured speaker for the evening was Transportation Secretary Allen D. Biehler, P.E.

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis also attended to make a announcement involving the permanent preservation of 5,000 additional acres of watershed lands in Lackawanna County (*see separate story*).

The Northeast PA Environmental Partners include the Pennsylvania Environmental Council's Northeast Office, Wilkes University, Northeastern PA Alliance, PPL, The Procter & Gamble Paper Products Company and the departments of Environmental Protection and Conservation and Natural Resources.

William F. McDonnell, Brennadele, LLC, and former director of DEP's Regional Office in Wilkes-Barre, served as the Dinner Chair and Master of Ceremonies for the event which will be held at the Woodlands Inn and Resort, Wilkes-Barre.

Here is a brief description of each of the Environmental Partners Environmental Award winners:

Edith D. Stevens, Cresco, Monroe County, Thomas P. Shelburne Environmental Leadership Award.

If you've been involved in environmental protection in northeastern Pennsylvania, you've likely worked with, or at least heard of, Edie Stevens. For some forty years, Edie has been involved in conservation, and for many of those years, she has been a regional force in water resource protection, community planning, and environmental education.

Edie Stevens' conservation juices first got flowing in the '60's, when a neighbor told her that her neighborhood stream, Forest Hills Run, was polluted. At that time, Edie didn't even know what the term "pollution" meant. So she spent some time educating herself by reading the encyclopedia and other reference material, beginning what has been a lifelong process of personal learning and teaching of others.

The list of organizations that Edie Stevens has served with is indeed impressive – the Board of Directors of the Monroe County Conservation District, the Paradise Township Planning Commission, the board of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania, DEP's Special Protection Waters Regulatory Negotiation Committee, DEP's Deep Mine Mediation Project, the board of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, the DEP's Water Resources Advisory Committee, the Paradise Township Environmental Advisory Council, to name a few.

She was, and is, actively involved in the development of the Monroe County Comprehensive Plan and its implementation. And, she was a key leader in the preparation of the Brodhead Watershed Rivers Conservation Plan, which was completed in 2002. Her resume is very impressive indeed.

Amongst all this, Edie is particularly proud of two achievements that have their roots in that first encounter with a polluted Forest Hills Run. In 1989, Edie founded the [Brodhead Watershed Association](#), one of the first in this part of the state. (Forest Hills Run is a tributary of the Brodhead.) She is a past president and the current treasurer of the association, and all they have accomplished would take more space than we have to document.

And, in 1993, she became involved with the [Water Resources Education Network](#), a project of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania. Today, she is the editor of Water Policy News and communications director for WREN, which provides funding for

groups engaged in water resource education projects and for groups and individuals wishing to improve local policy making for water resource protection.

People have asked Edie what keeps her going. To paraphrase her answer: when I see people who, in the past, knew little about water conservation, or who cared little about it, “get it” and get involved in their communities. That’s enough to keep me energized for a long time. And, Edie plans to be energized for a long time more...and, that’s good for northeastern Pennsylvania.

The Alliance to Keep Pike Green, a project of the Delaware Highlands Conservancy. [Keep Pike Green](#), is responsible for increasing the awareness of growth-related issues in Pike County. The Alliance to Keep Pike Green is a coalition of conservationists, business people, builders, landowners, local officials and local residents who are committed to preserving Pike County’s high quality of life through good planning and active conservation.

The Alliance has partnered with numerous organizations including the Pike County Conservation District, Delaware Highlands Conservancy, Penn State Cooperative Extension, Nature Conservancy, Pinchot Institute of Conservation, Lackawaxen River, Conservancy, Upper Delaware Visioning Committee and the Pocono Environmental Education Center. The Alliance has given presentations to over 50 clubs and organizations including senior clubs, realtors, town officials, home owner associations, planning boards, rotary clubs and school districts on the need to control growth to protect Pike County’s natural resources.

This public outreach effort culminated in the 2005 passage of the Scenic and Rural Character Preservation Bond Referendum. Additionally, a series of educational workshops have been created through these partnering activities, which expand on the bond campaign’s theme of watershed protection, open space preservation, conservation options, planning and growth management and scenic and rural character preservation.

