

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

January 17, 2005

Budget Season Coming Into Focus – It's Ugly

We provide an update on the budget schedule in this *Digest*, but things still look very ugly for the budget season-- \$1.5 billion deficit-- and it is getting uglier.

The [Issues/PA](#) Poll results this week confirm the public thinks the economy, fair taxes, and affordable higher education are their top three concerns. The environment generally didn't make their priority list. The results did strongly support having the voters vote on Gov. Rendell's proposed \$800 million bond issue, but there was no question about how to pay for it. (*see article below*).

And read our special feature on the Steel Valley Middle School teacher who is making an art of environmental education and read the [PA Center for Environmental Education](#) January EE and Higher Ed newsletter that's now available.



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Contents – On the Hill

- Rocky Landscape: Budget Address, Hearings Now Set for February and March
- First Environmental Issues Forum to Focus on Nutrient Trading Program

Other News

- PUC Sets Technical Conference on Implementing Alternative Energy Law
- Are You Prepared for a Winter Flood?
- [DEP Proposes NOx Allocations for Upcoming Ozone Seasons](#)
- Rendell Unveils Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy
- Grants Made By Western PA Watershed Protection Project, New Apps Due
- Revised Drinking Water Project Priority List Now Available
- PA Center for Environmental Education EE and Higher Ed Newsletter Available
- Central PA Green Building Council Sponsoring 2 Upcoming Events
- Save the Dates: Green Building Summit, Workshops Set in Pittsburgh Region
- Affordable Housing Goes Green in Cumberland County
- [Dept. of Energy Grants Solicitations Open in February](#)
- [DEP Awards Small Business Pollution Prevention Grants](#)

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

- Conservation Planning Using a Green Infrastructure Approach
- EPA Extends Deadline for Brownfields Grants to January 21
- EPA Helps Local Governments Use Environmental Management Systems
- Free Waste Reduction Assessments Available in Allegheny County from PRC
- Beverage Industry Cuts Packaging in Half Since 1990
- DEP Seeks Waste Tire Removal, Recycling Grant Proposals for Starr Pile
- EPA Proposes to Modify Toxics Release Inventory Reporting Requirements
- Conservation Groups Featured at 2005 State Farm Show
- Nominations Due for Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards
- What's on the Minds of Pennsylvanians? Economy, Higher Taxes, Education
- Looking for Internships? Check Out these Agencies, Groups
- Geologists Association Looking for Executive Director

Taking Positive Actions

- The Art of Environmental Education in Steel Valley Middle School

On the Hill

Rocky Landscape: Budget Address, Hearings Now Set for February and March

The 2005-06 budget season will officially open on February 8 with the Governor's Budget Address, although funding issues with mass transit, Medicaid and others are continuing to take center stage publicly and privately for this fiscal year as well.

The Governor is expected to announce a series of "Human Capital" initiatives to provide additional support for workforce development and higher education programs and institutions.

The Senate and House Appropriations Committees issued their latest schedule of budget hearings which are set to begin the day after the budget address. As of now, the schedule for the departments of Environmental Protection and Conservation and Natural Resources look like this—

March 2 – Senate – DCNR – 2:45

March 3 – House – DEP – 9:30

Senate – DCNR – 11:00

March 9 – Senate – DEP – 2:45

The Governor's Budget Office will present a more detailed overview of the Governor's proposed budget at a Senate hearing on February 28 at 2:45.

The overall state budget continues to face significant pressures ([PaED 12/27/04](#)) with some estimates of a budget deficit running as high as \$1.5 billion for next year, before additional spending for mass transit, Medicaid, the Governor's Growing Greener and Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund initiatives are considered.

The Pennsylvania Cable Network often provides live or taped coverage of budget hearings. Check the [PCN website](#) for their schedule.

First Environmental Issues Forum to Focus on Nutrient Trading Program

The [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#)'s (JCC) first Environmental Issues Forum of the 2005-2006 legislative session will be held on February 1.

The committee will hear a presentation by Andrew McElwaine, president and CEO of the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) (PEC) on the state's nutrient trading program and its progress, the completion of the first successful trade by PEC and a grant PEC will be using to establish best management practices regarding the trading program.

In Other News

PUC Sets Technical Conference on Implementing Alternative Energy Law

The [Public Utility Commission](#) (PUC) announced this week it will hold a technical conference on January 19 to discuss implementation issues related to the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act of 2004, signed by Gov. Rendell in November.

The Act takes effect on February 28 and requires that a certain percentage of all electric energy sold to retail customers be derived from alternative energy sources. The law applies to both electric distribution companies and electric generation suppliers, who must demonstrate their compliance on an annual basis.

