



# — PA — Environment Digest

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

February 6, 2006

## Youth Disconnected from the Outdoors – Potential Solutions

It's a fact, connecting youth to the environment through environmental education programs makes them not only good stewards of the environment, but better citizens.

That's the theme of several articles in this week's *Digest*.

An article last October from the Chesapeake Bay Journal ([Out of Sight, Out of Mind](#)) noted that biking riding dropped 19 percent and fishing by more than 10 percent for elementary-aged children and more than 26 percent for teens.

In his annual report to the House Game and Fisheries Committee this week, Dr. Douglas Austen noted the fact that fishing by children aged 6 to 15 dropped from 41 percent in 1995 to 35 percent in 2000.

The competition for time for parents and children has gotten worse, but the result has been to disconnect today's youth from the environment.

Dr. Austen is calling for an expansion of youth fishing education programs through some very innovative efforts, including a new Junior Fishing License that would help fund these activities.

In addition to more details on Dr. Austen's presentation, this week's *Digest* features several opportunities for teachers and students to be involved in environmental education activities like internships, awards programs, workshops and conferences.

As the saying goes, "Education is Expensive, But Try Ignorance."

In environment education, ignorance can also be at the expense of promoting good environmental stewardship.

Have other solutions? Send them to: [DHess@HolstonCrisci.com](mailto:DHess@HolstonCrisci.com).

**Links:** [Pennsylvania League of Angling Youth](#)  
[Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education](#)



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## Session Schedule

The House and Senate return to session February 6 and will be in for the next two weeks, then take a break for [budget hearings](#) throughout February and the beginning of March.

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- Pittsburgh Voyager Announces Contest to Name New Green Vessel
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- Reminder - 2006 Environmental Educators Conference March 24-26

### Feature

- **Teaming Up for the Environment – Part I - Townships Collaborate with Conservation Districts**, *By Jennifer L. Hawbaker, PA Township News*

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## On the Hill

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### On the Senate, House Agenda

The Senate and House are set to consider a variety of environmental bills and issues. Here's the rundown...

### Calendars

The House starts the week with these bills on their Calendar-- [House Bill 2067](#) setting limits on state spending through a constitutional amendment; [House Bill 1902](#) eliminating the sunset date on the \$2/ton Recycling Fee; and requiring Recycling Performance Grants to be used for local recycling and waste reduction efforts.

On the Senate Calendar is [House Bill 2054](#) that makes changes to the Eminent Domain Code in response to the *Kelo* decision; [House Bill 1114](#) expanding waste tire recycling program; and [Senate Bill 1025](#) would establish a Pennsylvania Clean Car Program by adopting federal Tier II standards.

### Committees

In the House, the Environmental Resources & Energy Committee will hold a public hearing on [House Bill 2141](#) and adopting the California vehicle emission standards for Pennsylvania; and Game and Fisheries Committee will hear a presentation on the Game Commission's annual and Growing Greener reports

### Senate/House Bills Moving

Legislation on the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy, setting up a Forestry Task Force and a resolution urging Congress to reauthorize federal funding for abandoned mine reclamation were just some of the highlights of legislative activity this week. Here's a rundown.

### On the Governor's Desk

**Open Space Preservation:** [House Bill 87](#) (Steil-R-Bucks) further authorizing local governments to preserve open space through the waiver of certain service fees. The bill was signed into law and is now Act 4.

### Given Final Action

**Forestry Task Force:** [Senate Resolution 137](#) (Madigan-R-Bradford) re-establishing the Forestry Task Force supported by the Joint Legislative Air & Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee was given final action by the House and Senate.

**Federal Mine Reclamation Funding:** [House Resolution 382](#) urging Congress to reauthorize the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund was given final action by the House and Senate.

**Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy:** [Senate Resolution 207](#) urging DEP to place a nine month moratorium on implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy was adopted by the Senate unanimously.

## Senate

**Capital Budget:** [House Bill 2317](#) (Feese-R-Lycoming) 2005-2006 Capital Budget for flood control, Keystone Recreation, Environmental Stewardship projects was amended several times to add projects and reported from Senate Appropriations.