James Clauser, Carbon County Conservation District. James Clauser has been the District Manager for the [Carbon County Conservation District](#) for over 17 years. Mr. Clauser, through his work at the Conservation District recently brought together Nesquehoning Borough, Nesquehoning Borough Water Authority, The Honorable Keith R. McCall, Pennsylvania House of Representatives, Department of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and private land to stabilize and restore 1,300 feet of the extremely steep and rapidly eroding First Hollow Run stream channel thus eliminating excessive sediment discharges to Nesquehoning Creek and areas downstream of its confluence with the Lehigh River.

Significant concerns regarding the creek began when an exposed water pipe was noted by the Nesquehoning Borough Water Authority. Mr. Clauser and the Conservation District soon became involved thereafter and became the principal driving force behind the environmental restoration of First Hollow Run.

Mr. Clauser and the Conservation District pursued and were successfully awarded three Growing Greener Grants from PA DEP that funded the stream restoration. Mr. Clauser went above and beyond his role as District Manager to oversee this project and through his partnering efforts not only succeeded in stabilizing First Hollow Run, but the use of natural stream design efforts also significantly enhanced in-stream aquatic and riparian habitat.

Developmental Education Services of Monroe County, Inc. (DES). DES has provided quality services and programs for adults and young children with special needs throughout Monroe County for over 23 years.

DES, in 2000, met with representatives of the Monroe County Municipal Waste Management Authority (MCMWMA) and established a cooperative agreement to service local pharmacies by picking up their pill bottles on a weekly basis. As the working relationship between MCMWMA and DES grew, so did the opportunities for DES clients to support and promote recycling in Monroe County.

Consequently, in 2001, DES founded the DES Community Partners in Recycling (CPR), an endeavor to build an environmentally responsible and responsive community through recycling.

Currently, DES-CPR employs one business manager, three supervisors, and 12 workers with disabilities, while continuing its volunteer program for 8 individuals. DES-CPR holds cooperative agreements/contracts with numerous offices and local businesses. Annually DESCPR facilitates the recycling of 5,000 tons of materials.

DES-CPR continues to have an impact on Monroe County recycling by helping businesses and municipalities meet recycling goals, reducing the amount of material going to landfills, providing alternatives to material disposal, and providing meaningful based employment and volunteer opportunities to individuals with disabilities.

Luzerne County Solid Waste Management Department. Four years ago, the [Luzerne County Solid Waste Management Department](#), began a free tire and electronics recycling program for the 75 communities in Luzerne County.

This program began with former Luzerne County Director/Recycling Coordinator, Ed Latinski, but has grown tremendously over the last several years due to the partnering efforts of Luzerne County with Hanover Area School Board and Administration, Butler Township Board of Supervisors and Firehouse, Luzerne County Correctional Facility and the Luzerne County Community Service Program, Luzerne County Sheriffs Office, and local residents. With thousands of vehicles dropping off recyclables, the coordination and partnering efforts was monumental.

This program has resulted in the recycling of 873,037 pounds of electronics and 65,473 tires. In 2005, Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinity recognized this event as the largest electronics collection east of the Mississippi.

Edwin Reish, Bradford County. A dedication to environmental awareness and education is more than words; it is action, partnership, and dedication to a lifestyle that shares with all individuals around you the principles of true environmental stewardship. Ed Reish has talked and lived a life that is built on those principles of true environmental stewardship.

Mr. Reish began to focus his dedication to wildlife in 1980 when he began assisting a wildlife rehabilitator. In 1985, he began the process to obtain a wildlife-rehabilitator permit, which he obtained in 1987, along with his wife, Barbara “Tink” Reish. Since that time, he has added many pens for a variety of birds and animals.

Working with community groups and individuals, Mr. Reish supported his operation through donations and dedication. He travels often over 100 miles to give presentations in support for such activities as the Conservation District Field Days held for School Districts. Literally thousands of individuals have been privileged to hear Mr. Reish’s informative and engaging presentations.

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He partnered with Bradford County Conservation District, Penn State University, and Pennsylvania Game Commission to provide teacher graduate classes. Building on his experience with rehabilitating wildlife, and especially birds, Ed worked actively on the osprey reintroduction program at the Tioga Hammond Dam for two years (1992-1993).

This led to his role as primary caretaker for the peregrine falcon reintroduction Program in Williamsport for the four-year span from 1993 to 1996.

