

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

January 31, 2005

Green Plans Blossom in Harrisburg

Spring came early to Harrisburg this week with the blossoming of several proposals on environmental spending.

House Republicans outlined their [Green PA Plan](#) to float an \$800 million bond issue, plus provide funding for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund and farmland preservation.

Gov. Rendell called the proposal “real progress.”

Senate Republicans said they would have some of their own ideas to announce shortly.

The Green Ribbon Commission met to hear testimony on open space and abandoned mine reclamation funding needs along with presentations by the PA Fish & Boat and Game Commissions on their infrastructure needs.

Environmental groups held a press conference in the Rotunda to support additional funding.

Maybe the groundhog will tell us next week if this thaw will last!



Mingo Creek Park, Washington County. *Contributed by Karen Hohman, PA CleanWays. Print your own copy from the file at the bottom of this webpage.*

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On the Hill

House Republicans Propose Green PA Plan, Rendell Says It's Positive Step

House Republicans, led by the Montgomery County Delegation, this week announced its [Green PA program](#), a 28-year, \$2 billion proposal that if passed and approved by voters, will represent the single largest investment of its kind in environmental health in state history.

The proposal would ask voters to approve an \$800 million bond issue this Spring to be spent over the next seven years on the original programs funded by the Ridge/Schweiker Growing Greener Program—watershed restoration, mine reclamation, State Park, State Forest and water and sewer projects.

In addition, \$25 million a year would be earmarked for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund and \$10 million a year for open space and farmland preservation. Both funding streams would continue through 2033.

The proposal also sets aside funds through 2033 in an endowment account that will result in an estimated \$179 million to be spent after the initial program has run its course.

The Green PA Plan would be funded by reallocating the \$4.25 Growing Greener fee now collected on each ton of municipal waste disposed in Pennsylvania. The existing \$2 per ton fee dedicated for recycling would also be extended through 2033. No new fees would be imposed or existing fees increased.



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"Green PA will allow this generation to hand to our children and grandchildren a cleaner, greener Pennsylvania, not the bill to pay for it," said Rep. Kate Harper (R-Montgomery). "With this plan, the Commonwealth will invest an unprecedented \$2 billion through the first third of the 21st century in land preservation, environmental clean up and restoration, and water resource and forest protection."

In response, Gov. Rendell said, "Nearly one year after I unveiled my [Growing Greener II proposal](#), I am pleased that House Republicans joined me in my commitment to improve the quality of life in Pennsylvania by boosting our effort on environmental clean-up and open space; preserving our farmland and cleaning up our rivers and streams. I am gratified that we now agree that an \$800 million bond is an appropriate way to do this, and paying for the bond with waste fees makes sense. Today's announcement represents real progress, and should help us to move quickly in crafting a ballot question for voters' to consider in the May primary."

The proposal also addresses the top three priorities identified by members of the bipartisan [Green Ribbon Commission last November](#)—funding the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund, preserving open space and farmland and reclaiming abandoned mines.

"Green PA is a balanced approach that will allow us to do more for environmental health without placing a new burden on our middle class working families," said Green Ribbon co-Chair Rep. William Adolph (R-Delaware). "It proves that we can balance environmental protection and economic development while delivering a better quality of life for our families."

At the press conference, Rep. Adolph said he would be circulating the proposal to members of the Green Ribbon Commission for their review and comment.

The proposal does not address infrastructure funding needs for the PA [Fish & Boat](#) and Game Commissions.

More Details: The Green PA Program would divide the \$800 million bond proceeds between three agencies—the departments of Environmental Protection and Conservation and Natural Resources and the PA Infrastructure Investment Authority—using the same formula used now in the Growing Greener Program—

DEP - \$50 million per year for watershed restoration, mine reclamation (minimum allocation \$15 million), oil and gas well plugging, watershed specialists and innovative water and wastewater technologies (all the existing uses of the funds)—an increase from about \$38 million annually now;

DCNR - \$36 million for State Park, State Forest and open space preservation, with a \$15 million minimum for open space preservation – an increase from about \$27.5 million.

PennVEST - \$28 million for water and wastewater grants – an increase from about \$22 million.

The Green PA Program was developed by the state House Appropriations Committee with input from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee led by the Montgomery County Delegation and Republican House members appointed by Majority Leader Samuel Smith (R-Jefferson) to the state Green Ribbon Commission.

At this week's Green Ribbon Commission meeting, Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) said the Senate was working on its own proposals that should be out in the near future. And in press accounts her office said they would like to see the issue of funding

for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund treated separately from any bond issue for other purposes.

A spokesperson for Sen. Brightbill (R-Lebanon) was quoted as saying they thought an \$800 million bond issue might not be supported in the Seante.

NewsClip: [House GOP Counters Rendell's Environmental Plan](#)
[GOP Tries to Top Rendell Green Plan](#)
[New Green Proposal Hailed as "Godsend"](#)
[Green Plan Advancing](#)
[GOP Drafts Green Plan](#)

Green Ribbon Commission Hears More Testimony on Environmental Needs

Members of the bipartisan Green Ribbon Commission heard testimony this week from organizations involved in open space preservation, abandoned mine reclamation and on the infrastructure needs of the Fish and Boat and Game Commissions.

