

—PA — **Environment Digest**

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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[*PA Environment Digest Video Blog*](#)

Chesapeake Bay Leaders Say 2010 Bay Cleanup Goal Will Not Be Met

By Karl Blankenship, [*Chesapeake Bay Journal*](#)

The (Chesapeake) Bay cleanup's top policymaking body formally acknowledged in December that 2010 will come and go without meeting its cornerstone goal—cleaning up the Chesapeake.

"I think you probably could have come to that conclusion two years ago," acknowledged Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, chair of the Chesapeake Executive Council.

"No, we are not going to hit [the goal] by 2010. Not on the water quality, not on the nutrient reduction, not on the sediment issues," Gov. O'Malley said.

But he and other members of the council insisted at their annual meeting December 5 that cleanup efforts were accelerating. And, Gov. O'Malley said, the region should have policies in place by the end of 2010 that would ultimately achieve the clean Bay goal.

To help accomplish that, the council signed a pledge to protect 695,000 acres of forest by 2020 because whenever forests are converted to other uses, water pollution typically increases.

Individual council members also agreed to "champion" various issues that could move restoration efforts forward, such as promoting cellulosic ethanol production and "green" infrastructure in cities.

Still, Gov. O'Malley wouldn't predict how long it will take to restore the Chesapeake, saying it depended on whether federal government increased Bay cleanup spending.

"A lot of progress is possible," he said. "When exactly we will hit that goal is going to be dependent, in part, on the sort of leadership the nation shows at the highest level." A spate of recent reports, including several from the EPA, have shown that the region will fall far short of its nutrient and sediment reduction goals aimed at restoring the Bay's water quality. Senior officials have nonetheless been reluctant to publicly acknowledge that they would miss another major cleanup milestone.

The reason for the 2010 deadline dates to the resolution of a lawsuit against the EPA in 1999. As part of the settlement, the agency must write a cleanup plan known as a Total Maximum Daily Load for the the Bay unless it meets water quality standards by May 2011.

The Clean Water Act requires a TMDL for any waterway that fails to meet its water quality standards—conditions that make waterways safe for both humans and aquatic life.

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The Executive Council set the 2010 deadline in its Chesapeake 2000 agreement, hoping to head off the need for a TMDL which has more regulatory provisions and more rigid requirements than the tributary strategies states have written to reduce Bay pollution. But writing a TMDL covering the Bay watershed is a huge exercise. Planning for it has already begun and further work will have begin soon to ensure the process, which must include opportunities for public review, is completed on schedule.

"Candor compels us to say we're not going to be where we want to be by 2010," said Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine.

The Executive Council oversees the 24-year-old state-federal Chesapeake restoration effort. It includes the governors of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia; the EPA administrator; the mayor of the District of Columbia; and the chair of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, which represents state legislators.

While not members of the Executive Council, representatives for Delaware, West Virginia, New York and the U.S. Department of Agriculture also attended the meeting.

Reducing the amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus entering the Bay has been the cornerstone of Chesapeake restoration efforts dating to 1987, when the Executive Council signed an agreement promising a 40 percent nutrient reduction by 2000, which was missed. At the current rate of implementation, various reports have suggested that the region is not likely to achieve its nutrient and sediment reduction goals until 2025, or even later.

Because it takes years for many actions to become fully effective, actual restoration could lag by another decade, or until about 2035.

Gov. O'Malley said 2008 would be a year of "recommitment" to Bay restoration. "Failure is not an option. We have to move forward."

As evidence of progress, council members pointed to new regulations forcing reductions at wastewater treatment plants, and to stepped-up Bay spending.

Gov. Kaine, for instance, said that in the last two years, Virginia had spent or committed roughly \$700 million for wastewater treatment plant upgrades, putting the state on track for sewage plants to meet discharge goals by 2010.

"If you look at each of the state's efforts, you would see a pretty significant acceleration of regulatory strategies and actual funding within the last two or three years," Gov. Kaine said.

Other states also expect to come close to goals for sewage plants in 2010 or shortly thereafter.

But the more vexing problem of controlling nutrient runoff from the land remains. Runoff is growing as urban and suburban areas expand over more of the watershed.

Pollution from agriculture, the largest single source of nutrients to the Bay, could increase substantially in coming years as farmers plant more corn to meet demand for ethanol.

Gov. Ed Rendell, who said five new ethanol plants are in various stages of approval in his state, pledged to set up a biofuel summit in the coming year that would explore ways to accelerate the use of cellulosic material, such as switchgrass, for ethanol instead of corn.

"Corn-based ethanol contributes significantly to agricultural runoff and that runoff goes into the Bay," Gov. Rendell said. "If cellulosic ethanol becomes a viable means of producing substitutes for fossil fuels, the Chesapeake Bay states can benefit tremendously both economically and environmentally."

Although progress has been difficult, Gov. O'Malley called restoring the Bay a "moral imperative" and said it is an objective the public increasingly demands. "I can't

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remember a time in my life when there was so much public support for improving our environment," he said.

Gov. Kaine agreed, "The citizens get this, and they want us to really start producing, and that is a sign of hope."

At the Executive Council meeting, various Bay cleanup participants agreed to "champion" issues or programs with the goal of gathering information that could be used by others. Among the issues championed are:

EPA: Improve cooperation with other federal agencies on Bay-related issues such as the development of the U.S. Navy's low impact development policy. Part of that effort will be the completion this spring of a Bay restoration plan that integrates the actions of all federal agencies.

Virginia: Control pollution from agriculture through a targeted program that focuses 80 percent of the state's effort and resources on five, cost-effective actions to reduce farm pollution: implementing nutrient management plans; planting streamside buffers; installing stream bank fencing to keep farm animals out of waterways; conservation tillage which reduces erosion; and planting cover crops that help to absorb nutrients left in the ground after harvest.

Maryland: Promote local government involvement by sponsoring a "local leadership summit" that focuses on finding ways to make local governments, communities and citizens true partners in the cleanup effort.

Create a Chesapeake Bay Venture Capital Technology Fund to promote investments in technologies that could accelerate Bay restoration efforts. The state committed an initial \$250,000 for the fund, which will be matched by the EPA.

Improve accountability in the Bay cleanup through new approaches such as Maryland's "BayStat" program, which seeks to target, track and measure the impact of restoration practices.

Work with Virginia, the Chesapeake Bay Commission and stakeholders to develop actions that enhance the blue crab stock.

Pennsylvania: Sponsor a "biofuels summit" in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Commission to explore ways to accelerate the use of cellulosic material, such as switchgrass for sources of ethanol instead of corn. Studies suggest increased corn production to fuel the demand for ethanol could sharply increase Bay pollution, while crops such as switchgrass could reduce runoff.

Support a study to better understand the movement of sediments trapped behind the Conowingo Dam on the Susquehanna River. The reservoir behind the dam has gradually been filling and, once filled, would lead to a huge increase in the amount of sediment reaching the Bay.

District of Columbia: Promote green development techniques, including the use of green infrastructure, such as planting urban trees, to reduce runoff.

Chesapeake Bay Commission: Work with Pennsylvania on a biofuels summit to promote cellulosic ethanol.

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Lead the region's action to secure funding from Congress to upgrade the Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant in the District of Columbia, which is the largest single nutrient discharger in the Bay watershed.

Continue work to build support for Bay-related activities in the Farm Bill.

Delaware: Sponsor a workshop on carbon sequestration to help identify activities on agricultural and forest lands that contribute to Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts and absorb carbon dioxide, which contributes to global climate change.

West Virginia: Work with Maryland to improve local government involvement by focusing on upstream localities.

(Reprinted from the January 2008 issue, [Chesapeake Bay Journal](#))

Links: [Progress of Chesapeake Bay Cleanup](#)

Chesapeake Bay Commission Reports Progress During First Meeting Of New Year

Gearing up for the new year, the [Chesapeake Bay Commission](#) held a productive meeting last week in Annapolis, Maryland, reported Sen. Mike Waugh (R-York).

Rep. Art Hershey (R-Chester) was elected Chairman of the Commission during the meeting. Other Pennsylvania members include: Rep. Michael Sturla (D-Lancaster), Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty, Sen. Mike Brubaker (R-Lancaster), Rep. Russ Fairchild (R-Mifflin), and George Wolff, a citizen member of the Commission.