The conference will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Hearing Room 1 of the Commonwealth Keystone Building, 400 North Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. All interested parties are invited to attend and to submit comments. The meeting is open to the public.

More details, including a list of issues to be addressed and directions for submitting comments, are available in the [Secretarial Letter](#).

The PUC and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) are responsible for implementing and enforcing the provisions of the Act.

Specifically, the PUC must establish an alternative energy credits program to be administered by an independent entity, develop rules governing the interconnection of customer-generators to the electric grid and verify that companies comply with the Act.

DEP is responsible for qualifying energy sources for alternative resource status and ensuring that these alternative resources meet environmental, health and safety standards.

The PUC and DEP will jointly monitor companies' compliance with the law and will provide an annual report to the General Assembly.

For more information, contact Karen Mitchell at kmitchell@state.pa.us or at 717-787-1925.

Are You Prepared for a Winter Flood?

Pennsylvania received significant rain, sleet and ice in the last week to ten days causing the National Weather Service to issue Flood Watches and Warnings for many parts of Pennsylvania, especially for small streams and rivers.

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

The major cause of deaths from flooding occurs when people try to drive their vehicles through standing water and get stranded and drown. The National Weather Service says "[Turn Around, Don't Drown](#)."

You can also check stream levels online for many streams in central and eastern Pennsylvania by going to the [Mid-Atlantic River Forecast Center](#) and the [Ohio River Forecast Center](#) of the National Weather Service.

[Pennsylvania weather information](#) is available from the National Weather Service

If you are affected by flooding, you'll find [practical flood recovery tips](#) online. Topics include: Advice on Disposing Flood Debris, Disinfection of Home Wells and Springs, Flood Recovery - Adding Energy Efficiency, Flood Recovery - Building Systems and Equipment Issues, Flood Recovery - Electric Motor and Appliances, Flood Recovery - Heating and Cooling Systems, Flood Recovery - Walls, Tips for Dealing with Flood Related Storage Tank Problems, and Tips for Safe Flood Cleanup

Thinking ahead to Spring, property owners may want to look into purchasing flood insurance now to prepare for later because flood damage is not covered by homeowners or business insurance policies. It has to be purchased separately.

Not sure if you're covered? Contact your insurance agent or insurance company right away. It takes 30 days for a flood insurance policy to become effective, so you can't wait until the rain starts falling.

If you're not sure if you're in an area subject to flooding, contact your township, city or borough or your county emergency management office. There are maps available that show which areas can be flooded for all communities in Pennsylvania. And sometimes the answer isn't always obvious.

For general information about flood insurance call the National Flood Insurance Program's toll-free information line at 1-800-427-4661 or visit the Department of Insurance [Flood Insurance Guide online](#).

NewsClip: [PEMA Reminds Residents to Protect Themselves from Flooding](#)

Rendell Unveils Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy

Marking his first meeting as Chair of the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council, Gov. Rendell unveiled Pennsylvania's [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy](#) this week.

[On January 27](#) the Department of Environmental Protection will host a meeting in Harrisburg to present information to the public on the Strategy.

The Governor also awarded a \$1 million Growing Greener grant to the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#) to continue efforts to improve the quality of Pennsylvania's waterways through significant and targeted restoration of riparian forest buffers and wetlands.

CBF will work to maximize farmers' participation in the expanded Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and pilot a new Stream Stewardship Program for the permanent protection of forested buffers.

At the same time, [CBF organized a demonstration](#) at the Council meeting to urge more action to curb the pollution degrading the Chesapeake and its rivers. But they left disappointed when the Council again failed to take decisive steps to restore this national treasure.

NewsClip: [Rendell Unveils Bay Strategy](#)

Grants Made By Western PA Watershed Protection Project, New Apps Due

The [Western Pennsylvania Watershed Protection Program](#) this week announced grant awards for six projects totaling \$66,000, according to John Dawes, Administrator of the program.

The Program also announced applications for the next round of grants are due March 15.

The projects funded in the latest grant awards include:

[Clearfield County Conservation District](#), \$10,000: Based on the recommendations of a watershed assessment completed on [Clearfield Creek](#) in 2003, the District in cooperation with the Morgan Run Watershed Association has joined efforts to treat the MR FROG Discharge. This discharge will be treated passively and will result in a reduction of 1063 lbs/day of acidity and over 434 lbs/day of metals.

[Emigh Run/Lakeside Watershed Association](#), \$5,000: This project funding was awarded to relocate the headwaters of Emigh Run, Clearfield County. This project relocation will move the headwaters to its original location. This project will prevent the headwaters from running through nearly 0.5 miles of spoil piles and will result in better water quality in the stream's headwaters. Checkout this [Watershed Hero](#) feature.