Molly Morrison, the President of [Natural Lands Trust](#), a nonprofit land trust in southeastern Pennsylvania, spoke to the commission about open space preservation. In its 50-year history, her organization has helped preserve more than 110,000 acres of natural open lands. They directly own and manage 15,000 acres of preserved land and have easements on another 15,000.

Morrison supported efforts to protect open space, noting she thought the issue is a statewide problem. Without additional financial support, not only would vital lands not be preserved, but federal dollars now available for preservation would be left on the table.

Bruce Golden from the [Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#) said acid mine drainage has left more than 4,000 miles of streams seriously polluted and unusable. However, because of the efforts of hundreds of watershed groups and thousands of volunteers, streams that have been dead for over 100 years are coming back to life.

Without adequate funding, these projects are going to be stopped. But more importantly the people involved in watershed groups need to be supported and encouraged to continue their good work. He recommended that any funding plan take advantage of the individuals and groups already doing cleanups.

Golden also pointed to the need to reauthorize the federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation fee that is due to expire in June to deal with safety problems caused by abandoned mines.

(See Golden's full testimony is included in this Digest as an Opinion piece.)

Dr. Douglas Austen, Executive Director of the PA Fish and Boat Commission, spoke about the [needs of the commission](#) saying fishing and boating are a \$2 billion industry in Pennsylvania.

He noted the Commission owned 18 dams now considered by DEP to be unsafe dams and 14 fish hatcheries that need upgrades to meet current environmental and operating standards. He estimated that the hatcheries alone would require \$84 million for all necessary fixes and upgrades.

William Schultz, a Special Projects Manager with the PA Game Commission, spoke about the needs of the Game Commission that include unsafe dams and other improvements to the 1.4 million acres of State Game Lands owned by the Commission.

He also noted the Commission has helped to successfully implement the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program in the state to set aside farmland for stream buffers and habitat areas that have been a significant benefit to wildlife. For every \$1 of state money invested, \$5 dollars of federal money is attracted to the program.

With the House Republicans laying out a proposal to expand environment spending for open space, mine reclamation and the Hazardous Sites Clean Up Fund this week and the Senate Republicans set to propose their own initiative soon, the Commission will have lots to chew on in the coming weeks.

All parties are aiming to have a bond issue proposal ready in time for the May primary election.

NewsClip: [Supporters of Growing Greener II Rally at Capitol Groups Underscore Serious Environmental Challenges](#)

House Appoints Members of Environmental Resources Committee

The House adopted its rules and appointed members to its standing committees this week, including the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Republican members include: Bill Adolph, Chairman, Charles McIlhinney, Subcommittee Chair on Energy, Richard Stevenson, Subcommittee Chair on Mining, Carole Rubley, Subcommittee Chair on Parks and Forests, David Reed, Secretary, Gibson Armstrong, Martin Causer, Jacqueline Crahall, Tom Creighton, Kate Harper, Arthur Hershey, Scott Hutchinson, Ronald Miller, Jeffrey Pyle, Kathy Rapp and Chris Ross.

Democratic members include: Camille George, Democratic Chair, Gregory Vitali, Subcommittee Chair on Energy, Dan Surra, Subcommittee Chair on Mining, Jim Wansacz, Subcommittee Chair on Parks and Forests, Daylin Leach, Secretary, Alan Butkovitz, Robert Freeman, Marc Gergely, David Levdansky, Jennifer Mann, Michael McGeehan and Curtis Thomas.

The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee members were [announced earlier](#).

Environmental Synopsis Features Invasive Species, RecycleBank, New York Trash

The 2005 inaugural issue of the [Environmental Synopsis](#) published by the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee this week contains a “potpourri” of issues, as chairman Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) described it.

Invasive species, recycling rates, New York Trash, the RecycleBank program in Philadelphia, air pollution and heritage areas were all topics covered in the January edition.

In Other News

Comments Invited on Guidance to Implement Energy Portfolio Standards

The Department of Environmental Protection is accepting public comments through February 11 on guidance it developed to implement the [Advanced Energy Portfolio Standards Act](#).

The [draft technical guidance document](#) outlines the environmental and resource eligibility requirements for qualifying resources under Section 2 of the act. The act requires that 18 percent of the electricity sold to retail customers in Pennsylvania come from specified, eligible alternative energy sources in 15 years or that electricity usage must be offset through demand-side management measures.

DEP will also be holding a meeting of the [Energy Advisory Board](#) at the Rachel Carson State Office Building in Harrisburg on February 2. Attendance at the meeting is open to the public.

Comments should be sent to [Eric Thumma](#).

‘Green Highway’ Certification Promoted By Transportation, EPA Region III

The Federal Highway Administration, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), and the Environmental Protection Agency’s Region 3 office in Philadelphia are cooperating on a new “Green Highway” initiative that will certify highway projects as sustainable and environmentally sound.