## House

**Donations of Property:** [Senate Bill 640](#) authorizes claims for taxes, water, lighting fees to be forgiven for donations of property was passed by the House and goes back to the Senate for a concurrence vote on House changes.

**Defending Conservation Easements:** [House Bill 671](#) (Reichley-R-Berks) requiring county farmland preservation boards to monitor and enforce agricultural conservation easements, including payment of legal costs associated with defending easements was referred to House Appropriations.

**Infrastructure Tax Credit:** [House Bill 2069](#) (Payne-R-Dauphin) providing a tax credit to provide security systems for critical infrastructure-- water and wastewater systems, data storage and processing, chemical factories, hydroelectric facilities, dams, electrical generating facilities, gas and oil storage, telecommunications, Internet, banking and financial institutions and health facilities was referred to House Appropriations Committee.

## Senate Hears From Mine Workers, Industry, DEP on Deep Mine Safety

The [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee](#) heard comments from the coal industry, mine workers and the current and former Secretaries of DEP on the issue of modernizing Pennsylvania's 1961 bituminous mine safety law.

Legislation sponsored by Sen. Kasunic (D-Somerset), [Senate Bill 949](#) before the Committee, and its companion [House Bill 2229](#) sponsored by Rep. Bastian (R-Somerset), make changes in law recommended by investigations of the 2002 Quecreek Mine Accident.

Current DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty [recounted the steps DEP](#) took over the last 3 years to change regulations and program requirements in response to the Quecreek investigations and the Governor's Commission on Mine Voids.



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Secretary McGinty also provided an [overview of Pennsylvania’s Deep Mine Safety Program](#) including number of inspections, safety record and a cross section of rescue efforts.

DEP reported the number of fatalities in Pennsylvania’s underground mines (coal and noncoal) totaled eight over the last six years, with none in anthracite and industrial mineral mining during that time. That’s in stark contrast to the early history of coal mining when in just one year – 1907—1,514 people died in mines in Pennsylvania. Since 1870, 51,504 people have died in Pennsylvania mines.

[Former DEP Secretary David Hess](#) provided background on the results of investigations and actions right after the 2002 Quecreek Mine Accident and testified in support of legislation saying it was needed to help Pennsylvania’s mine safety law keep up with changes in technology and safety procedures. In addition, he recommended the bill also include—

- **Miner Families First:** A “Mine Families First” program that adopts the policy Gov. Schweiker used during the Quecreek Rescue to make sure families of the trapped miners got accurate information first about rescue operations, before the media, to avoid communications problems like those encountered in West Virginia;
- **Open Adoption of Rules:** Require the adoption of mine safety regulations by a proposed Mine Safety Board through an open and public process;
- **Clear Authority to Respond:** Provide DEP with full, clear authority to conduct rescue operations and investigate the causes of accidents;
- **Restoration Costs:** Make sure the costs of restoring sites involved in a mine rescue can be recovered from mine operators and paid for under the proposed Mine Safety Fund; and
- **Flexibility to Add Safety Measures:** Assure the Mine Safety Board has the authority to adopt safety regulations that go beyond the specifics included in the 215 page bill so they can keep up with changes in technology.

[Edward Yankovich](#), vice-president of the United Mine Workers of America, said Pennsylvania and other states need to investigate new technologies for locating and communicating with trapped miners.

Yankovich recommended looking at the requirements just adopted by West Virginia in the wake of the Sago mine accident and called for more vigorous enforcement of existing mine safety requirements.

[George Ellis](#), president of the Pennsylvania Coal Association, said significant changes were made in Pennsylvania’s underground mine safety program after the Quecreek Mine accident and Pennsylvania mines are among the safest in the country.

But, PCA opposes Senate Bill 949 because it expands the differences between the federal mine safety program and Pennsylvania’s own requirements and increases duplication between the programs.

The Committee expects to consider mine safety legislation in the next few weeks.

Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) chairs the Senate Environmental Committee along with Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) who is Democratic Chair.