[Wiconisco Creek Watershed Association](#), \$20,000: This project allocation was for the integrated use of chicken manure as a soil amendment on abandoned mine reclamation projects. The funds will be used to analyze the beneficial reuse of this manure in terms of vegetative growth, nutrient runoff, and sediment reductions as a result of reclamation runoff in Schuylkill County.

[Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team](#), \$20,000: This grant was in support of the ongoing assistance of the Stream Team for general operational support of their monitoring process that assists over 25% of WPWP grantees and provides justification for the AMD projects of their service region, including: Armstrong, Cambria, Indiana, Somerset and Westmoreland counties.

[Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance](#), \$6,000: This first-time grantee was awarded funds for the Big Mountain Discharge. Once completed this project will mitigate the impacts of 500 lbs/day of metals and 1,400 lbs/day of acidity to Shamokin Creek.

[Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#), \$5,000: This preapproved grant was paid out as the Office of Surface Mining/VISTA position was filled. In this case the VISTA person was located in the Broad Top TWP/Six Mile Run watershed.

For more information and applications visit the [Western Pennsylvania Watershed Protection Program](#) webpage.

Revised Drinking Water Project Priority List Now Available

The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority and Department of Environmental Protection published [notice of their Drinking Water Project Priority List for 2004-05](#) this week. A copy of the [Priority List is available online](#).

Individuals interested in presenting comments on the priority ranking should submit those comments to the Administrative Services Section, Division of Municipal

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

Financial Assistance, Bureau of Water Supply and Wastewater Management, 10th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building, P. O. Box 8466, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8466, (717) 787-6744 or amaisano@state.pa.us .

Central PA Green Building Association Sponsoring 2 Upcoming Events

The [Green Building Association of Central Pennsylvania](#) is sponsoring two special events on green building best practices.

“Best Practices” Reception on Building Green

The Green Building Association of Central PA will host a “Best Practices” informal networking session on January 20 in Harrisburg at the Wyndham Hotel.

The program will feature team discussions on green living and green building practices and at the end of the evening the teams will present their collective thoughts to the attendees and award prizes for the best ideas.

The Association and [McKissick Associates](#) are sponsoring the event.

[To register, click here](#) or contact [Dave Sheridan](#) or call at 717 497-5768.

Driving Down the Cost of Building Green

The [Green Building Association of Central Pennsylvania](#) will feature a special program by Tom Paladino, one of the founding authors of the LEED standards, on February 24 in York. The program will focus on driving down the cost of constructing green buildings using LEED standards.

Paladino's company wrote much of the LEED-NC Reference Package and Tom has consulted on six LEED-certified buildings, and is currently working on 21 LEED projects.

The workshop will help answer the question: "Why does LEED cost so much?" The answer is: "It doesn't have to." We need to incorporate green building practices into the planning, design, and construction of our buildings, rather than "bolting on" LEED documentation to a conventional project.

The workshop will be registered with AIA for six hours of HSW training.

The sponsors of the workshop include, [Armstrong](#), [CH Briggs](#), [L. Robert Kimball](#), and [7 Group](#), in addition to the [Green Building Association of Central Pennsylvania](#).

[To register, click here](#) or contact [David Sheridan](#) at 717 497-5768.

Save the Dates: Green Building Summit, Workshops Set in Pittsburgh Region

The [Green Building Alliance's](#) second annual [Building Solutions Summit on April 7](#) is targeted towards smart building owners and developers constructing and operating environmentally responsible buildings.

This half-day, multi-session summit features business and development leaders who will reveal proven strategies and techniques that produce better performance of buildings and healthier, more satisfied occupants.

Presentations include: making the business case for green building, costs and financing and marketing benefits of green buildings.

New LEED Workshop in Pittsburgh

"Applying LEED-NC (New Construction) in Practice" (formerly LEED Advanced Workshop) will be presented in Pittsburgh on February 2. Understanding LEED® is an important step towards reducing environmental impacts and achieving superior economic performance. Architects, engineers, facility managers and building owners who master LEED concepts and processes become knowledgeable practitioners and consumers of green design and construction.

This course, offered by the U.S. Green Building Council, is an intensive, one-day technical overview of the LEED-NC Green Building Rating System. It will take place locally from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, 1000 Fort Duquesne Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA. [View the nationwide LEED Training Calendar online.](#)

The Green Light Pittsburgh Conference

The [Green Light Pittsburgh 2005 Conference](#) on March 29 brings the electrical and lighting industries together under one roof to see the best in related sustainable products and services. This event, which includes extensive educational programming workshops, a vast exhibition floor and ample networking prospects, will give attendees unrivaled opportunities to learn about the latest innovations, exchange ideas and develop new business relationships.