The new program is modeled after EPA’s [Performance Track Program](#) and will provide regulatory flexibility for environmentally beneficial practices in highway planning design, construction, and maintenance.

The Performance Track program recognizes facilities that consistently meet their legal requirements and have implemented high-quality environmental management systems. In addition to recognition, benefits of the program can include a low priority for environmental inspections and regulatory flexibility in meeting permitting, monitoring and reporting requirements under various environmental laws.

The Green Highway certification program similarly could provide recognition as well as flexibility for exemplary practices in limiting the environmental impacts of highways using practices like:

- Coordination of green infrastructure, land use and transportation planning;
- Watershed-based mitigation approaches;
- Context-sensitive solutions;
- Ecologically based mitigation;
- Use of environmental management systems;
- Innovative stormwater management programs and techniques;
- Use of bio-fuels in road construction; and
- Use of bioengineering approaches to protect resources during road maintenance.

Many of these practices were contained in a report from the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP), which is sponsored by AASHTO and administered by the Transportation Research Board of the National Research Council, entitled, [Environmental Stewardship Practices, Procedures, and Policies for Highway Construction and Maintenance](#).

EPA, FHWA, and AASHTO will sponsor a [Green Highway Forum](#) in September to further develop this program.

For more information visit the [AASHTO Center for Environmental Excellence](#).

(Reproduced with permission from Transportation Watch, "Green Highway' Certification Promoted By Transportation, Environmental Agencies" (Jan. 18, 2005). Copyright 2005 by [The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc.](#) (800-372-1033))

Penn State Offering Workshops on Stream Health, Runoff Pollution Potential

Penn State's Department of Metrology is offering a series of workshops in May designed to introduce a new web-based tool for assessing stream health and potential impacts from runoff.

The new [Stream Health and Runoff Potential tool](#) is designed to do several things: (1) to estimate stream health, such as yearly nutrient yields, for any user-selected stream basin or watershed in Pennsylvania, or the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and (2) to estimate peak and total volume of storm water runoff for a chosen stream or watershed in Pennsylvania and a design storm.

The workshops are sponsored by the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service, Department of Environmental Protection through its Watershed Academy, Alliance for Chesapeake Bay, the Consortium for Atlantic Regional Assessment (CARA) and the Penn State School of Earth and Mineral Sciences and Department of Meteorology.

Workshop dates are set for May 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16 and 17.

For more information contact Professor Toby N. Carlson at 814-865-1582, by e-mail to tnc@essc.psu.edu or by fax 814-865-3663. You will be sent more detailed information on the program, including materials you will need to bring.

You can also [register for the workshop online](#).

Comments Due to EPA on TMDLs in PA and Crossing into Delaware

EPA Region 3 published public notices recently on the availability of three Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) reports. These TMDLs address impairments including bacteria, mercury from atmospheric deposition, and excessive nutrients and sediment from nonpoint sources in Pennsylvania and Delaware.

TMDLs are being proposed for: Skippack Creek in Montgomery County, Pa.; Lake Wallenpaupack in Pike and Wayne Counties, Pa.; and the Christina River Basin, which is an interstate TMDL spanning Chester County, Pa. and Newcastle County, Del.

Public meetings will be held during the weeks of February 7 and 14, and the public comment period closes in March.

For more information visit [EPA's TMDL webpage](#).

Watch for Details Coming Soon on the 2005 Great PA Cleanup!

Want to part of some great? Watch for details on how your group can be part of the 2005 Great PA Cleanup in April. Look back at the [2004 Great PA Cleanup](#) for an idea of what you can do.

Last year over 500 groups, plus groups registered with PennDOT's Adopt-A-Highway Program, participated in the Great PA Cleanup.



Adult Male Peregrine Falcon Will Not Be Released Into Wild

From the Department of Environmental Protection this week: the adult male peregrine is recovering nicely and is expected to be just fine. However, he will not be released back to the wild.

Peregrines need to be 100 percent physically to survive from day to day. Unfortunately the falcon will not be able to fully extend the injured wing and so will not have the agility and precise control to effectively hunt.

Dauphin County Wildlife Rescue (DCWR) staff told DEP he is a very good patient. He will remain at DCWR under a falconry permit and will be used in educational programs by DCWR. In a very real sense, this remarkable bird will continue to enhance this endangered species recovery program by his appearance at educational events in the future.

For the latest information, go to [DEP's Falcon webpage](#) and sign up for the Falconwire email.

Game Commission Adds 1,150 Acres in Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Dauphin

The Pennsylvania Game Commissioners this week approved four land transactions that will increase the State Game Lands (SGL) system by nearly 1,150 acres, including the creation of a new SGL in Clarion County. Other transactions were approved in Dauphin, Centre and Clearfield counties.

Commission Executive Director Vernon Ross noted that the Board has been fortunate to [use donated funds](#) to purchase additional acres.

Board has approved the acquisition of more than 46,450 acres of State Game Lands since July 1, 1999, when the last license fee increase went into effect.