**NewsClip:** [Secretary Testifies Before Senate Panel on Mine Safety “Blood on our Hands” Without Mining Law Update](#)  
[Lawmakers Urged to Update Mining Law](#)  
[Editorial: Mine Safety](#)

[What Are the Chances?](#)

**Link:** [Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation, Somerset](#)

**House Committee Reports Alternative Fuels Tax Credit, State Energy Office Bills**

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee reported out legislation creating a tax credit for alternative energy enterprises and to establish a State Energy Office.

[House Bill 1964](#) (Ross-R-Chester) would authorize investment tax credits for qualified alternative energy producers; and

[House Bill 2253](#) (George-D-Clearfield) would create a State Energy Office and Energy Advisory Council within the Department of Environmental Protection.

Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware) chairs the Committee and Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) serves as Democratic Chair.

**Fish & Boat Commission Presents Annual Report to House Game & Fisheries**



The [Fish & Boat Commission](#) reported the number of licenses sold was down after last year's fee increase, but revenue is up and efforts to promote habitat restoration, youth involvement in fishing and its projects funded by Growing Greener bonds are moving ahead.

Dr. Douglas Austen, Executive Director of the Fish and Boat Commission, made the comments as he presented his [annual report and a special Growing Greener bond project report](#) to the House Game and Fisheries Committee this week.

Dr. Austen said the decline in the number of licenses issued was expected and paralleled previous experiences with fee increases. Revenue increased by over 21 percent, boosted by the sale of over 25,000 of the new Lake Erie permits.

Contracts have been awarded or will be awarded shortly for upgrades to five of the Commission's hatcheries—Tylersville, Pleasant Gap, Bellefonte, Huntsdale and Benner Springs—with more projects in the planning stages. The projects are funded with Growing Greener bond funds.

Dr. Austen noted the Commission still has significant unmet capital project needs, even with the new funding, at the 14 hatcheries, 62 dams and over 250 boat access sites it manages.

Pennsylvania continues to be a leader in dam removal to improve aquatic habitat. Last year there were 11 dam removals resulting in re-opening 100 miles of stream habitat for migratory and riverine fishes.

Last year a new Division of Fish Habitat and Restoration was created within the Commission, and new field staff was hired around the state to work with a variety of partners to conduct habitat restoration projects.

Dr. Austen noted he has focused more Commission resources on habitat restoration because of his involvement in the [National Fish Habitat Initiative](#). This federal effort has worked with a variety of partners to attract new funding from both public and private



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partners, including the [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#), which hopes to raise \$125 million nationwide for habitat restoration projects.

The Commission is on track to put a new Point of Sale program in place by December 1 of this year which promises more convenience for both license buyers and license sellers.

Dr. Austen outlined several initiatives underway to engage youth in fishing, including new education programs and a [proposal for a Junior Fishing License](#). Proceeds from the new license would be earmarked for youth education activities.

Research compiled by the Commission and the Governor's Youth Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation clearly shows youth involvement in the outdoors is declining because of all the competition with other activities.

"We need to face up to the fact that young people are busy, have money, and have an overwhelming and exhaustive litany of events, electronic toys, and distractions imposed upon their time," Dr. Austin said.

"Research clearly shows that good, well-structured youth fishing programs lead to kids increasing their skills, fishing more, and building a greater sense of aquatic stewardship and outdoor ethics. So not only do good youth fishing programs create better anglers, they create better citizens."

Dr. Austen said he would be discussing the proposal with members of the Committee to creatively address concerns about the cost of a Junior License, enforcement and other issues. There are 272,000 youth ages 12 to 15 in Pennsylvania.

A copy of the [Fish & Boat Commission's full 2005 annual report is online](#).

A copy of [Dr. Austen's remarks to the Committee are available online](#).

The Game Commission will present its annual report to the House Game and Fisheries Committee on February 9.

**Links:** [Out of Sight? Out of Mind? Youth Disconnected from the Outdoors. Pennsylvania League of Angling Youth](#)

### Bills Introduced

**Windmills:** [House Bill 2413](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) amends the PA Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act to allow property enrolled in the program to be used for wind power generation.

**Registered Septic Inspectors:** [House Bill 2416](#) (Saylor-R-York) establishing the Rural Homeowner and Real Estate Buyer Protection Act requiring septic system inspectors to register with the Department of State.