Affordable Housing Goes Green in Cumberland County

The construction of 14 homes in Penn Township, Cumberland County will tread softly on the environment and reduce heating and cooling costs for their future homeowners.

The preponderance of “green building” features will make this affordable housing development a first in Pennsylvania, according to Jack Berger, a special assistant for project development at the Redevelopment Authority of Cumberland County.

He said the project was four years in the making and is geared for low and moderate income occupancy. [Read about it here.](#) (courtesy [Green Building Alliance](#))

Conservation Planning Using a Green Infrastructure Approach

Most land and water conservation initiatives in the United States are reactive not proactive; haphazard not systematic; piecemeal not holistic; single-scale not multi-scale, single-purpose not multi-functional. Current conservation efforts often focus on individual pieces of land, limiting their conservation benefits to the environment and human health.

Green infrastructure is a strategic approach to conservation that addresses the ecological, social and economic impacts of sprawl and the accelerated consumption and fragmentation of open land.

A city, county or state would never build a road, water and electrical system piece by piece, with no advanced planning or coordination between different system components and jurisdictions.

These built infrastructure systems are planned, designed and invested in far in advance of their actual use. [GreenInfrastructure.Net](#) and a large coalition of public and private organizations are advancing the concept of Green Infrastructure nationwide.

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

They say we should plan, design and invest in our Green Infrastructure following the same principles and approaches that are used for built infrastructure.

The mission of [GreenInfrastructure.Net](#), a collaboration of The Conservation Fund and the U.S. Forest Service, is to illustrate that identifying and planning for Green Infrastructure - multi-purpose green space networks - provides a framework for smart conservation and smart growth.

To find out more, visit the [GreenInfrastructure.Net webpage](#). See and hear more about green infrastructure from [Dr. Mark A. Benedict](#) and [Edward T. McMahon](#) of The Conservation Fund. (*requires RealPlayer*)

EPA Extends Deadline for Brownfields Grants to January 21

EPA is extending to January 21 the deadline for applicants to submit [proposals for the brownfields assessment, revolving loan fund and cleanup grants](#) that are affected by the bona fide prospective purchaser reopener. Final proposals must be received before 6 p.m.

EPA's recently signed 2005 appropriations bill temporarily expands the number of brownfield sites that are eligible for funding under EPA's brownfields assessment, revolving loan fund, and cleanup grants. According to the appropriations bill, purchasers of brownfields sites may be considered bona fide prospective purchasers (and hence not liable for contamination on the site) if the property was purchased prior to January 11, 2002, provided all other provisions of the bona fide prospective purchaser requirements are met. This change applies only for grants awarded during the federal fiscal year 2005.

Because of this change, EPA is reopening the brownfields grant competition to allow entities that are affected by the changes to submit and/or resubmit proposals for brownfields funding. To qualify for participation in the reopened competition, applicants must identify specific brownfields sites.

If you have questions about whether a brownfields site may be eligible for grant funding based on this temporary change to the definition of bona fide prospective purchaser, please contact Tom Stolle, EPA Region III Brownfields Coordinator in Philadelphia at 215-814-3129 or stolle.tom@epa.gov.

EPA Helps Local Governments Use Environmental Management Systems

Environmental management systems (EMS) are a well established tool to help local governments prevent pollution, operate more efficiently and improve environmental performance within their communities.

Since 1997, EPA has helped local entities establish EMS that include effective environmental policies and measurable goals for reducing impacts on the environment.

Mayor Douglas Palmer of Trenton, N.J., who co-chairs the National Conference of Mayor Urban Watershed Council said, "Introducing EMS as a tool reduces costs and improves government efficiency in addition to preserving environmental quality, making it a 'must do' for mayors and their staff and programs."

The agency has been working with local governments and others to help understand the benefits of an EMS and assist those that choose to put one in place. EPA in cooperation with the Global Environment and Technology Foundation has worked

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

with more than 30 local governments around the country to reduce operating costs, improve their compliance and significantly reduce environmental impacts in the community.

EPA is also leading a program to work with non-profit organizations, called EMS Local Resource Centers, to help increase the number of local governments that adopt EMS. These centers provide a range of services to local governments including education, training, workshops and guidance.

There are [11 local resource centers](#) around the country, including four new centers recently designated by EPA. The Center closest to Pennsylvania is the [Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University](#).

Each of these local resource centers is playing an important national leadership role by helping local governments operate in a more environmentally and economically sound manner and provides more efficient services for taxpayers in their communities.