The purchases and donations included land in--

Clarion County: nearly a 965-acre parcel of land in Piney Township that will be designated SGL 330 -- the newest SGL in the agency's system -- bought from the Alliance for Wetlands and Wildlife for \$289,500. Commonly known as the "Piney Tract," this parcel is a remarkable area of grasslands and scattered woods that has long been recognized as an important habitat for wildlife.

The property was mined for coal several times beginning during World War I, resulting in a diversity of topographic features. The most recent activity was reclamation and re-vegetation work in 1979. Much of the area was reclaimed into gently rolling hills planted with various grasses.

The Piney Tract is significant because of the large populations of grassland-associated birds and the diversity of species that have occupied this area for many years in addition to the various game species -- such as ring-necked pheasants, rabbits, ruffed grouse and wild turkey.

As an example, Dan Brauning, Game Commission Wildlife Diversity Section supervisor, noted that the Henslow's sparrow -- a nationally rare bird that is classified as endangered or threatened in most states in which it occurs -- can be found in the hundreds on the Piney Tract. This probably represents the largest concentration of this species in the state. Other state endangered and threatened species, such as the short-eared owl, upland sandpiper and northern harrier, can be found on Piney Tract."

Brauning noted that grassland habitats have been under siege, but reclaimed mine lands in Pennsylvania and across the country are refuges for viable populations of game and nongame species. The Piney Tract stands out among reclaimed mine lands because of its size, which helps reduce the impact of forest-edge predators enabling birds to sustain substantial local populations. Few reclaimed areas have such extensive fields, or support the diversity or densities of grassland species as does the Piney Tract.

Dauphin County: the donation of two tracts of land totaling 60 acres that are indentures to SGL 264, Wiconisco Township, from the Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (EPCAMR). Acquisition of this land will enable the Game Commission and Dauphin County Conservation District to partner on addressing acid-mine discharge issues related to SGL 264. SGL 264 currently contains 8,850 acres in Dauphin and Schuylkill counties.

Centre County: ratification of a 10-acre donation from M, M & V Energy that will provide vital public access to SGL 100 in Burnside Township. The access will be provided near Pine Glen. SGL 100 currently contains 19,973 acres in Centre and Clearfield counties.

Clearfield County: the ratification of a 113-acre donation from M, M & V Energy that will provide protection to a portion of land along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River in Karthaus Township. This parcel will become part of SGL 100, which currently contains 19,373 acres in Centre and Clearfield counties.

Case Study: Roofing System Gives Londonderry School Extra Green Credit



The [Londonderry School in Harrisburg](#), recently opened its doors at its new facility ushering in a new era of [environmentally friendly considerations in school design](#).

Established in 1971, the school occupied leased space for classes extending from preschool through eighth grade. As the population grew

and classroom space became tighter, school board members and staff began plans to construct a new building.

Realizing that the construction of a new facility would provide the opportunity to integrate environmental consciousness and affordability in design, the school officials involved with the project systematically studied available options. The result is, in their own words, "a model to challenge and revolutionize traditional thinking in school construction."

After careful analysis, construction materials and methods were selected to help reduce operating costs for energy consumption. This innovative approach qualified the school as a "green" building with the [U.S. Green Building Council](#), and secured a silver rating from the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

LEED is a national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings including educational facilities. Based on well-founded scientific standards,

LEED emphasizes state of the art strategies for sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials and indoor environment quality.

One of the major innovations was the use of [Carlisle SynTec Incorporated's](#) Sure-Weld® TPO Mechanically-Fastened Roofing System. The white, 60-mil Sure-Weld membrane was installed over 8,555 square feet of the building's roof offering Londonderry School a twofold benefit: exterior solar and heat reflection which helps reduce HVAC energy consumption, and water collection for sanitary facilities.

Rainwater from the sloped roof is collected in a cistern and used to flush toilets in the school's lavatories, and to provide water for the heating system. The roof was installed by [Progressive Services, Inc.](#), of Dover, Pennsylvania, a Carlisle authorized applicator.

Larry Toot, president of Progressive Services, Inc., was pleased with the opportunity to work on the project. "The Londonderry School was the first LEED project we were involved in. Since the entire program was designed around the "green building" concept, we were able to take advantage of Carlisle's total roof system package that meets [ENERGY STAR®](#) guidelines and includes membrane and insulation, as well as a total system warranty."

In addition to the white TPO membrane and its unique application for recycling runoff water, the building's insulation values are very high, offering additional energy savings benefits to the school. Toot added, "We used two layers of four-inch Polyiso, throughout. And, since everything is manufactured by Carlisle, I am only dealing with one, Carlisle-appointed representative. Also, the fifteen-year total system warranty gives everyone peace of mind."

Designed by the architectural firm of Murray Associates, Inc., of Harrisburg (717-234-2581), and erected under the general supervision of the contracting firm of A.P. Williams, Inc., also of Harrisburg (717-540-3902), the Londonderry School was given a \$500,000 loan by [the Sustainable Energy Fund](#) that led an area bank to finance the remainder of the \$3 million project.

The masonry exterior, accented by clerestory windows and large amounts of energy efficient glazing throughout, provides a splendid balance to the wooded pastoral setting just minutes from Pennsylvania's state capital.