Among the many topics discussed during the Commission's first quarterly meeting of the year was a plan to co-host a Cellulosic Biofuels Summit in September 2008, along with Gov. Rendell.

The Summit will be held in conjunction with the third quarterly Commission meeting, and is a follow-up to one of the recommendations from the Commission's [Biofuels and the Bay](#) report released in 2007.

"This Cellulosic Biofuels Summit is timely considering Pennsylvania's efforts to move towards energy independence through the use of alternative fuels," said Sen. Waugh, who has introduced [Special Session Senate Bill 41](#) to encourage the planting and use of switch grass and other perennial grasses in the making of cellulosic ethanol.

In addition to the summit, the Commission has agreed to support new funding for conservation practices in the Federal Farm Bill, as well as champion efforts to upgrade the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant in Washington, D.C. The largest treatment plant in the Bay area, it needs improvements to reduce the nitrogen pollution being released into the Bay.

Similar efforts for Pennsylvania are being discussed, and will be on the agenda for the state's Commission Delegation meetings throughout the year.

Additional topics at the meeting included a strategy to build state-local partnerships to further implement the forest and land conservation goals recently established by the Chesapeake Executive Council and innovative solutions to accelerate agricultural conservation efforts in the Bay watershed.

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The election of the 2008 Commission Officers were held, and the Chairmanship, as was slated, returned to Pennsylvania with the election of Rep. Art Hershey as the 2008 Commission Chairman.

"I am pleased that Rep. Hershey will be leading us in 2008," said Sen. Waugh. "He is a good man who is very dedicated to the efforts of the Commission."

Rep. Hershey announced his retirement from the House at the end of this year.

Created in 1980, the Chesapeake Bay Commission is a tri-state group that serves in an advisory role to the members of the General Assemblies of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia on matters of Bay-wide concern. Of its 21 members, 15 are lawmakers – five each from PA, MD, and VA.

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On the Hill

Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to voting session the week of January 14, then off a week for Martin Luther King’s birthday, and then back on January 28.

You can watch the [Senate Floor Session](#) and [House Floor Session](#) live online.

On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House published floor Calendars for January 14 and committee schedules—

Calendars

House (January 14): [House Resolution 506](#) (George-D-Clearfield) directing DEP and the PUC to evaluate measures to manage the transition from electricity price caps and to minimize the impact on residential customers.

Senate (January 14): [Senate Bill 497](#) (Robbins-R-Mercer) limiting the liability of landowners making property available for recreational purposes.

Committees

House: the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Resolution 465](#) (Hanna-D-Center) urging the Federal Emergency Management Agency to review and update flood insurance maps every 10 years and [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate gas and energy prices; and the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee meets to discuss 2008 Committee business.

Senate: the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) making changes to the Bituminous Coal Mine Safety Act in part based on recommendations made after the 2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue.

Other: the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee Environmental Issues Forum featuring Kathleen Cowles Paul, Director of the [PA Center for Environmental Education](#).

Bills Introduced

The following bill of interest were introduced this week—

Utility Shutoff: [House Bill 2134](#) (Preston-D-Allegheny) making changes to the utility shutoff, reconnection requirements.

Heating Oil Price Freeze: Senate Bill 1240 (Rhoades-R-Schuylkill) would freeze the price of heating oil at the price of heating oil at the time the bill is signed into law. (*not online yet*) **NewsClip:** [Rhoades Introduces Heating Oil Price Freeze](#)

Senate Committee Set to Consider Mine Safety Law Update

The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets on January 15 to consider [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) making the first comprehensive revisions to the Bituminous Coal Mine Safety Act in 45 years, in-part based on recommendations made after the [2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue](#).



The bill would—

- Creates a Coal Mine Safety Board to promulgate regulations and continually review and recommend the use of new mine safety technologies. The Board would be composed of representatives from the industry, labor, and DEP. A key shortcoming of our current law is the inability of any entity to promulgate regulations;
- Provides the specifications for emergency shelter chambers in underground mines;
- Better ensures the availability and transfer of maps to DEP, as well as giving DEP statewide authority to copy all mine maps; enables DEP to establish a central map repository database;
- Brings state law in line with federal standards where appropriate;
- Eliminates obsolete language and provides clarity where practicable; and
- Provides for greater responsibility for operators to ensure the safety within mines.

Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) serves as Majority Chair of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) serves as Minority Chair.

For more information, visit the [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee webpage](#).

Flood Mapping, Energy Price Resolutions to Be Considered by House Committee

House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider resolutions urging an update of the state's flood control maps and a Congressional investigation of energy prices. The resolutions include:

- [House Resolution 465](#) (Hanna-D-Center) urging the Federal Emergency Management Agency to review and update flood insurance maps every 10 years; and
- [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate gas and energy prices.

Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) serves as Majority Chair and Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) serves as Minority Chair.

Senate Appropriations Releases Budget Hearing Schedule

The Senate Appropriations Committee this week released its schedule of budget hearings starting February 25 and ending March 6. The Governor's Budget Address will be February 5. Here are some highlights—

February 25: Budget Secretary Budget Hearing, 3:00

February 28: Department of Agriculture, 9:00

Department of Health, 10:30

March 4: Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, 9:00

Department of Transportation, 1:15

March 5: Department of Environmental Protection, 3:00

March 6: Department of Community and Economic Development, 1:15

All hearings will be held in Hearing Room 1, North Office Building.

Sen. Gib Armstrong (R-Lancaster) serves as Majority Chair of the Committee and Sen. Gerald LaValle (D-Beaver) serves as Minority Chair.

Sen. Vance Proposes Third-Party Study of Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Costs

Sen. Pat Vance (R-Cumberland) this week announced plans to introduce a Senate resolution that would require a third-party study of the costs for sewage treatment facilities to execute the [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy](#).

Pennsylvania has been working with other states over the last two decades to implement programs to improve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay. In 2005 the governor unveiled Pennsylvania's bay strategy.

The Strategy was designed by the Department of Environmental Protection to implement multi-state agreements intended to achieve significant reductions in the pollutants that have degraded the bay by 2010. These pollutants can come from a variety of sources: agriculture, stormwater runoff, wastewater treatment plants, septic systems, forested lands and atmospheric deposition.

“A variety of municipalities have voiced concerns about the costs to implement the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy,” Sen. Vance said. “The Department of Environmental Protection maintains compliance costs could be as low as \$190 million. Municipalities believe it could exceed \$1 billion. By having a third-party study the costs, we will have a better handle on it and be in a better position to consider requests for state financial assistance.”

The resolution would direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to review estimates of the costs that sewage treatment facilities will incur to comply with the Bay Strategy.

A 2006 resolution authored by Sen. Vance and Rep. Jerry Nailor (R-Mechanicsburg) delayed implementation of the strategy for nine months so public and legislative input could be considered. This input resulted in revisions regarding the implementation and calculation of discharge levels for nitrogen and phosphorus.

“Since 2005, I have been working to have the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection address issues surrounding the strategy,” Sen. Vance said. “While we have made progress, more study and work needs to be done. The strategy has the potential to significantly increase sewer rates for customers. It is critical that when undertaking something of this magnitude that it be thoroughly vetted.”

Environmental Issues Forum Features PA Center for Environmental Ed

The January 14 Environmental Issues Forum sponsored by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) will feature a presentation by Kathleen Cowles Paul, Director of the [PA Center for Environmental Education](#).

The program will be held at noon in Room 205 Ryan Building.

PCEE was created through executive order in 1997 to "support and facilitate environmental education on a statewide basis." The center is located at Slippery Rock University and is administered by the State System of Higher Education.

Legislation-- [Senate Bill 356](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango)—that would establish the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education in law was passed by the Senate and is now in the House Appropriations Committee.

The Joint Committee is chaired by Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) is vice-chair.

Other News

Drought Watch Lifted in 34 Counties, 20 Counties Remain in Drought Watch

Due to improving conditions in many parts of the state, the Department of Environmental this week lifted the [drought watch declaration](#) in 34 counties and upgraded Clinton County from drought warning to drought watch.