Visit the [Public Entity Environmental Management System Resource Center](#) online or the Department of Environmental Protection's [EMS and ISO 14,000 webpage](#).

Free Waste Reduction Assessments Available in Allegheny County from PRC

The [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) (PRC) currently has funding for its WasteCap program to conduct free waste assessments at small- to mid-sized businesses and institutions throughout Allegheny County.

PRC's assessments consist of an on-site interview and facility walk-through to identify waste streams and operating procedures. PRC assessors then generate a report including findings, recommendations, and available resources to help businesses implement voluntary recycling, waste minimization, and environmentally-preferable purchasing programs. Fee-for-service work and ongoing support are also available.

Call 412-431-4449 ext. 213 for more information.

Beverage Industry Cuts Packaging in Half Since 1990

Since 1990 the weight of packaging used for carbonated beverages has dropped by half, in spite of a 24 percent increase in carbonated beverages consumed through 2003.

Carbonated beverage packaging fell from 28 pounds per capita in 1990 to 14 pounds in 2003.

Carbonated beverage containers continue to be the most recycled consumer product package in the United States, with 44 percent of the containers recycled in 2003.

In addition to waste prevention efforts like these, both nationally and in Pennsylvania, the beverage industry has supported recycling and anti-litter efforts.

This year the American Beverage Association is a principal sponsor of the "[Recycle It Now](#)" campaign, a multi-faceted attempt to renew public interest in recycling.

In Pennsylvania, the [Pennsylvania Soft Drink Association](#) has been a significant supporter of recycling initiatives, including the extension of the \$2 recycling fee, the Great PA Cleanup and is a founding member of the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful organization.

DEP Seeks Waste Tire Removal, Recycling Grant Proposals for Starr Pile

The [Department of Environmental Protection is seeking proposals](#) for demonstrating techniques for removing and recycling waste tires from the Starr Tire pile, Columbia County.

The deadline for applications is February 28.

Proposals should use innovative technology (either onsite or offsite) to consume or use waste tires currently located at the Max Starr property that result in marketable products to be used or sold in this Commonwealth or abroad. The proposal should be limited to a demonstration-size project to determine feasibility of further implementation of the technology both at the Starr site and potentially at other tire piles sites within this Commonwealth.

For more information, go to the [Starr Tire Pile webpage](#).

EPA Proposes to Modify Toxics Release Inventory Reporting Requirements

EPA announced this week the first of [two proposed rules](#) intended to reduce the time and resources needed to submit annual reports to EPA's Toxics Release Inventory (TRI). TRI data and information are currently provided to federal officials by nearly 23,000 industrial and federal facility owners and operators nationwide.

These rules are being proposed after the agency received suggestions from stakeholders in meetings and on-line between November, 2002 and March, 2004. The proposed rule announced this week is the "Toxics Release Inventory Forms Modification Rule" in the Federal Register Volume 70, Number 6.

This proposal contains several options that could potentially reduce the amount of time that facility representatives currently spend each year submitting data and information by an estimated 45,000 hours.

Comments on the proposed rule are due to EPA by March 11.

For more information or ways to submit comments on EPA's proposal, visit the [TRI website](#) or contact [Ms. Shelley Fudge](#) 202-566-0674, U.S. EPA, Office of Environmental Information, TRI Program Division, Washington, D.C. (EST); or the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Hotline, Washington, D.C., (toll free) 1-800-424-9346 (EST).

PA Center for Environmental Education EE and Higher Ed Newsletter Available

The [Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education](#) now has available its January EE and Higher Education newsletter.

It includes articles on new scholarships available for the 2005 North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) conference, information on professional development workshops, NAAEE environmental education standards, other upcoming environmental education conferences and much more.

Conservation Groups Featured at 2005 State Farm Show

Thousands of visitors to the 89th [Pennsylvania Farm Show](#) had the opportunity to see dozens of exhibits, including a significant number of displays by conservation and environmental organizations.

In addition to the Department of Environmental Protection will feature a [RiverWalk display](#), the departments of Agriculture and Conservation and Natural Resource, Fish & Boat Commission and Game Commission were there as well as displays by other groups: the PA Biodiversity Partnership, Mothman, the Ned Smith Center, the Bluebird Society of Pennsylvania, PA Sustainable Agriculture Association, The Barn Savers, Pennsylvania Sustainable Forestry Initiative, American Kestrels preservation group and the Penn State College of Agriculture.

To see pictures from the Farm Show, visit our special [Environmental Features at the 2005 Farm Show](#) photo feature.

NewsClip: [Farm Show Volunteers Applauded](#)

Nominations Due for Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards

If you know a person or organization that has helped to enhance the environment of western Pennsylvania, nominate them now to win a [Western Pennsylvania Environmental Award](#).