With a "green" building, a silver rating and a white, ENERGY STAR roof, Londonderry School and Carlisle set a good example of how environmentally friendly products can be integrated into design plans to reduce energy consumption and costs.

[Progressive Services, Inc.](#), was established in 1984 as a commercial roofing and sheet metal company. Located in Dover, Pennsylvania, its founders brought together more than 65 years of combined experience in the roofing industry and continue to provide the company's leadership today.

[Carlisle SynTec Incorporated](#), headquartered in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, has been manufacturing single-ply membrane roofing systems for more than 40 years. To date, 10 billion square feet of Carlisle roofing membrane has been produced. Carlisle is a business segment of Carlisle Companies and has manufacturing facilities in Carlisle, Greenville, Illinois and Senatobia, Mississippi. For more information contact Melissa Mulligan at Carlisle SynTec Incorporated - 1.800.4-SYNTEC.

EPA's List of Most Energy Efficient Buildings Nears 2000

Almost 2000 of the nation's most energy efficient buildings have earned EPA's [ENERGY STAR](#) rating, saving an estimated \$200 million annually and reducing approximately six billion pounds of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to the emissions of 500,000 cars. The buildings qualifying as ENERGY STAR use about 40 percent less energy without compromising comfort or services.

[Seventy-one buildings meet the ENERGY STAR standards in Pennsylvania.](#)

Currently 1,964 buildings nationwide qualify for the ENERGY STAR, representing nearly 400 million square feet. ENERGY STAR buildings protect the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and using energy more efficiently.

In 2004, more than 700 buildings received the ENERGY STAR label, the largest increase since the program began. More than 50 percent of the buildings joining the program were supermarkets or grocery stores.

Buildings earn the ENERGY STAR by scoring a 75 or higher on EPA's 100-point national energy rating scale. The average of all buildings qualifying for ENERGY STAR through 2004 is 84. These buildings must also meet industry standards for comfort and indoor air quality, as verified by a professional engineer.

For more information visit the [ENERGY STAR webpage](#) or call 1-888-STAR-YES.

Applications Now Being Accepted for Heritage Parks Grants

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources [announced this week](#) it is accepting applications for FY 2005-06 Heritage Park Program grants. The deadline for applications is May 20.

It is the intent of the Program to create a system of State designated Heritage Areas that preserve and interpret the significant contributions that various regions of this Commonwealth have made to the rich heritage of Pennsylvania and the United States.

The historic, cultural, natural, scenic and recreational resources within a Heritage Park area are inventoried, preserved, enhanced and promoted as a strategy to enhance regional economic development through the attraction of tourists, creation of new jobs, stimulation of small business growth, and the promotion of public and private investment opportunities.

The Program manual, application forms and additional information about the program can be obtained from Tim Keptner, Chief, Regional Services Division, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, 6th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building, P. O. Box 8475, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8475, (717) 783-0988.

DCNR Adds Rivers to Conservation Registry

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources formally added portions of the [Middle Delaware River](#) in Northampton and Bucks counties and [Sewickley Creek Watershed](#) in Westmoreland County to the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry this week. The official notice was published in the PA Bulletin January 29.

DCNR Appoints Williamson, Dunn, Leslie to New Positions

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) this week announced the appointment of three of its staff to new positions within the agency.

Larry G. Williamson was named as the Deputy Secretary for Conservation and Engineering Services. Prior to this appointment, Williamson was the director of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation for more than 20 years.

Williamson replaces Richard G. Sprenkle who retired in January from the deputy secretary's position where he had served since DCNR's formation in 1995.

Williamson will oversee three DCNR bureaus: Recreation and Conservation; Facility Design and Construction; and Topographic and Geologic Survey.

A native of Parkhill, East Taylor Township, Cambria County, Williamson began his Commonwealth employment in 1969 with the former Department of Community Affairs (DCA), working as recreation adviser in charge of the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program. He advanced through departmental ranks to become director of DCA's Bureau of Recreation and Conservation in 1984.

Williamson, of Silver Spring Township, Cumberland County, graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a bachelor's degree in recreation and parks administration.

Cindy Adams Dunn will replace Williamson as Director of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. Currently, Adams Dunn oversees DCNR's Office of Education, Communications and Partnerships (OECF), a role she has served since 2003.

Prior to her DCNR director role, Adams Dunn, of Camp Hill, was executive director and vice president of Audubon Pennsylvania, based in Harrisburg, for six years. She also had served as director of community relations and environmental education for DCNR from its inception until 1997. Adams Dunn holds master's and bachelor's degrees in biology from Shippensburg University.

Gretchen Leslie, press secretary for DCNR since its inception in 1995, has been named to Adams Dunn's OECF position.

Prior to serving as DCNR's press secretary, Leslie, who lives in Camp Hill, also worked as a deputy press secretary with the former Department of Environmental Resources (DER) and as communications coordinator for the Bon-Ton Corporation. She will oversee the Department's education, communication and partnership initiatives.

Leslie holds a bachelor's degree in advertising from Pennsylvania State University and a master's degree in journalism from Temple University.