A drought watch remains in 20 counties where conditions are improving, but have not fully recovered.

A drought watch is the first and least severe of the state's three drought declarations. It calls for voluntary conservation of 5 percent of water use. Under a drought warning, also a voluntary measure, residents are asked to reduce their water consumption

by 15 percent. A drought emergency calls for mandatory reductions in non-essential water use.

The 34 counties removed from the drought watch are Armstrong, Bedford, Blair, Bradford, Butler, Carbon, Chester, Clarion, Columbia, Delaware, Erie, Forest, Fulton, Greene, Lancaster, Lawrence, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, McKean, Mercer, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Snyder, Somerset, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Venango, Washington, Wyoming and York.

Counties that remain under drought watch status are Adams, Berks, Bucks, Cambria, Cameron, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Cumberland, Dauphin, Elk, Franklin, Juniata, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Potter, Schuylkill and Union.

DEP first declared a drought watch for 58 counties on Aug. 6.

For the latest on drought conditions and tips on how to save water, visit DEP's [Drought webpage](#).

DEP Recognizes Wellhead Protection Efforts in Bucks, Montgomery Counties



The Department of Environmental Protection recognized three southeastern public water suppliers this week for voluntary efforts to protect drinking water sources.

Southeast Regional Director Joseph A. Feola said the suppliers—Riegelsville Water Authority and Springfield Township in Bucks County, and the East Greenville Borough Water Department in Montgomery County—have implemented successful wellhead protection programs that guard public and environmental health in the respective regions.

“Wellhead protection is a commonsense approach to guarding public health,” said Feola. “By identifying and minimizing threats to groundwater, we ensure the highest drinking water quality, safeguard residents from water-borne illnesses, and support the economic viability of these communities.”

Source water protection programs are locally designed, voluntary efforts to protect drinking water sources used by public water systems. The programs may take the form of watershed protection for surface water sources, wellhead protection for groundwater sources, or a combination of approaches.

The Riegelsville plan updates a protection area for one of its wells and includes a detailed hydrogeologic study of all three wells in the system. The Springfield Township plan is a joint effort with Lower Saucon Township, Northampton County, and includes groundwater protection ordinances in both townships to protect a shared resource. The East Greenville plan addresses the protection of a well and a surface water intake on Perkiomen Creek and recommends measures to protect the upper reaches and tributaries of the creek.

All three plans include public education activities.

A wellhead protection program generally includes forming a steering committee, delineating the area to be protected, identifying contamination sources, educating the public, establishing contingency and emergency plans for water supply protection, and investigating new drinking water sources.

During this process, a water supplier will identify known environmental contamination sites, such as leaking underground storage tanks and Superfund sites. The supplier will also identify potential impacts to water supplies from, among other things,

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registered underground storage tanks, hazardous waste generators, or land use associated with agricultural, commercial and industrial operations.

The development and implementation of a wellhead protection program generally takes several years to plan and obtain DEP approval. With the addition of these three systems, there are now five approved programs in the southeast region. Each plan has been tailored to its system's resources and constraints.

For more information, visit DEP's [Source Water Protection webpage](#).

Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Grant Applications Due February 29

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service, will provide grants to support innovative conservation practices on farms in the Chesapeake Bay region under its [Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund](#)

Proposals are due February 29.

Grants of up to \$1 million each will be awarded to organizations working directly with farmers to improve water quality and restore habitats.

The Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund pools federal dollars from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Forest Service, and now NRCS, to make strategic investments in the Chesapeake Bay's restoration.

For more information, visit the [Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund webpage](#), contact Amanda Bassow at 202-857-0166 or send email to: amanda.bassow@nfwf.org.

PRWA Seeks Nominations for Annual Conference Awards

The [Pennsylvania Rural Water Association](#) is accepting nominations for the [Tribute to Excellence Awards](#) to be presented at its 2008 PRWA Conference banquet in April.

The deadline for nominations is February 1.

Seven awards will be presented to dedicated operators and exceptional water and wastewater systems throughout Pennsylvania. Nominees are required to be PRWA members.

Each nominee will be recognized at the April 3 awards banquet by fellow managers, operators, and board members of the PRWA community.

To make a nomination, [download a nomination form](#).

EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program Seeks to Preserve 100,000 Acres of Forests in PA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [Chesapeake Bay Program](#) announced a goal of permanently protecting 695,000 acres of forests by 2020, with an interim goal of protecting 266,400 acres by 2012.

These goals include 15,000 additional acres in Delaware; 250,000 acres in Maryland; 100,000 in Pennsylvania; and 315,000 in Virginia, through national, state or local programs offered by government agencies or private land trusts.

Forests cover about 58 percent of the Chesapeake Bay watershed thereby producing less nutrient runoff because their roots and leaves absorb nitrogen. It is estimated that the

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region loses about 100 acres of forest a day and forest loss at this rate could increase nitrogen loads to the bay by 1,300 pounds per day.

For more information, visit EPA's [Chesapeake Bay Program webpage](#).

DEP Invites Comments on Six Watershed TMDLs in Three Counties

The Department of Environmental Protection this week invited comments on Total Maximum Daily Load Plans for six watersheds in three counties. They include:

Monongahela River Watershed, Allegheny County: DEP will hold a public meeting on January 22 at 1:00 p.m. at the Greensburg District Mining Office to take comments on the plan. Contact: Martin Picklo at 724-925-5517 or sending email to: mpkcklo@state.pa.us.

Streets Run Watershed, Allegheny County: DEP will hold a public meeting on January 22 at 1:00 p.m. at the Greensburg District Mining Office to take comments on the plan. Contact: Bernie Robb at 724-925-5524 or send email to: brobb@state.pa.us.

Georges Creek Watershed, Fayette County: DEP will hold a public meeting on January 23 at 1:00 p.m. in the Greensburg District Mining Office to take comments on the plan. Contact: Martin Picklo at 724-925-5517 or sending email to: mpkcklo@state.pa.us.

York Run Watershed, Fayette County: DEP will hold a public meeting on January 23 at 1:00 p.m. at the Greensburg District Mining Office to take comments on the plan. Contact: Paul Cestoni at 724-925-5518 or send email to: pcestoni@state.pa.us.

Laural Run Watershed, Somerset County: DEP will hold a public meeting on January 24 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cambria District Mining Office to take comments on the plan. Contact: John Conrad at 814-472-1894 or send email to: joconrad@state.pa.us.

Wilson Creek Watershed, Somerset County: DEP will hold a public meeting on January 24 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cambria District Mining Office to take comments on the plan. Contact: Thomas Pongrac at 814-472-1892 or send email to tpongrac@state.pa.us.

To see a copy of these TMDLs and for more information, visit DEP's [TMDL webpage](#).

Calling All Young Artists: Clean Water Begins and Ends With You



The [Partnership for the Delaware Estuary](#) is now accepting entries on behalf of the Philadelphia Water Department for the 2008 “[Clean Water Begins and Ends With You](#)” Drawing Contest, an annual art competition for kindergarten through 12th-grade students throughout the City of Philadelphia.

Deadline for entries is February 22.

For the past nine years, the nonprofit National Estuary Program has partnered with the [Philadelphia Water Department](#) to hold this popular

contest, the purpose of which is to educate thousands of children every year about stormwater runoff pollution, the leading cause of water contamination throughout the Delaware Estuary.

First-place drawings from four age categories will be featured on car-card advertisements celebrating the 38th anniversary of Earth Day. These, along with 12 other award-winning entries, will be published in a calendar available for free to the public. Other prizes to be awarded at a ceremony in April include framed certificates, a variety of art supplies, and gift cards ranging from \$25 to \$100.

“Each year we honor the winners and their teachers at the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center,” said Ed Grusheski, general manager of public affairs at the PWD. “It’s a great setting in which to reward these youngsters for their artistic achievements in an effort to educate the public about protecting the region’s valuable water resources.”

The first school to submit 100 qualified entries or more by the February 22 deadline will receive a \$500 gift card for school supplies. And each teacher of a winning student will receive a \$25 gift card toward the purchase of art supplies.

Stormwater runoff occurs whenever water from rain or melted snow flows over watertight surfaces such as driveways, sidewalks, and streets. Rather than naturally soaking into the ground, this stormwater picks up debris, chemicals, and other pollutants on its way into storm drains. It is then frequently discharged directly into the water bodies we use for swimming, fishing, drinking water and more.