Deadline for nominations is February 28.

The [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) and [Dominion Foundation](#), sponsors of the awards program, announced they are now accepting nominations for the 2005 Environmental Awards, to be presented at the Westin Convention Center Hotel on May 26.

Community groups, schools, volunteers, government officials, and other organizations, individuals, or programs are eligible to receive a Western Pennsylvania Environmental Award for their efforts to enhance the environment of western Pennsylvania.

A total of 5 awards will be presented in the areas of Community, Government, Green Design, Higher Education and Primary or Secondary Education.

An independent panel of judges will evaluate all nominations. In honor of each winner, the sponsors will make a \$1,000 donation to a nonprofit organization of the winner's choice that provides environmental benefits to western Pennsylvania.

Nomination forms are available by calling the Awards Program office at (412) 481-9400, or can be found online at the [Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards webpage](#).

The awards were established to encourage the community to adopt the standards set by successful nominees, thereby promoting innovative environmental efforts and enhancing the quality of life in western Pennsylvania. Through public recognition and award donations, the program also helps to advance those projects which achieve specific environmental objectives, and which reflect a genuine understanding of local needs.

Major funding for the awards comes from the Dominion Foundation, which is dedicated to the economic, physical and social health of the communities served by Dominion companies.

Dominion is one of the nation's largest producers of energy, with an energy portfolio of about 28,340 megawatts of generation, 6 trillion cubic feet equivalent of proved natural gas reserves and 7,900 miles of natural gas transmission pipeline.

What's on the Minds of Pennsylvanians? Economy, Higher Taxes, Education

A poll put out this week by [Issues/PA](#), a nonprofit public interest group, tried to gauge what's on the minds of Pennsylvanians as we begin the new year.

Not surprisingly, the economy and attracting new businesses (32 percent), fair and adequate tax system (19 percent), affordable higher education (16 percent) and retaining young people in the state (15 percent) ranked as the top four priorities.

The environment as an issue, did not make the list, although when asked about specific quality of life issues, preserving open space and farmland ranked fourth out of nine items. Creating jobs, keeping taxes low and reducing crime came first.

When asked about specific state legislative issues to be debated in the coming year - namely state support for local mass transit systems and giving voters the opportunity to approve borrowing \$800 million for the Governor's Growing Greener II initiatives - Pennsylvanians surveyed were supportive.

Over two-thirds favored legislative action to provide new funding for the state's local [mass transit systems](#). In total, 69 percent strongly favored or somewhat favored providing new funds to help local mass transit. Support is highest in Southeastern Pennsylvania (76 percent) and Southwestern Pennsylvania (71 percent) - but remains above 60 percent in other parts of the state.

Potential environmental initiatives garnered even more support. About three-quarters (74 percent) said they favored action to give voters the opportunity to approve borrowing \$800 million for Gov. Rendell's Growing Greener II. The money would be used for initiatives to preserve open space, reclaim abandoned mines and factory sites for new uses, clean up rivers and streams, and make other environmental improvements.

No question was asked about how the initiative would be paid for.

The strongest supporters of Growing Greener II are those who said loss of open space and farmland is a big problem in their region, primarily the Southeast. Some 51 percent said they're strong supporters of going forward with these initiatives, compared with 30 percent who said loss of open space isn't a big problem.

So what's the bottom line?

Based on the IssuesPA/Pew poll results, Pennsylvanians generally stand firmly behind the Growing Greener II initiative and strongly support the idea of aid for mass transit - but offer no clear way to pay for them.

NewsClip: [Harrisburg Rally January 25 for Growing Greener](#)

Looking for Internships? Check Out These Agencies, Groups

State agencies and nonprofit groups often hire college students for Spring and Summer internships, but the number of positions vary from year to year. To check out the available positions for this year, use these contacts:

PA Organizations for Watersheds & Rivers

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

POWR is [seeking a motivated and ambitious intern](#) for the spring semester. The intern will be involved in several programs, including the volunteer monitoring data system program and River Sojourn program. The intern will work closely with these program coordinators as well as the Executive Director. Excellent communication skills and understanding of the environmental issues facing watersheds are essential.

If interested, please send resume and letter of interest to POWR, 610 North Third Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101, attention Judith Jordan, or fax to 717-234-7929, attention Judith Jordan.

Environmental Protection

DEP typically has a variety of intern positions available to college students, technical, scientific, engineering and sometimes computer science and information systems in Harrisburg and major offices around the state.

To check on the available positions, contact the DEP Bureau of Human Resources at 717- 783-4759 or email [EP, JobOps](#) . For applications visit the [DEP Internship webpage](#).