Additionally, working with the birding community, Ed has been an active participant and organizer of the bald eagle survey on the Little and Big Pine Creeks for 10 years. For the Conservation Districts in his area, his irreplaceable value has been his partnership and support of the countless school and educational outreach efforts. He has brought wildlife into the classrooms (literally) and into the minds and hearts of his audiences. Mr. Reish is truly an outstanding environmental steward.

To receive an invitation to next year's awards dinner, please call the Pennsylvania Environmental Council at 570-718-6507 or send email to: Julie A. McMonagle, julie@pecnepa.org, Director of PEC's Northeast Office.

Link: [Sign Up for the PA Environmental Council's Monthly E-Newsletter Today!](#)

Westmoreland Banquet Recognizes Award Winners, Locally Produced Foods

The public is invited to taste the difference “local” makes in the quality of a meal at a special November 17 banquet hosted by the [Westmoreland Conservation District](#). In addition to good food, the program will include the recognition of the District's 2006 Conservation Award winners.

Virtually everything served that evening at the Greensburg Country Club – from appetizers to desserts – will be food that has been grown, raised, or made in Westmoreland County.

“This is our way of showcasing the amazing variety of fresh, wholesome food that's being produced in our county,” said Greg Phillips, Westmoreland Conservation District manager/CEO. Agriculture is Westmoreland County's number one industry in terms of gross dollar product.

Local agricultural producers whose products will be used to create the menu include: Bardine's Country Smokehouse, Crabtree; Bellview Foods, Penn; Friendship Farms, Lycippus; Hearts Content Farm, New Alexandria; Heinnickel Farms, Greensburg; Hillandale Farms, New Kensington; Hutter's Dairy, Kecksburg; Kerber's Dairy, North Huntingdon; Salsa Sisters, Latrobe; Sand Hill Berries, Mount Pleasant; Schramm Farms & Orchards, Harrison City; Stone Villa Wine Cellars, Acme; Dorothy Stoner & family, Latrobe; and Wendel Springs Farm, Herminie.

Also that evening, awards will be presented to five individuals and organizations that have made noteworthy contributions to conservation. They are: Adam Battistella of Greensburg – Conservation Farmer of the Year; Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County – Sustainable Community Partner; Rostraver Township – Municipal Conservation Partner; Murrysville Parks Volunteers – Conservation Volunteer; and Ann Rudd Saxman (posthumously) – Conservation Hall of Honor.

Mr. Battistella is receiving the Conservation Farmer of the Year award for the outstanding conservation work he has done on his 135-acre farm in Greensburg. Among

the many conservation practices he employs on this commercial beef cattle and quarter horse operation is rotational grazing.

Rotational grazing allows animals to feed in only one area of the pasture at a time, while the remaining areas of the pasture rest. This practice benefits the farmer by improving the animals' health, saving on feed costs, and producing more product. It benefits the community by reducing soil erosion, improving the use of animal manure, and improving water quality.

[Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County](#) is currently celebrating five years of helping area communities make good, long-term decisions about where, when, and how they should grow.

The non-profit organization is receiving a conservation award for the important role it has played in a number of projects, including: the development of Westmoreland County's first-ever Comprehensive Plan (2004); in the multi-municipal plan developed by Hempfield Township, Greensburg, South Greensburg, and Southwest Greensburg (2006); in the Irwin Project community revitalization effort; and in the current undertaking of a US Route 30 Master Plan, which is developing a strategic blueprint for central Westmoreland County's primary east-west economic growth corridor.

Rostraver Township is being honored for its progressive approach to controlling erosion and managing stormwater in the municipality. Rostraver is the first municipal government in Westmoreland County to adopt low-impact stormwater regulations into its ordinances, opening the way for innovative approaches, such as infiltration trenches, to be used in developments.

Murrysville Parks Volunteers will receive a conservation award for the thousands of hours this group has invested in maintaining and improving the community's natural spaces, such as Duff Park.

These volunteers have worked to eradicate invasive plants, such as Japanese Knotweed, as well as to plant desirable trees and shrubs in disturbed areas, and blaze and maintain trails. Accepting the award for the group will be Pia van de Venne, who has served as the Murrysville parks volunteer coordinator since 1999.