To learn more about this form of non-point source pollution and the “Clean Water Begins and Ends With You” Drawing Contest, please call Dee Ross at 800-445-4935, extension 106 or visit the [Partnership for the Delaware Estuary website](#).

Erosion and Stormwater Inspection Workshop in Westmoreland January 25

To help inspectors better know when these erosion and stormwater controls are being installed and maintained properly, the Westmoreland County Conservation District will host a short course for construction site inspectors called “Verifying Proper Installation of Site Controls,” on January 25.

The workshop will start from 7:30 a.m. to noon, at the District office on Donohoe Road in Greensburg.

Highways, utility lines, housing developments, shopping centers and just about any major construction undertaking has inspectors who frequently visit the jobsite to make sure that the work is being done properly.

One of the many things they have to keep an eye on are the temporary and permanent controls installed on the construction site to keep the loosened soil out of any nearby streams and to control the rainwater that runs off the site.

The informative event will include a discussion of how controls are detailed on construction site plans and their proper sequencing, and the proper installation of erosion controls such as channels, turf reinforcement mat, and rock construction entrances and loading areas.

Attendees also will receive information about the proper construction of sediment basins and traps, and the proper installation of both utility lines and stormwater management controls such as porous pavements, wet ponds, and forebays.

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Presenters include technical experts from the District in the areas of erosion and sediment control and stormwater control, and Darl Rosenquest, PE, from the Department of Environmental Protection.

Breakfast is included in the course fee of \$20. Space is limited and the last day to register is January 18.

To register, visit the [Westmoreland Conservation District's website](#), call 724-837-5271, ext. 210; or send email to: christie@wcdpa.com.

Nutrient Credits Used to Reduce Impact of Susquehanna County Development

The Department of Environmental Protection this week approved the use of [nutrient credits](#) to reduce the water quality impact of a planned resort community in Ararat Township, Susquehanna County.

The Preserve at Dunn Lake becomes the first new development project in northeastern Pennsylvania to use the cost-effective alternative.

"After thoroughly evaluating the factors associated with this National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit, the developers chose to apply for it using a cost-effective alternative to reducing pollution runoff," said DEP Northeast Regional Director Michael Bedrin.

Bedrin explained that the developer was required to evaluate non-discharge alternatives, conduct a social-economic justification analysis for the project, and use the department's water quality anti-degradation regulations as part of its application and decision to participate in the nutrient credit trading program. The requirements were also necessary given discharges from the development will be to a high quality cold water fishery.

The Preserve at Dunn Lake will include 37 vacation home sites and a 30-room inn with a restaurant and banquet facilities. DEP granted planning approval for the project in July 2006.

The permit allows the resort community to discharge 19,000 gallons of treated sewage per day to the East Branch of the Lackawanna River.

Most of the Chesapeake Bay, and many of its tributaries, have been listed as impaired by the federal Clean Water Act. As part of a multi-state effort to restore the bay's health, new requirements water quality standards for nutrients and sediment pollution were enacted.

This state's nutrient reduction plan includes efforts to minimize impacts from point sources, like sewage treatment plants, as well as non-point sources, such as agricultural runoff.

The credits that are traded in the program can be purchased by developers, which allows them to have a certain amount of nutrients in their discharge equivalent to what has been purchased and removed elsewhere in the watershed.

For this project, the developer entered into a contract with the Red Barn Trading Company, a Lancaster firm that represents farmers who agree to remove manure from their fields and ship it to areas outside of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The manure would be used as a soil conditioner in nutrient deficient areas outside of the watershed.

"The nutrient trading concept has shown itself to be successful in reducing overall levels of nitrogen and phosphorus," said Bedrin. "Rather than depending on expensive capital upgrades to the project, nutrient trading provides a practical and cost-effective means of reaching our state's federally mandated water quality goals."

For more information, visit DEP's [Nutrient Trading webpage](#).

Time to Renew Your Aging (Infrastructure) System, February 7-8 Workshop

The [PA Section American Water Works Association](#) is sponsoring a two-day workshop in Philadelphia on new tools to help renew aging infrastructure on February 7-8.

Water systems carry the lifeblood of modern society, providing the service needed to maintain public health and drive community growth. The stewards of these systems are faced with finding water-main renewal technologies capable of sustaining long-term community needs.

This seminar builds on asset management principles, provides a structured framework for rationalizing water-main renewal technology, and supports participants in filling their "renewal tool box" with material and installation options compatible with their objectives and regional environmental constraints. Participants will experience hands-on use of the tools presented.

This workshop would be helpful to asset managers, utility managers, capital planners, engineering staff, technical staff and distribution operators.

The instructors will be Chris Macey, PE National Technical Specialist, UMA Engineering Ltd., Winnipeg, Manitoba and Peter Oram, Sr. Associate Metcalf and Eddy Inc., Atlanta, Georgia.

For more information and to register, visit the [Time to Renew Your Aging System Workshop webpage](#).

Allegheny Land Trust Protects Last Undeveloped Island in Allegheny County



The [Allegheny Land Trust](#) announced the protection of the 14-acre Sycamore Island located in the Allegheny River near Blawnox. The [Colcom Foundation](#) provided full funding for the conservation of the island.

The last remaining privately owned undeveloped island in Allegheny County, Sycamore Island hosts a unique floodplain hardwood forest – among the most rare plant community types globally.

The Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory included Sycamore Island as part of the “Allegheny River Biological Diversity Area” which has a ranking of “High Significance.”

“The conservation of Sycamore Island through the generous support of the Colcom Foundation ensures that this undeveloped island and its ecological, educational and recreational benefits will be forever protected,” said Roy Kraynyk, Executive Director of the Allegheny Land Trust, a local nonprofit land conservation organization that successfully negotiated the purchase.

“This is an extremely exciting project,” said Colcom Program Director Carol Zagrocki. “Sycamore Island is truly a rare conservation opportunity in the county.”

Recreational boaters frequently visit Sycamore Island, which has been proposed as a docking location for the Allegheny River Trail project of the Friends of the Riverfront.

Conservation of the island will create a unique opportunity for the public to visit and experience a wild and natural island within an urban county.

Additionally, Allegheny Land Trust hopes to use Sycamore Island as a demonstration site for education about invasive species removal and water quality improvements along rivers, creating a special model for future study.

“We will face some stewardship challenges such as removing debris that has collected on the island over the years from floods,” said ALT’s Project Committee Chair, Tim Stanny, “but we are committed to fulfilling our mission of caring for the local lands we protect.”

One of Sycamore Island’s most unique characteristics is that the 14-acre island is actually growing in size due to its location on the inside of a river bend where silt and sediment are deposited.

Allegheny Land Trust is celebrating its 15th year protecting land in Allegheny and Washington Counties. Since incorporating in 1993, Allegheny Land Trust has protected more than 1,350 acres in 18 municipalities.

To learn more, visit the [Allegheny Land Trust website](#) or call 412-741-2750.

Reduce Costs by Using Low Impact Development Practices

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has released a new report "[Reducing Stormwater Costs through Low Impact Development Strategies and Practices](#)," which contains 17 case studies from across North America that show the economic viability of LID practices.

Using these practices in construction projects can lower costs while improving environmental results.

LID practices are innovative stormwater management practices to manage urban stormwater runoff at its source. The goal is to mimic the way water moved through an area before it was developed by using design techniques that infiltrate, evapotranspire, and reuse runoff close to its source.

Some common LID practices include rain gardens, grassed swales, cisterns, rain barrels, permeable pavements and green roofs. LID practices increasingly are used by communities across the country to help protect and restore water quality.

The report highlights examples that, in most cases, reduce project costs while improving environmental performance. Total capital savings ranged from 15 to 80 percent, with a few exceptions in which LID project costs were higher than conventional stormwater management costs. As LID practices become more common, it is likely that they will become cheaper to use.

[A copy of the report is available online.](#)

New PCEE Environmental Ed Connections Newsletter Now Online

The [January EE Connections](#), the environmental education newsletter published by the [Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education](#), is now available online.