The deadline for applications for available positions is March 1.

Conservation & Natural Resources

DCNR typically has engineering, scientific and technical intern positions available through its summer intern positions, along with temporary summer jobs as lifeguards and maintenance staff at its State Parks.

To check on the availability of positions, contact the Bureau of Human Resources at: 717-783-5788 or email: ra-dcnrjobs@state.pa.us . For applications visit the [DCNR Intern Program webpage](#).

The deadline for applications for available positions is March 1.

Fish & Boat Commission

To check on the availability of internships with the Fish & Boat Commission, contact the Bureau of Human Resources at 717-705-7820 or email: ra-pfbchr@state.pa.us or visit the [PFBC Employment webpage](#).

Historical & Museum Commission

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is now accepting applications for the [summer 2005 internship program](#). The deadline for applications is February, 25.

The 12-week program provides pre-professional training to graduate or undergraduate students who are interested in careers in the public history field. Interns will be assigned to a PHMC employee who will serve as their mentors for the duration of the summer program.

At the end of the program, interns will present an informal oral presentation to other commission interns and interested employees about their experiences. Applicants will be notified in mid-April of their selection.

For more information, visit the [PHMC's internship program webpage](#) or contact the internship coordinator, Linda Shopes, at lshopes@state.pa.us .

Geologists Association Looking for Executive Director

The [Pennsylvania Council of Professional Geologists](#) is looking for an Executive Director to increase program offerings, work as a lobbyist with the Legislature and manage the organization. Applicants should apply by January 31.

PCPG is a non-profit organization representing the professional, ethical and commercial interests of practicing Geologists in Pennsylvania. Since 1989, membership in the PCPG has grown from our original 20 Charter Members, to over 60 companies employing more than 1,200 geologists in the Commonwealth.

Applicants may direct resumes in confidence by e-mail to info@pcpg.org; or by mail to: Pennsylvania Council of Professional Geologists, 116 Forest Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011.

Quick Clips

[Wind Energy Firm to Bring Jobs](#)

[Wind Energy Firm Brings Jobs to Cambria County](#)

[Rendell Announces Wind Energy Company Location](#)

[Editorial: Idea for Wind Farm \(in Schuylkill County\) Should Get Green Light](#)

[Wyoming County Recycling Coordinator Passes Away](#)

[Carbon County Recycling Efforts Recognized](#)

[Scientists say deer hunting must increase](#)

[PennDot's Popular Adopt-A-Highway Anti-litter Program](#)

[Greening up fertilizes home prices](#)

Taking Positive Action - Feature

The Art of Environmental Education in Steel Valley Middle School



Alice Cottone watches her falcons. See the special photo feature for this article

An innovative teacher at the [Steel Valley Middle School](#) in Munhall, Allegheny County is using the environment to help her sixth grade students express themselves with art and learn new math and language skills.

Alice Cottone (pronounced “Ka-tone”) has been a teacher for 32 years and every day faces the challenge of how to interest her students in art.

An avid outdoors person and beginner birdwatcher, Cottone said she always had an interested in the environment.

“I have done Earth Day and recycling projects with the kids, but what drew me into environmental education was the [Peregrine Falcons living in](#)

[Pittsburgh](#),” said Cottone. “I became fascinated with the falcons and went to the [Peregrine Falcon workshops](#) (put on by the Game Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection) in Harrisburg four times.”

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

“I also have a computer on my desk at school and when the falcons are laying their eggs, pictures of the nest are always on my screen,” she said.

But it wasn't until this past summer that she put it all together for her classroom with the help of the [Governor's Institute for Environment and Ecology](#) and two grants from the [Mon Valley Education Consortium](#).

“We learned in the Environment and Ecology classes that the environment was a great way of bringing together an interdisciplinary approach to teaching art, math and language arts,” said Cottone. “My group wrote a middle school study unit with other teachers at the Institute that included writing lessons to the standards, educational goals, activities and concepts we wanted the students to learn in the unit.”

With two “Great Idea Grants” from the Mon Valley Education Consortium, she created two lessons for the art programs this fall at Steel Valley Middle.

“Biodiversity in Our School's Backyard” is a year long series of activities that turns sixth graders into junior naturalists using binoculars, insect viewers and art to document the birds, fish, turtles and mammals around their school.

Students create their own drawings of birds and other animals they observe just like they would have on the Lewis and Clark expedition. A pond on the school grounds offers a handy aquatic environment for the students to explore.

Unlike Lewis and Clark, students will also be using photography in a second project, “Framing our Environment” to take pictures of what they think are good and bad features of their environment.