Ann Rudd Saxman will be inducted into the Westmoreland Conservation District's Hall of Honor. Ms. Saxman, 1914-1990, was a pioneer conservationist, botanist, landscape designer and master gardener.

She was an advocate of soil and water conservation, open space, composting, and recycling long before the "environmental movement" began. She also was a driving force in the formation of Nature Park – Westmoreland County's first county park – in 1960, and it was her vision that this site should be largely undeveloped so visitors could study and enjoy the beauties of nature.

In 1976, when industrial development began on the nearby Donohoe Road, Ann worked to ensure that Nature Park would remain open, natural space. In 1996, the park was rededicated in her honor and an adjacent 10 wooded acres that originally were part of Ann's farm, were added to the park.

The Conservation Hall of Honor was established by the Westmoreland Conservation District in 2003 as a way to permanently recognize the men and women who have made significant and long-term contributions to the conservation ethic in Westmoreland County. Plaques for each inductee are displayed in the District's headquarters on Donohoe Road in Greensburg.

The Westmoreland Conservation District Annual Awards banquet begins at

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6 p.m., and everyone is welcome to attend. Seating is limited and tickets must be purchased in advance. Price per person is \$30.

Banquet sponsors include: Bruce Construction, C.B. Speicher Engineering, Roth, Moore & Associates, and Tri-County Engineering.

For more information, contact the Westmoreland Conservation District at 724-827-5271.

Link: [Special Westmoreland Awards Photo Feature \(PDF\)](#)

Four PA Companies Receive Waste Minimization Awards From EPA

Four Pennsylvania companies were included in sixty-one organizations given [WasteWise Awards](#) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week as part of the [National Partnership for Environmental Priorities Program](#).

The award winners contributed significant efforts in reducing and recycling materials, and reducing or eliminating priority chemicals in products and waste, including lead, mercury and cadmium. The organizations, included utilities, schools, electronic and chemical companies, and consumer product manufacturers, among others.

EPA gave awards to [25 National Partnership for Environmental Priorities](#) members for reducing or removing significant priority chemicals, such as those noted above. The Pennsylvania companies include:

- The **General Electric Bridgeville Glass Plant** in Bridgeville Pennsylvania, produces specialty glass tubing for lighting applications. GE Bridgeville eliminated 86,000 pounds of lead from the manufacturing process through material substitution as part of GE's Ecomagination Initiative.
- **Kalas Manufacturing: Plant #2** in Denver, Pennsylvania, produces and distributes electrical wire and cable products for various markets. Kalas reduced 80,000 pounds of lead by switching to the use of lead-free materials in the production of copper wire.
- **Kalas Manufacturing: Plant #3** in Denver, Pennsylvania, produces and distributes electrical wire and cable products for various markets. Kalas reduced 21,000 pounds of lead by switching to the use of solderless terminals in the production of engineered cable.
- **Sony Technology Center** - Pittsburgh manufactures large screen color televisions. This year, Sony recycled 34,465 pounds of lead by separating lead waste at the source of generation and using it as a material in the glass manufacturing process.
- **Sylvin Technologies, Inc.** in Denver, Pennsylvania, designs and manufactures custom PVC compounds for wire and cable markets. Last year, Sylvin received an NPEP Achievement Award for reducing 125,244 pounds of lead from the manufacturing process. This year, Sylvin is recognized for eliminating an additional 99,508 pounds of lead and becoming a lead-free facility.

Pennsylvania had more winners in this category than any other state.

The partners' combined efforts reduced or eliminated 144 pounds of dioxin, 4,335 pounds of PCBs, 26,750 pounds of mercury, and more than 1 million pounds of lead. Partners reduced or removed lead in automotive components, glass tubing, fluorescent lights, filters, wire, and cable products, automotive lighting, printing plates and cylinders, PVC compounds, and cathode ray tubes. One NPEP partner recycled 66,000 mercury-containing bulbs.

For more information visit the [WasteWise website](#) and the [National Partnership for Environmental Priorities Program website](#).

NewsClip: [Montgomery County Business Lowers Utility Bills, Reduces Waste](#)

DEP Announces Grants to Help Small Businesses Enhance Energy Efficiency

The Department of Environmental Protection this week awarded 39 grants totaling \$224,318 to help small businesses enhance energy efficiency and promote pollution prevention.