Highlight: The PCEE maintains a list of Pennsylvania organizations that often have environmental education positions available. Check out this list on the [website](#).

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General News: DEP Awards Three Million in Recycling Performance Grants, Calendar Highlights Threatened Pennsylvania Flora, PNC Bank Trademarks 'Green Branch' Term, Training for Home Energy Assessments Offered

K-12 News: 'Protect Our Watersheds' Art Contest, Award Creates New Programming for RiverQuest, Chester County Schools Recognized for Biofuel Use, Recycling Curricula Added to Online Library, Journey North's 'Citizen Science' Project, 'Creating a Green Neighborhood' Essay Contest

Higher Education: International 'Global Excellence' Conference Call for Papers, Sustainable Food Purchasing Policy Guide Released, Web Course Offered on Climate Neutral Planning, Villanova University Unveils New Solar Electric System

Professional Development: Keystone Coldwater Conservation Conference, February 22-23, Wild Resources Symposium, February 28, Online EETAP Courses Announced, Scholarships Available

Grants/Awards: WREN Accepting 2008 Grant Applications, Soliciting Nominations for Government Leaders in Conservation, REAP Guidelines, Application Available to Farmers 'Toyota TAPESTRY Grants' Still Available, Entries for Children's Contests Due Jan. 31

Contributions welcome! The Center receives news and information from a variety of sources across Pennsylvania and beyond. We appreciate all of the organizations, agencies and individuals who provide EE services and share their relevant information.

If you would like to contribute to future issues of EE Connections, please submit your article before the 15th of the month. Articles should be of statewide interest and are subject to space availability.

Share EE Connections! If you know of others who would appreciate receiving EE Connections, please complete the [on-line form](#) or call 724-738-9020.

To see all of the resources available, visit the [Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education](#) website.

PA Assn. for Environmental Ed 2008 Conference – Early Registration Due

“[LEEAP IN! Linking Environmental Education and Play in Nature](#),” is the theme of the 2008 PA Association of Environmental Education Conference set for February 28 to March 2 in Antiochian Village Camp and Conference Center near Ligonier, Pa.

The deadline for early-bird registrations is January 15.

Conference tracks include Human Health and the Environment, Best Practices in the Field, Outdoor Family Fun, and EE in the Classroom.

A full complement of workshops, on-site field studies, and off-site field experiences will be offered throughout the weekend, along with exhibits, entertainers, great food, and conference fun!

The 2008 conference committee is pleased to announce that Rick Flood and Joseph Cornell are confirmed as 2008 conference keynote speakers.

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Rick Flood is a sustainability expert with 15 years executive leadership in the environmental education field. His expertise lies in sustainable systems for energy, buildings, water conservation, waste assimilation, and food systems.

Mr. Flood's presentation, Environmental Education's Future: Birds, Bugs, and Bogs?, will kick-off the 2008 conference weekend, as he invites us to consider environmental education in the context of climate change, species extinction, and global consumption and to ask ourselves, "Is it our job to foster generations of nature-lovers, or should we be creating people devoted to sustainability?"

Rick will help us to explore themes that are at the core of what we do and why, and challenge and inspire us to imagine what might be.

Joseph Cornell is one the most inspiring nature educators in the world today. His first book, Sharing Nature with Children, sparked a worldwide revolution in nature education and became a classic.

His six Sharing Nature Books have been translated into twenty languages. In 1978, Mr. Cornell founded Sharing Nature Worldwide, a popular and highly acclaimed nature awareness program. He is the honorary president of the Japan Nature Game Association, an organization of 11,000 leaders who use and promote his nature education philosophy and methods in Japan and Southeast Asia.

Mr. Cornell will present Balancing Science with Love, at the PAEE Annual Banquet on Saturday, March 1, 2008. Joseph will discuss the unique role that calm feeling, or intuition, plays in our understanding, empathy, and desire to act and will provide many innovative techniques for encouraging love and care for the Earth.

Prior to his keynote presentation, Joseph is facilitating an on-site field study entitled Sharing Nature, an opportunity to experience many nature awareness games from Joseph Cornell's Sharing Nature books. Participants will also experience Flow Learning-- a powerful tool to lead people from their present level of awareness into closer contact with nature.

For more information and to register, visit the [LEEAP IN! Linking Environmental Education and Play in Nature webpage](#).

Environmental Education Resources Supported By EPA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has supported a variety of [environmental education resources](#) for students, teachers and the public. Here is a sampling of what's available—

- Elementary school teachers will find the [2007 Love-A-Tree kit](#) on land conservation a valuable addition to Virginia studies and nature resource science;
- For the summer, there are the 2007 [summer professional development](#) opportunities; Teachers can bring the world of water into their classroom with [Project WET](#);
- Teach about wildlife with [Project WILD](#);
- Climb into the world of forestry with [Project Learning Tree](#);
- Read the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program's definition of a [Meaningful Watershed Education Experience](#); and
- Learn more about [outdoor classrooms](#) and how you can start one of your own!

For more information, visit EPA's [Teacher Resources webpage](#).

Healthy Home Solutions Workshop Offers Personal Sustainable Living Tips



[Springside School](#) in Philadelphia will host a Health Home Solution class on January 29 that will focus on ways to enhance the health and performance of your living space offered by school alumna Lili Wright of [Wright Design](#).

Learn where your valuable resources are being wasted. Learn ways to incorporate simple, healthy, and enjoyable practices that will revolutionize your quality of life and how to avoid health hazards in your lifestyle.

Lili's work has been featured in interior design magazines such as *Atlanta Homes and Lifestyles*, *Style*, and *Veranda*, and is showcased in many prestigious residences across the country.

Wright's eco-effective approach to interior design won her the 2004 Watershed Hero Award for Innovation. She is a member of the editorial advisory board of [www.GreenHomeGuide.com](#), a web-based resource for homeowners, and she actively speaks to local groups on topics of healthy living, sustainable design, and building practices.

Most recently, Wright was selected to join the cast of a new TV show currently in development called Going Green.

The class will be held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. and is open to the community; there is a fee for the program.

January 18 Rachel Carson Forum Examines Environmental Justice Partnerships

The first Rachel Carson Forum of 2008 on January 18 will feature the documentary “Environmental Justice: The Power of Partnerships.”

The film was produced to educate viewers about EPA's [Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model](#) which helps communities work to solve local environmental and public health problems.

The forum will be held from noon to 1 p.m. in the second floor auditorium of the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg.

The film is a documentary about the [ReGenesis Environmental Justice Partnership](#). ReGenesis, a local Spartanburg South Carolina non-profit organization, started with a \$20,000 grant from the EPA in 1999. Since that time, the partnership has worked with private and public organizations to leverage over \$166 million in funding.

ReGenesis has worked with government and industry to cleanup the Arkwright municipal dumpsite, a former fertilizer plant, and six brownfield sites. They also demolished 184 old, substandard public housing units and built more than 500 new, single-family and multi-family units for rental and home ownership.

The Rachel Carson Forum on Future of the Environment is a monthly mid-day speaker/film series that seeks to stimulate discussion of important environmental and sustainable development issues.

DEP's Office of Policy, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Office of Conservation Science and the [Pennsylvania Environmental Resource Consortium](#) organize the series.

For more information, contact Will Delavan by sending email to: wdelavan@state.pa.us or calling 717-772-5643.

Three Mile Island License Renewal Submitted to Nuclear Regulatory Commission

AmerGen Energy Co. this week submitted an application to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to extend the operating license of [Three Mile Island Unit 1 Generating Station](#) by 20 years.

Three Mile Island is an 852-megawatt generating station in Dauphin County. Its current operating license expires in April 2014. NRC approval of the application would extend the license until April 2034.

“This is an important milestone for the employees of Three Mile Island and the residents of central Pennsylvania,” said Russell West, TMI Site Vice President. “AmerGen’s commitment to continue the operation of Three Mile Island means 20 more years of clean, safe and reliable energy for our region.”

Supervisor Daryl LeHew of Londonderry Township said. “I believe this is very good news for our community. Three Mile Island is a clean source of electricity, is a major contributor to the local economy and plays a major role in supporting charitable causes important to many residents in the area.”