Watch Punxsutawney Phil's Weather Prediction Live Online Feb. 2

Not going to be in Punxsutawney on February 2? You can again join the festivities surrounding Punxsutawney Phil's world-renowned end-of-winter forecast online at VisitPA.com from 7 to 7:15 a.m.

Visitors to a special section of the site, www.VisitPA.com/groundhog, will be able to scan Phil's haunt using two Web cameras positioned above the stage where he will make his appearance. A third camera is positioned behind the viewing area where the crowd will gather. After a short wait in queue, users will be able to control the cameras, zooming and panning over the action.

In addition to high-tech features, this special Groundhog Day section of VisitPA.com is filled with information about the groundhog legend, including how the tradition evolved from its European roots. It also features useful information for those who make the pilgrimage to the region surrounding Punxsutawney, including listings for nearby dining, accommodations and other attractions, and a place where the public can view Phil via a live Web cam in the "Groundhog Zoo," where he resides with his family throughout the year.

Sorry Octorara Orphie, maybe next year!

Quick Clips

[Bethlehem Gives Businesses Recycling Awards](#)
[Carbon County Containers to Promote Recycling](#)
[Rep. Rubley Recognized for Land Use Work](#)
[Winter offers advantages for elk viewing](#)
[Breathing easy: emissions inspections in Central PA](#)
[Berks Farmers Forgo Profit for Preservation](#)

Feature

How to Clean 3 Miles of Stream Banks-- Let Eagle Scouts Lead the Way!

Robin Orris, Executive Director, of the [PA CleanWays Chapter in Jefferson County](#), wrote the *Digest* recently to tell us how they organized the cleanup of three miles of stream banks in and around Brookville. It was a great effort by lots of partners and a real family affair!

PA CleanWays of Jefferson County partnered with our local Boy Scout Troop #64 to complete a cleanup on the Northfork, Sandylick and Redbank watersheds that all come together in Brookville, Jefferson County on September 28 and 29.

The cleanup was a Eagle Scout Project headed up by Kodel Orris and involved 30 boys and adults cleaning up three miles of stream banks all within the Borough of Brookville. (My other son Jeremiah did an appliance cleanup project that collected over 12 tons of appliances and trash as part of his Eagle Scout Project in 2001.)

We found a computer, gas pipe line, full bottles of alcohol. We also found many items left from the major flood that took out many homes in the Brookville area in 1996. The boys say they learned that it's very hard to cleanup trash and they for one will not be throwing things on the ground.

More than 100 bags of trash were removed weighing nearly half a ton.



Boy Scout Curtis Orris works hard to make up for the carelessness of others. *See more pictures in the photo feature at the bottom of this webpage.*

The [International Coastal Cleanup](#) provided the bags for this cleanup. Also donated for this project through PA CleanWays were: the food and drinks, the cost of disposal of the trash, gloves, vests, and bags

This was actually a small cleanup. With that first section adopted as a scout project, we're waiting on the paperwork to complete the adoption of the rest of the streams. We had to postpone cleanups in those areas because it was scheduled for the Saturday the hurricane came through and we had major flooding. The water was up to the top of the stream banks more than 25-30 feet. That caused a problem for the cleanup in that it was hard to walk in the high grass laying flat and covered in mud.

We had another cleanup last September in the southern part of the county that resulted in collecting over 13 tons of trash. We partnered with the Punxsutawney Sportsmen Club and Boy Scout Troop #245 to clean up Stonehouse Road.

We have more cleanups planned for the Spring-- the entire 12 miles of the Mahoning Shadow Rails-to-Trails in Punxsutawney -April 23 – with funding for this project provided by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Community Conservation Partnerships Program; the stream banks and wetlands in the City of Dubois April 9 and/or 16, partnering with the Sandy Lick Conservation Initiative and the City of Dubois. We also plan the cleanup of Reynlow Park outside of Reynoldsville and do a cleanup at the baseball fields in the Borough with the school kids around Earth Day.

But cleanups aren't the only things we do.

We also do environmental fairs at the schools (out of 20 schools we were in all but two last year) to educate kids about rural dumping, littering and ways to recycle keeping the county and our water clean. We also do community education events at scout meetings and community fairs.

We also co-hosted the tire, appliance, gas grill propane tanks and batteries recycling day each spring and fall and an Electronics Recycling Event or Household Hazardous Waste each Spring with Jefferson County Solid Waste Authority.

This year we will be starting an assessment for all the illegal dumps in the watersheds of Jefferson County with a Growing Greener Grant we received last Fall.

So if anyone in [Jefferson County](#) wants to help out, contact Robin Orris, PA CleanWays, by email to: reo1@alltel.net or call 814-856-3291.

Opinion

Using Pennsylvania's "Citizen Capital" To Cleanup Our Abandoned Mine Legacy

By Bruce Golden

Regional Coordinator

Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

(Note: These remarks were presented as testimony this week by Mr. Golden before the Green Ribbon Commission chaired by Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware) and Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) in Harrisburg.)

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Chairman White, Chairman Adolph, and distinguished members of the Green Ribbon Commission, thank you for inviting me to speak before you about one of Pennsylvania's most chronic environmental problems, acid mine drainage.