The investments are leveraging more than \$850,000 in private funds, almost four times the amount of the state grants.

The grants, awarded under the [Small Business Advantage Grant Program](#), provide a 50-percent match of up to \$7,500 for equipment or processes to reduce energy consumption and promote pollution prevention while increasing profitability.

The Small Business Advantage Grant Program is open to small business owners whose business or facility is located in Pennsylvania. An eligible applicant must be a for-profit business enterprise that is a corporation, limited liability company, partnership, sole proprietorship or other legal entity that has no more than 100 employees and is a separate legal business entity at the time the application is submitted. Applicants may be manufacturers or service providers.

[A list of grants awarded is available online.](#)

Funding for this fiscal year has been exhausted for the [Small Business Advantage Grant Program](#).

Water Resources Education Network Seeking Grant Applications

The [Water Resources Education Network](#) is soliciting proposals for its next round of Water Resources Education Grants. Applications are due April 2, 2007.

Partnerships of organizations in Pennsylvania such as watershed associations, civic groups, community water systems, governmental entities (including municipal authorities), and other public interest organizations are all eligible. All partners must play an active role in the project.

Educational projects that raise awareness about protecting the community's drinking water source and/or preventing non-point source pollution in the watershed. Projects must aim at building an informed citizenry who will protect water resources with actions at home, at work, and within the community, including encouraging local officials to make decisions that will promote clean water.

Grants will be awarded up to \$5,000 per project for projects that must be completed during the period July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008.

Grantees must attend Orientation Meeting in mid-June, 2007 (date and location TBA) to network with other WREN grantees and receive resources and tools. There is no cost to the grantee to attend.

Applications may be sent or hand delivered to the office of League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania CEF, 226 Forster Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102-3220 (no faxed or emailed applications).

[Applications are available online.](#) To receive an application, send email to wren@palwv.org or call 800-692-7281 ext 10.

Floodplain Restoration, Legacy Sediments Workshop Set for October 26

The [Brandywine](#) and [Red Clay Valley](#) Associations are sponsoring a workshop, “[Legacy Sediments: The Next Frontier in Stormwater Management](#)” on October 26 at the Holiday Inn in West Chester.

Dr. Dorothy Merritts and Dr. Robert Walter, from Franklin & Marshall College will discuss the science behind the formation and characteristics of legacy systems and their experience on DEP’s Legacy Sediment Work Group.

Mark Gutshall and Ward Oberholtzer, from [LandStudies, Inc.](#) will talk about case studies in dealing with legacy sediments and the potential multiple benefits of floodplain restoration within watersheds.

Mark Lucas, East Bradford Township Engineer, will present information on legacy sediments from a municipal perspective.

For more information [download the workshop brochure](#).

Environmental Permitting Workshops Set by Professional Engineers

The [Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers](#) has scheduled three workshops in November on water permitting in Monroeville, Camp Hill and Fort Washington.

The topics include: Wetlands and Waterways Permitting, NPDES Construction Permits, Post Construction Stormwater Management and Highway Occupancy Permits.

The workshops will be held: November 7 -Holiday Inn Monroeville, November 13 - Radisson Penn Harris Hotel, Camp Hill, November 14 - Holiday Inn Fort Washington

For further information, [download the workshop brochure](#) or send email to: info@pspe.org .

Cooking Grease to Fuel Buses at Wissahickon Charter School

By the time school ends next June, students at Philadelphia’s [Wissahickon Charter School](#) are hoping that their school buses will be running on the vegetable oil-based biodiesel fuel they will be manufacturing this year.

SmartFuel, Inc., a project of the [William James Foundation](#) of Washington, D.C., has been designed to provide practical experience and build confidence among middle school students that they can make a difference on the local and global level.

Under the guidance of SmartFuel staff, students will design a biodiesel processor and collection system that will produce biodiesel fuel comprised of 80 percent vegetable oil and 20 percent alcohol, either methanol or ethanol. Students will contact local restaurants to acquire waste vegetable oil for use in the project. The end product will be used to power the charter school’s own school buses.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provided a supporting grant of \$15,440 and called the project “exciting and innovative.”