A license renewal team has collectively worked 60,000 hours preparing the 1,800-page application. This involved review of thousands of documents, a detailed review of equipment and component performance and a rigorous review of the existing maintenance and engineering programs to ensure that the station is capable of maintaining plant systems over the extended license period.

AmerGen also conducted a study to ensure there will be no increased environmental impacts from the extended operating life of the plant.

Three Mile Island is subject to an ongoing, rigorous program of oversight and inspection by the NRC, led by two full-time inspectors at the station, as well as supplemental inspectors from the NRC regional headquarters. The plant has its own extensive programs in preventive and corrective maintenance, equipment testing and monitoring, and equipment replacement.

The NRC is expected to spend 22 to 30 months to review the application before making a decision. The public will have opportunities to participate in the process. Three Mile Island began commercial operations in September 1974. The plant has an excellent operating record including setting four separate world records for continuous days of operation for a pressurized water reactor, one of two primary reactor designs in the United States. Of 439 operating commercial reactors worldwide, 264 are pressurized water reactors.

Since purchasing Three Mile Island in December 1999, AmerGen has invested more than \$100 million in upgrades to plant equipment and facilities, not including security enhancements. The company expects to invest another \$300 million during the fall 2009 refueling outage to replace both of the plant’s steam generators and make other equipment enhancements. The company spends another \$10 million annually to ensure plant mechanical systems meet or exceed requirements.

Three Mile Island safely produces enough carbon-free electricity to power about 800,000 homes. Each year it operates, Three Mile Island avoids more than 5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide that would be generated from a replacement coal-fired plant.

The station plays a positive role in the economy of Pennsylvania, annually providing about \$170 million in statewide economic impact through direct and indirect

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compensation and the purchase of materials and supplies. This includes an economic impact of nearly \$50 million in Dauphin County. In addition, Three Mile Island and its employees contributed nearly \$250,000 to the United Way and other non-profit organizations in the area in 2007.

The NRC has approved license renewal for 48 generating stations and 38 other license renewal applications are pending or have been announced. At Exelon, the NRC approved license extensions for the Peach Bottom Generating Station in York County, Pa. in 2003 and the Dresden and Quad Cities Generating Stations in Illinois in 2004. The NRC is currently reviewing a license renewal application for Oyster Creek Generating Station in New Jersey.

For more information, visit the [Three Mile Island Unit 1 Generating Station website](#).

3 PA Landfill Gas to Energy Projects Recognized by EPA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week recognized the accomplishments of seven landfill methane partners that are generating renewable energy while reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including three in Pennsylvania.

The [Landfill Methane Outreach Program awards](#) were given out at the 11th Annual Landfill Methane Outreach Program Conference & Project Expo in Washington, D.C., The Pennsylvania awardees included:

Projects of the Year in PA: [Greentree High Btu Landfill Gas Project, Kersey, Pa.](#) - This project is one of the largest landfill gas projects in the country. The landfill gas is upgraded to natural gas quality and utilized in clean-burning power generation equipment to generate renewable power.

[Southeastern Chester County Refuse Authority, Chester County, Pa.](#) - Relying on its staff and their motivation to succeed with minimal outside assistance, SECCRA Power forged ahead and developed this landfill gas energy project through a number of innovative approaches, including joining a regional transmission organization to sell green power.

"This is a singular honor for our authority and our 24 member municipalities," said SECCRA Chairman Richard Cairns. "Our board and our staff take pride in a forward-thinking attitude and a steadfast commitment to serving our communities. This award signifies that SECCRA is a leader in responsible environmental stewardship and the development of green energy."

Community Partner in PA: [Greater Lebanon Refuse Authority, Lebanon, Pa.](#) - GLRA and PPL Renewable Energy created and built a Renewable Energy Education Facility that serves as an educational forum for local, national, and international visitors. With the goal of "empowering our future leaders with green energy," the project demonstrates the power of renewable energy from a 3.2 megawatt landfill gas energy project, 2,000 watt wind turbine, and 1,000 watt solar array (multiple solar panels).

"Not only does the facility generate electricity from a renewable fuel, but it also helps to raise awareness in the community about the benefits of alternative energy," said Kurt Zwerko, vice president for PPL Renewable Energy. "This award recognizes the efforts of PPL Renewable Energy to work

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with our partners to develop projects that benefit the environment and the community."

"Landfill gas energy projects play an important role in meeting the environmental and energy challenges of the 21st Century," said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. "By turning methane waste into wealth, EPA and our partners are helping build a clean and plentiful energy supply for our country."

Methane, a primary component of landfill gas, is a greenhouse gas over 20 times as potent as carbon dioxide at trapping heat in the atmosphere. Nationwide, there are approximately 435 projects that harness landfill gas to produce renewable energy.

In 2007 alone, these projects provided over 10.5 billion kilowatt hours of electricity and delivered 79 billion cubic feet per year of landfill gas to corporate and government users, and produced energy equivalent to powering roughly 810,000 homes and heating nearly 547,000 homes each year.

For 2007, EPA's LMOP is pleased to recognize projects that took innovative approaches to utilize landfill gas while delivering environmental and economic benefits.

This year's award winners demonstrate creativity, persistence, and leadership in developing landfill gas energy projects that benefit the local and global community.

EPA's [Landfill Methane Outreach Program](#) is a voluntary assistance and partnership program that reduces greenhouse gas emissions by supporting landfill gas energy project development.

The program also assists countries throughout the world in developing landfill methane reduction projects through the international Methane to Markets Partnership. Since 1994, LMOP has assisted in developing more than 330 landfill gas projects in the United States, reducing methane emissions by over 24 million metric tons of carbon equivalent.

For more information, visit the [Landfill Methane Outreach Program webpage](#).
NewsClip: [EPA Honors SECCRA With Award](#)

PROP Announces Municipal Recycling Meeting for January 24

The municipal committee of the [Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania](#) will hold the second of two public meetings for anyone from the public or private sector involved with municipal collection programs on January 24.

The first meeting was held January 10 in Murrysville and the second will be on January 24 (snow date February 1) in Program Room 2 at Harrisburg's Fort Hunter Mansion.

PROP staff will discuss legislative news and new tools for municipalities and DEP staff will be in attendance to discuss municipal requirements, funding, and enforcement issues.

For more information and times, contact Jan Arnold, PROP Program Manager, by sending email to: jarnold@proprecycles.org or calling 814-742-7777.

Save the Date: 2008 Recycling and Composting Conference July 30-August 1

The [Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania](#) will hold its annual [Recycling and Composting Conference](#) in Gettysburg July 30 to August 1.

PROP is also hosting the [National Recycling Congress Conference](#) in Pittsburgh September 21-24.

[Download a PROP Conference brochure.](#)

Planet Aid Non-Profit Clothes Recycler Expands Into Pittsburgh

[Planet Aid](#), the 10 year-old non-profit clothes recycler has entered the Pittsburgh market, planting its distinctive yellow recycling bins throughout the city and offering residents greater convenience and more choices when discarding old clothes and other items.

Founded as a Massachusetts non-profit agency in 1997, Planet Aid has expanded across the country, now collecting, bundling and selling more than 70 million pounds of old clothes each year in its 8,500 bins. The organization is dedicated to improving the lives of people in developing countries in Africa and Asia, along with protecting the environment and providing relief aid.

"We want citizens of Pittsburgh to get to know us and when they see our yellow bins they can be sure that their old clothes and other items are supporting worthwhile development programs, as well as helping the environment," said Jenny Kullas, Planet Aid operations manager. "Our phenomenal growth has been the result of the support we receive from members of the communities where we operate and we're looking forward to being part of the Pittsburgh community."

Planet Aid typically forms partnerships with local merchants and institutions that allow it to locate its collection bins on their sites.

The organization, which plans to put 200 bins around the Pittsburgh area, donated more than \$5 million to worthy development programs around the world last year. Since 2001, it has been a partner with Johnson & Johnson in support of the fight against the AIDS epidemic in Southern Africa.

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

State Parks Completing Phase-In of Open Swimming Policy for Lakes

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis this week announced that, with the exception of Presque Isle State Park in Erie, all swimming beaches at lakes in state parks will implement an open swim policy this year.