My name is Bruce Golden, Regional Coordinator of the [Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#), a non-profit group whose mission is to advance the cause of abandoned mine reclamation in western Pennsylvania.

Working in concert with county conservation districts, we see ourselves as a helping hand for those groups grappling with local problems caused by past mining practices. In existence for over 20 years, we are a recognized leader in this cause. Our sister organization, the [Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#), is performing similar services in the anthracite coal region.

Years ago, before regulations protected the environment, extensive coal mining occurred throughout much of Pennsylvania. Mining operators minimized costs but in ways that turned out to be disastrous to the environment. Throughout coal country, rust-colored, lifeless waters are testament to a century's worth of unregulated mining. Acid mine drainage (AMD) is the culprit. Characterized by its acidity and metal content, streams affected by AMD are generally not suitable for drinking or recreation.

We've inherited well over 4,000 miles of these seriously degraded waterways, now Pennsylvania's single worst water pollution problem.

In spite of the magnitude of this problem, a truly remarkable phenomenon is happening in Pennsylvania: AMD impacted watersheds are being transformed into usable and desirable resources.

This renaissance of sorts is not just the story of environmental improvement, but one of the passionate people acting at the local level in partnership with government, business, industry, academia, non-profit organizations and foundations to bring about meaningful change.

It's also the story of the success of passive treatment systems that have been instrumental in the treatment of AMD. I'll illustrate with a two examples.

In Somerset and Cambria Counties, a local coalition known as the [Stoneycreek River Improvement Project](#) did what many thought next to impossible: in less than 8 years a virtually lifeless AMD impacted river now has 22 species of fish including reproducing trout. The upper reaches of the Stonycreek River are considered to be one of the best reclaimed trout fisheries in America.

Using passive treatment, that fishery extends to downtown Johnstown. People there are now looking to the river for economic growth from tourism, fishing, and white water rafting. Nature has tremendous resiliency given a chance: with only a partial cleanup, the Stonycreek has made an amazing comeback. This astounding success was only possible through the dogged determination of over 55 active local partners dedicated to the project.

A similar story comes from the heavily mining-impacted watershed adopted by the [Slippery Rock Creek Watershed Coalition](#) in Venango, Butler, Mercer, and Lawrence Counties.

Collectively their 12 passive treatment systems process 500 million gallons of AMD per year, enough water to supply 3 cities the size of Punxsatauny. They remove enough iron and aluminum annually to construct 200 small pickups. In 11 miles of streams where fish, absent for 100 years, are back and reproducing.

The environmental success is equaled by the success of people and partners who have bought into the process and become involved at many levels. As proof that these projects take on lives of their own, I've given you a publication called "[Accepting the Challenge](#)" produced by the Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition that eloquently develops this topic. I urge you to examine this very approachable work.

I could go on and on about the successes that are being achieved throughout the Commonwealth by the people comprising more than 150 watershed groups and their partners. The energy and creativity released on projects is often something to behold. These are action-oriented people on a mission to improve their environment. If we could bottle this determination, energy and enthusiasm, we'd make a fortune.

I'd now like to turn to the technologies involved with treating AMD. First a little background. The most common way of treating AMD is to capture it as it exits the mining environment, then neutralize the acids and precipitate the metals as sludge. So-called active treatment methodologies directly add chemicals to the AMD on an ongoing basis in treatment facilities. Although effective, active treatment has not been widely used for legacy AMD problems because of high operations costs.

In contrast, passive treatment mimics nature's way of treating AMD by using constructed wetlands and ponds, but still uses the strategy of neutralizing acids and precipitating metals.

Since the mid 1990s, passive treatment technologies have taken center stage in our AMD reclamation efforts. This still emerging technology has advanced substantially over the past decade. We better appreciate both the capabilities and limitations of passive treatment.

For instance, operations and maintenance are more important than originally thought, and we know we have to budget for those costs. We also appreciate that passive treatment may not always be the best alternative for every situation. Sometimes active treatment or a combination of active and passive methods makes for the most cost effective solution.

Other innovative approaches to the problem are being explored. For example,

- resource recovery looks to the metals in AMD for their potential economic value;
- *in-situ* treatment technologies have promise in treating AMD within the mining environment;
- waste streams from other industries may have value in treating AMD;
- marketing mine pool water as a resource to water intensive industries such as the power industry is something we've already started to do.

We commend DEP's leadership role in encouraging these and other innovative approaches in dealing with AMD.

Now let's turn to funding. Plain and simple, without adequate funding, we stop dead in our tracks.

The people behind these projects have worked very hard and have been very fortunate to obtain the funding necessary for their projects. Funding has come from a variety of sources, but without doubt the standout player has been the existing Growing Greener program.

Without [Growing Greener](#) much of our successes would simply not have happened. And Growing Greener has been a wonderful catalyst for multiplying value. On average, for every Growing Greener dollar spent, another dollar was matched by project partners.