In addition to learning how to manufacture biodiesel fuel, Wissahickon Charter School students will pass their learning on to the community and other students. One evening per semester the school will host community sessions where the biodiesel processor will be on display and students will explain the process of creating the fuel.

It is estimated that the U.S. uses more than 37 trillion gallons of diesel fuel annually for highway vehicles. Diesel fuel combustion produces pollution in the form of

sulfur dioxide, carbon dioxide and fine particles. As an alternative to fossil fuel, biodiesel not only reduces pollution, but also recycles used vegetable oil.

DCNR Commits \$1.2 Million to Lackawanna Land Protection

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week announced the commitment of \$1.2 million in state funds to help acquire about 5,000 more acres of prime watershed and forestland in Lackawanna County.

In addition to the state funds, Lackawanna County is providing \$4 million from its 2006 capital budget. The state's \$1.2 million is from Growing Greener II funding.

The joint land conservation effort was announced by Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis and Lackawanna County Board of Commissioners Chairman Robert C. Cordaro at the 16th Annual Evening for Northeast Pennsylvania's Environment hosted by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

"It is not often we get a chance to save lands that hold so much value for a region," said Secretary DiBerardinis. "These parcels protect highly diverse ecological habitats including extensive wetlands in the Frytown section, riparian habitats along Roaring Brook and barrens habitat on Moosic Mountain. They also provide important connectivity to state game lands, protected lands on Moosic Mountain and Tobyhanna and Goldsboro state parks."

"From the beginning of our administration, we recognized that one of our critical missions had to be restoration and protection of the natural environment," said Cordaro. "No other county in Pennsylvania suffered more from coal mining, heavy industry, landfills and hazardous material sites than we did. In that regard, we have developed a plan and created the resources to execute that strategy. We are very pleased that the state, The Conservation Fund and The Nature Conservancy have come on board with us to assist. It is important to note that this is only phase I of our efforts in Lackawanna County."

The land parcels are located along eastern Lackawanna County, near its border with Wayne County, stretching north to south from near Carbondale to near Frytown. The largest parcels are about 1,500 acres in the Frytown and Moosic areas. The land purchase is made up of contiguous and non-contiguous parcels.

The Conservation Fund and The Nature Conservancy are facilitating the land purchase and providing some funding for miscellaneous costs associated with legal, administrative and closing requirements.

"Thanks to the leadership of Lackawanna County and the support and commitment of the commonwealth and the Theta Lands Corp., we are protecting sensitive wildlife habitat, preserving water quality and expanding important recreational lands," [The Conservation Fund](#) President Larry Selzer said. "This public-private partnership demonstrates the extraordinary results that can be achieved when corporations, public agencies and nonprofit organizations work together to find balanced conservation solutions."

"Identifying environmentally significant lands to preserve is a crucial element in Pennsylvania's long-term conservation success," said Bill Kunze, [The Nature Conservancy's Pennsylvania](#) state director. "In conjunction with DCNR and other conservation organizations, we have identified these parcels as strategic conservation targets for the continued health and restoration of Penn's Woods and Waters. By working

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together, we are leveraging our scientific and conservation expertise to better protect the commonwealth for future generations."

Once the purchase is complete, which is expected to take place by spring 2007, the land will be turned over to Lackawanna County and DCNR's Lackawanna State Forest.

These 5,000 acres are part of thousands of acres of prime watershed lands in the region owned by the Theta Lands Corp. In 2004 the Commonwealth, Luzerne County and The Conservation Fund purchased several parcels of Theta lands covering more than 10,000 acres in Luzerne and Lackawanna counties. The majority of those lands are being managed today as part of DCNR's Lackawanna State Forest.

PA CleanWays Hosts Dump Cleanup in Dauphin County November 4

[PA CleanWays](#) is seeking volunteers to help remove an illegal dumpsite located near the Capital Area Greenbelt at South 29th Street & Park Terrace, Dauphin County on November 4.

Volunteers should meet at 9:00 a.m. Rain or Shine in the parking lot of Hornung's True Value Hardware Store at 509 South 29th Street, Harrisburg.

For more information contact: Michelle Dunn, PA CleanWays 1-877-772-3673 or mdunn@pacleanways.org to register or with any questions.