"The open swim program provides increased opportunities for swimmers beyond the hours and seasons during which lifeguards are available," Secretary DiBerardinis said. "Over the last few years, we have successfully implemented open swim policies at 23 of our state parks. We will add the remainder of the state parks with lakes this year."

Lifeguards are not provided at open swim beaches. Swimmers swim at their own risk. Visitors are encouraged to be vigilant when their children are swimming.

Beaches will continue to be patrolled and monitored by state park staff. Instructions and regulations on swimming are posted at all beaches.

The use of lifeguards will continue at swimming pools at state parks, as well as at Presque Isle State Park on Lake Erie, where currents on the lake make water hazards much different than other smaller lakes in the state park system.

The state parks that will implement the open swim policy in 2008 are Bald Eagle, Beltzville, Black Moshannon, Canoe Creek, Chapman, Cowans Gap, Gifford Pinchot,

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Laurel Hill, Moraine, Parker Dam, Pine Grove Furnace, Raccoon Creek, Shawnee, Tuscarora and Yellow Creek.

The implementation of open swim beaches is a national trend; it allows state parks to operate more efficiently, and provides greater public access to beaches.

Beaches (except Presque Isle) are generally open to swimming from before Memorial Day to after Labor Day. The exact opening and closing dates vary at each park.

"We encourage visitors to call ahead if they have concerns about swimming at a state park they plan to visit," Secretary DiBerardinis said.

For more information, visit DCNR's [State Parks webpage](#).

Wildlife for Everyone Selects Architect for Wildlife Research And Education Center

Russ Schleiden, Chairman of the Board of the [Wildlife for Everyone](#) Endowment Foundation, announced that JSA Architects, Inc., Pittsburgh, has been selected to design the Wildlife Research and Education Center for the Foundation.

The 45,000 square foot complex will be located on 70 acres near State College. It will house wildlife biologists, a library, research facilities, and a theatre.

"We are privileged to be working with JSA because they understand the importance of wildlife conservation and our mission here at the Foundation," said Schleiden.

JSA is a full-service, nationally recognized architectural, planning, engineering and interior design firm. Headquartered in Pittsburgh, it has been providing dynamic building design solutions since 1939. By having architects, engineers and interior designers in one office, JSA's "single-source" philosophy and blend of professionals creates value for its clients by delivering a final product that is creative, functional, cost effective and technically smarter.

Jim Eckles, Firm President and Principal involved in the project, has direct experience with other local, national and international wildlife organizations similar to the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation.

Eckles stated that "The Foundation's Wildlife Education and Research Center design will ensure Pennsylvania is in the vanguard of wildlife conservation. The state of the art education complex features a library, theatre, classrooms and interactive exhibits, and will stimulate continuous learning about Pennsylvania's birds and mammals, their habitats, and their benefits to all Pennsylvanians."

The building will be green certified using The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System. The system encourages the adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the implementation of accepted tools and performance criteria.

The [Wildlife for Everyone Endowment Foundation](#) was established in 2004 to provide permanent private support for wildlife habitat enhancement, wildlife research and education, land preservation, and for the establishment of a Wildlife Research and Education Center.

Governor's Advisory Council Seeks Commissioner for Fish and Boat Commission

The [Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation](#) is seeking qualified candidates to fill a vacancy on the board of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission in district seven, which includes Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming counties.

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Applications must be received by February 29.

A vacancy occurred when Commissioner Frederick P. Osifat, 64, passed away in late November.

“The Governor is reaching out to the anglers and boaters of district seven to find the highest-qualified candidate to serve on the board of the Fish and Boat Commission,” said Bob Schlemmer, chairman of the Governor’s Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation.

The next commissioner from the district will complete Osifat’s term, which expires June 4, 2009. Because the term is less than four years, the appointee will be eligible for re-appointment to an eight-year term.

While commissioners are not compensated, they do receive a travel reimbursement. According to the Fish and Boat Code, in order to qualify as a commissioner, the applicant must be a resident of the district and be well informed on the subjects of conservation, restoration, fish and fishing, and boats and boating.

Individuals interested in applying for this seat should send a resume, with a detailed cover letter explaining their desire to serve, to Robb Miller, 7th Floor – Rachel Carson State Office Building, P.O. Box 8767, Harrisburg, PA 17106-8767.

The Governor’s eventual nominee is subject to confirmation by a simple majority vote of the state Senate

Help Wanted -- Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Invasive Species Council

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and the Governor’s Invasive Species Council are seeking applicants to fill positions in their organizations. Here are the details--

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is seeking a committed and talented conservation professional to fill its [Allegheny Project](#) Director position.

The director will lead and manage a large, complex conservation project based in Ridgway, PA. Successful outcomes will hinge on building and sustaining productive relationships with community leaders, the forest industry individual landowners and public/private agencies and organizations to protect the forest landscape and the natural features within.

[The full announcement is available online.](#)

If you are interested please send a resume and cover letter with salary expectations no later than February 8 sending email to wpcjobs@paconserve.org and list "Forestlands" in the subject line.

The [Governor’s Invasive Species Council of Pennsylvania](#) is seeking applicants for a full-time, salaried Coordinator for the Commonwealth’s invasive species program. The minimum starting annual salary is \$45,438.

The closing date for receipt of applications is January 31.

The position is currently funded until December 2008, and continued employment is contingent on annual funding by the Commonwealth and satisfactory progress of the employee.

Applicants must complete and submit a [Personal Data Sheet](#), letter of interest, and resume to the Office of Human Resources for the position.

Letters of interest should be sent to: Russell Redding, Executive Deputy Secretary,

Office of Human Resources, Department of Agriculture, 2301 North Cameron Street,
Harrisburg, PA 17110.

Spotlight

Bullock Oriole Brings Birders to Juniata County



Want to add something special to your birding life list? Then the Game Commission suggests that you head to Oakland Mills, just outside of Mifflintown, Juniata County, to see a [Bullock oriole](#), a neotropical songbird not normally found in Pennsylvania at any time that has made itself at home here.

The buzz began on November 23, when Steven Troyer, an avid 13-year-old birdwatcher told his grandfather, Aden Troyer, "Pap, come look at this Bullock oriole."

Steven Troyer was excited and wanted to share the news because he knew that this particular species is rarely seen in this part of the United States.

According to "The Birds of Pennsylvania," the Bullock oriole - which is a close cousin of the more famous Baltimore, or northern, oriole – breeds in southern Canada from British Columbia to Saskatchewan and south along the Pacific Coast and east to the Dakotas, Kansas and Texas.

"They winter primarily in Mexico and Central American, and a few winter along the Gulf Coast region to Georgia to Florida," said Game Commission Wildlife Diversity Section Supervisor Dan Brauning, who - along with Gerald M. McWilliams - authored "The Birds of Pennsylvania" in 2000. "They show up occasionally in northeastern North America, and strays are occasionally reported in Pennsylvania. All those reported here have been immature or female orioles at bird feeding stations. In fact, prior to this sighting in Juniata County, there have only been three accepted records of this bird in the Commonwealth."

Aden Troyer and his son, David Troyer, welcome visitors to where they can view and photograph the Bullock oriole, which has been regularly visiting three areas within 150 yards of their store. The Lost Creek Shoe Shop, which also is a retail store for bird watching equipment, is open from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays, and from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The store is closed on Sundays, but visitors still are welcomed to visit the site.

So far, more than 100 visitors from as far away as Pittsburgh, Wilkes-Barre and Scranton, as well as a few from Maryland, have come to the area and signed the visitor book at the viewing locations.

"On behalf of the state's wildlife management agency, I offer heart-felt thanks to the Troyer family for sharing this tremendous opportunity with bird enthusiasts," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director.