“Once a week I take the students out to do bird counts around the school, and almost every morning before school starts I am at the ball field with binoculars and interested students looking for birds,” said Cottone. “We enter the data into the computer and at the end of the year the students will put together their own interpretations using word processing, PowerPoint and pictures they've drawn or taken.”

Cottone also plans to do a “[bioblitz](#)” in the spring, a marathon effort to document the insects, animals and birds living around the school within a 24-hour period. She plans to enlist the help of other teachers and resources from the community for this aspect of the project.

Each of the projects requires the use of art, math and language skills and helps the teachers meet their obligation to teach concepts required by the state's [Environment and Ecology Curriculum Standards](#).

“The kids love the program,” said Cottone. “As soon as we started I heard stories about experiences they had with birds and other animals.”

In addition to the training Cottone received at the Governor's Institute, she also took an environmental education course offered by [Conservation Consultants, Inc.](#) and used resource materials from [Earth Force](#) in Pittsburgh.

The C.C.I. staff is coming to Steel Valley Middle to teach workshops called, “Encouraging a Sense of Wonder- A Hands-on Interactive Approach to Environmental Education” for the sixth and seventh grade this Spring.

“I'm encouraging other teachers in our school to go to the Governor's Institute and C.C. I and take advantage of the same resources I did,” said Cottone. “At first I didn't apply to the Institute because I was an art teacher, but I did and I was accepted.”

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

“What I did can definitely be reproduced in other schools,” she said. “I was able to buy the equipment for the projects with the grants and got a great deal on the binoculars from a Nikon dealer.”

The Steel Valley Middle School has over 550 students in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades and the school administration, including Principal John Ackermann, has been very supportive of the Cottone’s projects.

“Using the environment to teach art is an exciting tool bringing our outdoor environment inside the classroom,” said Cottone.

For more information on Cottone’s approach to environmental education, contact her directly at: acottone@svsd.k12.pa.us .

Resources: The 2005 Governor’s Institute on Environment and Ecology for Educators will be held July 24 to 29 in Seven Springs. For information on how to apply, contact Patricia Vathis, Environment & Ecology Education Advisor, at: Pvathis@state.pa.us or call 717-783-6994.

The Ecology and Environment for Teachers course by Conservation Consultants, Inc. will be offered again in June. Contact Indigo Raffel at 412-431-4449, ext. 214 or by email: indigor@ccicenter.org for more information.

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)
(courtesy [PA Center for Environmental Education](#))

Watershed NewsClips

[Editorial: Award for Center is a Natural Pact Seeks Better Chesapeake Bay Authority Considering a Watershed Plan](#)
[Earth Conservancy Nearly Debt Free](#)
[Board ponders wind power plan](#)
[Meeting to outline latest Mill Run Project](#)
[Fish will return, with tourists, in Catawissa Creek](#)
[Governors to seek more Hill funds for Bay](#)
[System to treat acidic drainage from Audenreid Mine Tunnel](#)
[State Supports Regional Appalachian Reforestation Initiative](#)

Regulations

January EQB Meeting Features Mercury Emissions Petition, Explosive Rules

The [Environmental Quality Board meets on January 18](#) to consider final form regulations on [explosives storage](#), a rulemaking petition on setting Pennsylvania’s own [mercury emissions standards](#) for power plants and a [petition to redesignate Fishing Creek](#) in Lancaster County. [Here’s a quick agenda summary](#).

[Correction of Regulations Setting Landscape Architect, Geologist Fees](#)

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – January 15, 2005](#)

Comment Deadlines: [Regulations](#) [Technical Guidance](#)

[Copies of Proposed Regulations](#) [Status of Regulations, 6-Month Calendar](#)

Technical Guidance & Permits

[Proposed Water Quality Permit for Sewer Extensions & Pumping Stations](#) : The complete proposed permit is on page 85 of the [January 15 Pennsylvania Bulletin](#).

[For copies of Draft Technical Guidance](#) [For copies of Final Technical Guidance](#)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **January 18** – House returns for non-voting session
- **January 18** – [DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting
- **January 18** – [Environmental Quality Board](#) meeting.
- **January 24** – First day of voting session for Senate & House
- **January 26** – [DCNR Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting.
- **February 1** – [Joint Legislative Air & Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) presentation on PA’s nutrient trading program.
- **February 2** – [Groundhog Day](#)
- **February 8** – (Updated) Governor’s Budget Address
- **February 10-11** – [Fundamentals of Geology & Applied Geology, Philadelphia](#)
- **February 17-18** – [Fundamentals of Geology & Applied Geology, Pittsburgh](#)
- **April 10-12** – [Engineering Sustainability 2005](#) – University of Pittsburgh School of Engineering.

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

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

Contributions 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 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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