[Look for other cleanup events near you online.](#) (Courtesy: [Watershed Weekly](#))

DEP Names Tom Callaghan New Manager for Pottsville District Mining Office

DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty this week announced the appointment of Tom Callaghan as the new District Mining Manager in the Pottsville District Mining Office.

Callaghan is a professional geologist with more than 26 years of service to the department, including six years with District Mining Operations and 16 years with the Bureau of Mining and Reclamation. Most recently, he has served as chief of BMR's Environmental Studies Section.

He replaces Roger Hornberger who retired on July 11. Callaghan's appointment is effective Oct. 28.

The Pottsville District Mining Office oversees surface and underground anthracite and non-coal mining, and blasting activities in 23 eastern Pennsylvania counties.

Third Young Peregrine Falcon from Rachel Carson Building Dies

The third of five young peregrine falcons that hatched this spring from the nest on the [Rachel Carson State Office Building](#) in Harrisburg has been found dead at Dulles International Airport near Washington, DC. The apparent cause of death was contact with an aircraft.

Peregrines are usually welcome visitors at airports because they tend to clear the airways of other birds, reducing the occurrence of dangerous collisions. Sometimes, however, they find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time and become victims as well.

"Clearly, peregrines live a high-risk existence and surviving their first year of life is their greatest challenge," DEP Director of Environmental Education Jack Farster said.

"Mortality now stands at 60 percent for the 2006 Rachel Carson Building juveniles. This is

not an unusual outcome. If the surviving female- “Yellow” and male- “Green” make it through their first year, they will likely establish their own breeding territories adding to the recovery of this still endangered (state-listed) bird of prey."

In mid-August, the red-banded juvenile female was found injured near Safe Harbor, along the Susquehanna River in Lancaster County. Despite the best efforts of wildlife rehabilitators, her injuries were too severe and she was put down.

In July, the silver-banded male, the smallest at the time of banding, was found dead along a nearby railway in Harrisburg, apparent 1 victim of electrocution.

There are two surviving young falcons from this year's clutch -- the green-banded male and the yellow-banded female.

Feature

Ospreys Call Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Home for the Next Few Weeks

By Patrick McShea

Division of Education at Carnegie Museum of Natural History

Last summer's [Bassmaster Classic](#) established fish-catching as a spectator sport in Pittsburgh. Post-tournament estimates of 100,000 spectators lining bridges and riverside vantage points might well result in another major tournament being held on our rivers, but not at least until the summer of 2008.

Anyone looking for a more immediate opportunity to observe out-of-town experts testing their fishing skills on waters in western Pennsylvania might want to invest in a pair of binoculars.

Beginning in late September and continuing throughout October, the great flow of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio mirrors an overhead trickle of large birds known colloquially as fish hawks and more properly as [Ospreys](#).

From summer territories as close to Pittsburgh as Moraine State Park and as distant as Hudson Bay, the nearly eagle-sized birds follow the water, singly or in pairs, to a winter range that stretches from the Gulf Coast deep into the South American Continent.

This intermittent procession, which has occurred for at least the past dozen years, is a revival of a centuries old natural cycle. On a national level, Osprey populations plummeted during the middle decades of the Twentieth Century as residues of DDT and other related pesticides in aquatic food chains interfered with egg shell formation and consequently dramatically reduced the birds' reproductive rate.

The species' rebound in recent years is attributable not only to diminished presence of the harmful chemicals, but also to the successful efforts by various government and private agencies all over North America to re-introduce the birds into suitable habitat.

Bridge bound commuters who aren't familiar with an Osprey's crooked wing silhouette or the distinctive patterning of its white underside aren't likely to notice a passing migrant when it's 300 feet above them and intent on covering ground.

Circumstances can be quite different, however, when a hungry Osprey descends to circle the water at something closer to treetop height. When a gliding Osprey detects a



potential meal it uses rapid wing beats to effect a seemingly awkward hover. After a few seconds in this stationary position the predator either resumes its reconnaissance maneuvers or folds its wings and plunges feet-first toward the finned prey.

The graceless splash that concludes such dives offers little clue about the effort's success, for, unlike the film footage most often selected for nature documentaries, misses are as common as hits. A floating bird's effort to regain flight, however, is a reliable predictor. Watch an Osprey struggling mightily to free itself from the river surface, and you're likely to see a fish follow the bird into the air.