Grants & Awards

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This section gives you a heads up on upcoming deadlines for grants and financial assistance as well as nominations for awards and other recognition programs. **NEW** means from last week—

- **January 15**— [International Children’s Painting Competition](#)
- **January 15**— [National Wetlands Awards Program Nominations](#)
- **February 1** – PA Land Trust Assn. [Government Leadership Award Nominations](#).
- **February 1**—**NEW**. [PA Rural Water Assn. Annual Awards](#)
- **February 8** – [PA American Water Watershed Art Contest](#)
- **February 19** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **February 20**— [USDA Conservation Innovation Grants](#)
- **February 22**— [Allegheny County Global Warming Poster Contest](#)
- **February 22**—**NEW**. [Clean Water Begins and Ends With You Student Art Contest](#)
- **February 29**— [Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants](#)
- **February 29**—**NEW**. [Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Grants](#)
- **March 17**— [Community Action for a Renewed Environment Grants](#)
- **March 31** – PAEP [Karl Mason Environmental Award](#).
- **March 31**—[DEP Host Municipality Inspector Grants](#)
- **April 2** – [WREN Water Resources Education Project Grants](#)

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

Quick Clips

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

[Environmental Additions Take Shape at Middle School – Video](#)

[Allegheny Colleges Joins National Teach-In on Climate Change](#)

[Ursinus College to Sponsor Think-In About Climate Change](#)

[WV Landowners on Power Line Route Could Get Free Service](#)

[Wild Boars at Center of Local Controversy](#)

[Captive Boars Ruled Wildlife](#)

[Wild Hogs Off Limits For Now](#)

[Concern for Turtle May Slow Sugarhouse Casino Work](#)

[Audubon Society Members Rely on Ears, Binoculars, Boots to Count Bird Species](#)

[Development to Post Toad Warning Signs, Speed Limit](#)

[Op-Ed: DCNR and ATV Damage](#)

[Oil Industry, Environment Appeals May Derail Forest’s 10-Year Plan](#)

[Landowners Donate 112 Acres to Conservancy in Centre County](#)

[Moratorium Spares 555 Pittsburgh Trees From the Ax](#)

[Allegheny County Proposal to Use Clean Air Fund for Road Projects](#)

[Allegheny County Officials Drop Bid to Use Clean Air Fund for Road Project](#)

[Program Helps Manufacturer Save \\$92,000](#)

[Brownfield Site Renewal May Revitalize Haysville](#)

[Op-Ed: The Wrong Road to Energy Independence- Rep. Hutchinson](#)

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[Power-Plant Project Moves Forward](#)
[Dominion Has Cheaper Natural Gas Lead](#)
[Light Bulbs Required to Undergo Big Change](#)
[Bill Would Give Break to Drivers of Vehicles Using Alternative Fuels](#)
[Green Car Well Oiled Machine](#)
[Editorial: Growing Fuel](#)
[Environmental Groups to File Lawsuits to Stop Transmission Corridors](#)
[Exhibitors Go Green at Farm Show](#)
[Energy is State Farm Show's Bumper Crop](#)
[Companies Push Green Energy at Farm Show](#)
[Renewable Energy Unpopular at Farm Show](#)
[Green Building Council Headed for Lehigh Valley](#)
[Meadville Market Ownership Change](#)
[\\$1 Billion Clairton Works Upgrade Put on Fast Pack](#)
[Feds to View Knox Mine Disaster Site](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Bay Leaders Say They'll Not Meet 2010 Cleanup Goal](#)
[Editorial: State Needs to Help Municipalities with Chesapeake Bay Upgrades](#)
[Big Sewage Plants Gain Discharge Breaks](#)
[Op-Ed: Sediment Buildup Poses Threat to Chesapeake](#)
[Precision Feeding for a Healthy Bay](#)
[Clearfield County Senior Environment Corps Faces Budget Cuts](#)
[Abraham's Creek Watershed Group Eyes Flooding Problems](#)
[Editorial: Water Pact Needs Support of Legislature](#)
[Soaring Costs Put State's Farmers at Crossroads](#)
[Clearfield Conservation District: Tired of Red Streams?](#)
[Trove of Fish Fossils in Northern PA](#)

Regulations

The Environmental Quality Board published proposed rules on [Diesel Vehicle Idling](#) and proposed changes to water quality regulations under the [Triennial Review of Water Quality Standards](#). The Independent Regulatory Review Commission [published comments](#) on the Department of Agriculture Odor Management Certification Program regulations.

NewsClip: [State Schedules Hearing on Proposed Diesel Idling Rules](#)
[Idling Reduction Rule Published for Comment](#)

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – January 12, 2008](#)

Comment Deadlines: [Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

[Copies of Proposed Regulations \(DEP website\)](#)

[Status of Regulations, 6-Month Calendar \(DEP website\)](#)

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection proposed amendments to the [Water Quality Toxics Management Strategy](#) for public comment.

[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. **NEW** indicates new from last week. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

- The Department of Environmental Protection published a schedule of meetings by its boards and advisory committees for 2008. [The schedule is available online](#) and they are now all posted on the [PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#).
- **January 14**—Environmental Issues Forum featuring Kathleen Cowles Paul, Director of the [PA Center for Environmental Education](#). Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **January 15**—**NEW**. Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) making changes to the Bituminous Coal Mine Safety Act in part based on recommendations made after the 2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue. Room 8E-B East Wing. 9:30.
- **January 15**—**NEW**. House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Resolution 465](#) (Hanna-D-Center) urging the Federal Emergency Management Agency to review and update flood insurance maps every 10 years and [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate gas and energy prices. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 9:15.
- **January 15**—**NEW**. House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee meets to discuss 2008 Committee business. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 10:00.
- **January 15**— **CANCELLED**. [Environmental Quality Board meeting](#). Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **January 15**— DEP [Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 11:00.
- **January 16**—[Delaware River Basin Commission](#) hearing on [Flexible Flow Management Program for New York Reservoirs](#). Trenton Volunteer Fire Company, Trenton, NJ.

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- **January 16**—**NEW**. Capital Region Water Board Meeting. Susquehanna River Basin Commission Building. 1:00. Contact: Cindy Rock, Cindy.L.Rock@comcast.net or call 717-633-7959.
- **January 18**—**NEW**. Rachel Carson Forum will feature the documentary “Environmental Justice: The Power of Partnerships.” Auditorium, Rachel Carson Building. Noon.
- **January 21**—Martin Luther King Day. Capitol Offices are Closed.
- **January 23**—**NEW**. DCNR [Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **January 24**— DCNR [Snowmobile and ATV Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **January 25**—**NEW**. Westmoreland County Conservation District “Verifying Proper Installation of Erosion and Stormwater Controls,” District office on Donohoe Road in Greensburg. 7:30 a.m. to noon.
- **January 29**—**NEW**. Senate Transportation Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 295](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) limiting the idling of diesel engines. Room 461. 10:00.
- **January 31**—**NEW**. House Consumer Protection Committee hearing on electric rate cap legislation. LTBA.
- **February 5**—**NEW**. Governor’s Budget Address.
- **February 13**—**NEW**. House Game and Fisheries Committee meets for a presentation of the Game Commission annual report. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 9:00.
- **February 14**—**NEW**. House Game and Fisheries Committee meets for a presentation of the Fish & Boat Commission annual report. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 9:00.
- **February 19**—**NEW**. House Republican Policy Committee hearing on electric rate cap mitigation. Room 418. 11:00.
- **February 22-23** – 2008 [Keystone Coldwater Conference](#). State College.
- **February 25**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Budget Secretary. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 3:00.
- **February 26**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Insurance. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 10:30.
- **February 26**—[PA Chamber Energy Summit](#). Harrisburg Hilton.
- **February 28**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Agriculture. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00.
- **February 28**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Health. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 10:30.
- **February 28**—[Pennsylvania Wild Resources Symposium](#). [Powdermill Nature Reserve](#). Pittsburgh.
- **February 28-March 2**—[PA Assn. of Environmental Educators Conference](#). Antiochian Village Camp and Conference Center near Ligonier, Pa.
- **March 4**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00.
- **March 4**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Transportation. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 1:15.
- **March 5**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Environmental Protection. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 3:00.

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- **March 6**—**NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Community and Economic Development. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 1:15.
- **March 19**—**NEW**. Capital Region Water Board Meeting. Susquehanna River Basin Commission Building. 1:00. Contact: Cindy Rock, Cindy.L.Rock@comcast.net or call 717-633-7959.
- **March 28**— Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference and Shad Symposium. Holiday Inn, Fogelsville.
- **May 13-15**—[PA Water/Wastewater Association](#) annual conference. Valley Forge.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

You can watch the [Senate Floor Session](#) and [House Floor Session](#) live online.

Helpful Web Links

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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

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

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

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

Stories Invited

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

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