Pennsylvania is now the recognized leader in its approach to the dealing with AMD. And Growing Greener is the envy of many other states. I like to think of our approach as a triangle, with the sides representing **people, technology, and funding**. Each of the sides is dependent on the other two. And sufficient quantities of each are needed to make it all work. It's a winning formula.

In formulating a game plan on how we go about dealing with the abandoned mine reclamation problems in Pennsylvania, it's useful to examine the magnitude of the problem. Simply put, it's big, real big. Many billions of dollars will be needed to fully address the problems statewide.

We need to be in this for the long haul. Realistically, even with optimistic estimates of costs and generous funding, it will take many decades to put this behind us (or behind our children and grandchildren). The decisions made in the upcoming months will help decide how many decades it may take.

In the triangle I referenced earlier, funding will always be the element in the shortest supply dictating the rate of progress. From our standpoint we need and can use all the funding that comes our way. The Governor's [Growing Greener II proposal](#), therefore, merits our support.

I'll finish with these recommendations.

- The Commonwealth has a treasure in "citizen capital". Take advantage of the tremendous energy and opportunity to leverage resources that exists with watershed groups and their partners by funding worthy local reclamation projects.
- Continue to invest in new, improved and innovative technologies.
- Protect the investments we make with reclamation projects by providing funds for operation and maintenance. [As a rule of thumb, we use 4% of the construction costs to estimate annual OM&R costs.]
- Work smarter. Strategically apply available resources to projects that will get the greatest bang for the buck. Many watershed groups have completed or are in the process of doing comprehensive watershed assessments that serve as a guide to their reclamation efforts.
- Be patient, but with a sense of urgency. Recognize the magnitude of the problem. Fund at the highest levels possible. Avoid "feast or famine" funding cycles.

I'd like to close with a passage from "Accepting the Challenge" which provides a fitting summary:

"Pennsylvania has the largest inventory of abandoned mine problems in the entire US. No one government agency, business, or concerned group of individuals can hope to restore the entire state. Only through cooperative partnerships, statewide concern, and the innovation of improved treatment techniques will this unfortunate legacy be resolved."

Bruce Golden can be contacted at the [Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation](#) at 724-837-5271 ext. 136 or by email to: bruce@wpcamr.org.

Watershed NewsClips

[River Sojourn Organizer's Guide: Pennsylvania's Experience](#)

[Elk Conservation District Offers Watershed Specialist Job](#)
[Communities try cooperating to combat flooding](#)
[Eco-conscious math teacher honored](#)
[Editorial: Delaware River Cleanup, What Lies Beneath?](#)
[Polluted Schuylkill Creek May Be Transformed into Trout Habitat](#)
[Former Crucible Mine Site Gets Facelift](#)

Regulations

The Environmental Quality Board published a notice that it accepted a rulemaking petition for study involving the redesignation of Fishing Creek in Lancaster County (PaB 705) at its January 18 meeting.

Pennsylvania Bulletin – January 29, 2005

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources [published a notice this week](#) saying it had approved the Middle Delaware River Conservation Plan and is placing all river segments and tributaries covered in the Plan in Northampton and Bucks Counties on the PA Rivers Conservation Registry.

DCNR also [published a notice](#) saying it has approved placing Sewickley Creek Watershed and its tributaries on the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry.

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **February 1** – [Joint Legislative Air & Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) presentation on PA's nutrient trading program.
- **February 1** – House Game & Fisheries Committee meets to hear Game Commission annual report
- **February 2** – Groundhog Day, [watch live via the Internet!](#)
- **February 2** – House Game & Fisheries Committee meets to hear Fish & Boat Commission annual report.
- **February 2** – Joint Legislative Budget & Finance Committee meeting to release report on DCNR snowmobile and ATV program.
- **February 2** – [Governor's Energy Board](#) meeting.
- **February 4-5** - [Farming for the Future conference](#) in State College.
- **February 9** – Governor's Budget Address (yes this is a change caused by football)

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- **February 9** – Grassroots Recycling: Getting the Most out of Your Home Composting Program. HACC, Harrisburg Area Community College. Amy Cicchiao, 800-769-7767. www.PropRecycles.org .
- **February 9** – Watershed Awareness for the Community. Delaware County. Sue Cochrane 610-353-1555, ext. 232. www.PRC.org
- **February 15** – DEP Citizens Advisory Council meeting Harrisburg.
- **February 24** – Advanced Composting. State College. Amy Cicchiao, 800-769-7767. www.PropRecycles.org .
- **March 2** – Backyard Composting Class. Delaware County. Sue Cochrane 610-353-1555, ext. 232. www.PRC.org
- **March 5** – [Schuylkill Watershed Congress](#), Montgomery County Community College, Pottstown
- **April 10-12** – [Engineering Sustainability 2005](#) – University of Pittsburgh School of Engineering.
- **May 6-7** - **West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium** -_Location: Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College, PA _Contact: Amy Wolfe at 570-726-3118 or awolfe@tu.org

DEP Calendar of Events

Watershed Events

(courtesy [PA Organizations for Watersheds & Rivers](#))

Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar

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

Senate Committee Schedule House Committee Schedule

Helpful Web Links

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

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

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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