The slippery scaled cargo, secured by inch-long curved talons, is carried face-forward to a secluded dining perch, but only after the Osprey trims its traveling weight with a dog-like shake that sends a shower of water drops back to the river.

Areas of shallow water near creek mouths and islands are favored Osprey fishing spots, and at this time of year the birds can appear, gliding, hovering, or plunging talons-first, at virtually any daylight hour. Occasionally, the dramatic action of an Osprey capturing a fish occurs in places where the city's downtown skyline serves as a backdrop.

A photograph of such action is nothing special in the age of Photoshop, but to witness the event firsthand, especially from the bike trail terrace of reclaimed industrial riverbank, is to reap a visual dividend from all our investments to keep our water clean.

For more information visit the [Game Commission's Osprey webpage](#).

Patrick McShea, Division of Education at [Carnegie Museum of Natural History](#),
mcsheap@carnegiemnh.org (Courtesy: [Watershed Weekly](#))

Quick Clips

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

[Exeter Teen Making Big Cleanup His Mission](#)
[Wyoming County Conservation Efforts Highlighted](#)
[Pike Conservation District Refines Stream Monitoring](#)
[COALS Program to Get New Logo from Student](#)
[Environmental Filmmakers Compete for Prizes](#)
[Student Environmental Filmmaker Prizes Announced](#)
[Grant Helps Students, Teachers Manage Asthma Cases in Delaware County](#)
[At Beef Ranch, Green is Gold](#)
[Group Seeks Volunteers for "Growing Native"](#)
[DEP Chief Backs Push to Develop Wind Farms](#)
[PSU Commits to Changing the World With Light Bulbs](#)
[Lehigh County Coroner to Use Hybrid Vehicle](#)
[DEP Adds More Funds to Hybrid Electric Rebate Program](#)
[Perry Farmland Preservation Board Logs 5,000 Acres](#)
[County, State Partner in Land Conservation](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Middle Spring Group Wants to Protect Stream](#)
[Mahoning Creek Project is Under Way](#)
[Scientist Sees Revenue in River Pollution](#)
[Fishing: Bass Thriving in Program Lakes](#)
[River Hailed as Whitewater Mecca](#)
[Group Meets on River to Talk Water](#)
[Removal of Homes Could Alleviate Flooding](#)
[DEP Seeks \\$8.9 Million in Penalties for Train Derailment in McKean County](#)
[\\$1.37 Million for Revitalization of North Delaware Riverfront](#)

Regulations

The Department of Community and Economic Development published proposed changes to regulations covering the [Community Revitalization Program](#) and the Public Utility Commission published a correction to its [order implementing the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act](#).

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – October 21, 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 Public Utility Commission formally published its order [investigating conservation and energy efficiency activities](#).

[For copies of Draft Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

[For copies of Final Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Upcoming conferences, meetings, workshops, plus links to other online calendars. Meetings are in Harrisburg unless otherwise noted. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

- [No Cost Internet Based Training Courses for October-November](#)
- **October 23** – [DCNR Carbon Management Advisory Committee](#). Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.

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- **October 24** – House Game and Fisheries Committee meets to consider [House Bill 3007](#) (Semmel-R-Berks) limits the liability of landowners who open their property to hunting. Room 302 Irvis Building. 9:30.
- **October 24** – DCNR [Snowmobile and ATV Advisory Committee](#) meeting. [Room 105 Rachel Carson Building](#). 9:00.
- **October 25** – [DCNR Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council](#) meeting. Weaber, Inc., Lebanon Valley Business Park, 25 Keystone Dr., Lebanon. 12:30.
- **October 31-November 5** – [National Historic Preservation Conference](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation. Pittsburgh.
- **November 2** - [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) public hearing on the [Kilbuck landslide](#) in Pittsburgh. Sewickley Country Inn. 9:00.
- **November 20** – Environmental Issues Forum, [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) featuring J. Kent Crawford, USGS, to discuss the emerging contaminants project. Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **December 12** – **CANCELLED**. [Coal and Clay Mine Subsidence Insurance Board meeting](#).
- **December 14** – [Coal and Clay Mine Subsidence Insurance Board meeting](#). 14th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building, Harrisburg. 10:00.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

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

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

Helpful Web Links

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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

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

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

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

Stories Invited

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

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