### In Other News

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#### Applications Invited for New Round of Funding for Conservation Projects

Pennsylvania Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission this week announced they are accepting project applications for the [State Wildlife Grants Program](#). The deadline for applications is April 7.

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The commissions are seeking projects that will help address conservation needs for high-priority conservation projects for endangered, threatened and at-risk species across Pennsylvania.

In 2005, the two agencies awarded more than \$1.14 million in State Wildlife Grants funding. Since 2001, Pennsylvania has received \$11.9 million through this program.

For more information and an application packet, visit the [State Wildlife Grants Program webpage](#).

### Applications Due for Meaningful Watershed Education Experiences Grants

The Department of Education is now accepting applications for the “Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences” Grant Program from schools by March.30.

MWEE grants were authorized in 2005 through legislation passed by Chesapeake Bay Commission member Rep. Pete Zug (R-Lebanon).

The program provides up to \$3,000 to schools and other local partners to provide meaningful watershed or habitat educational experiences to students.

The [application is available online](#) and more information is available by contacting Patty Vathis, Environment and Ecology Advisor to PDE by sending email to [pvathis@state.pa.us](mailto:pvathis@state.pa.us).

**Link:** [CBF Guide to Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences](#)

### CBF Offers Free Native Trees to Watershed Groups

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation is offering free native trees and shrubs to watershed and community groups throughout South Central Pennsylvania through its “[Trees for Streams](#)” Program.

Applications must be received no later than March 15. The trees and shrubs will be distributed through [Octoraro Native Plant Nursery](#).

“The Trees for Streams program has been a big success, allowing CBF to provide the expertise and trees to more than 100 groups during the last four years,” said Dave Wise, CBF PA Water Restoration Scientist. “Streamside buffers are essential for healthy streams and waterways.”

Streamside buffer planting projects improve water quality, stabilize banks, reduce soil erosion, and provide healthy habitat for fish and other wildlife.

“Trees for Streams” is supported by both State and Federal funding, specifically through the Department of Environmental Protection’s Growing Greener grant program, as well as through a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant program. This year 17,000 trees and shrubs will be available.

In September 2004, the Stroud Water Research Center released a technical journal article, “[Riparian Deforestation, Stream Narrowing, and Loss of Stream Ecosystem Services](#),” which found that streamside, particularly forested, buffers are the single most important step we can take in protecting and enhancing the quality of Pennsylvania’s streams and rivers.

CBF is now offering a general summary of that report, titled “Forested Buffers: the Key to Clean Streams” through its Harrisburg office.



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

Groups must order a minimum of 200 trees and shrubs to be picked up at the Octoraro Native Plant Nursery in Lancaster County.

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

For an application and more information, visit the “[Trees for Streams](#)” Program website or contact Cathy Hiebert at 717-234-5550 or send email to: [chiebert@cbf.org](mailto:chiebert@cbf.org).

### Reminder – 2006 Coldwater Conference February 24-25

The [2006 Keystone Coldwater Conference](#) will be held in State College on February 24 and 25. Registration deadline is February 6.

The Coldwater Conference is the ideal way to share ideas and concepts for protecting watersheds among a diverse group of people from all over Pennsylvania.

Come join the fun! Visit the [Keystone Coldwater Conference webpage](#) for more information.

### Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy Announces Environmental Award Winners

The [Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy](#) has announced the winners of its 2006 environmental awards which honor those projects and organizations that have committed their time and energy to help protect the watershed.

The 2006 winners are:

- **Municipal Environmental Award - Montgomery County Conservation District**

The [Conservation District](#) has been striving to reduce soil losses throughout the County and as a result protecting the water resources that otherwise would be polluted by construction and agricultural run-off. We commend their efforts at increasing tree cover throughout the Watershed, for assisting watershed farmers by installing streamside fencing and riparian buffers and for managing the County-wide TreeVitalize effort, making it possible for all of Montgomery County's environmental organizations to participate.

- **Land Use Environmental Award – TreeVitalize**

Trees are the most important stormwater management and pollution control device available today. [TreeVitalize](#) is committed to restoring tree cover throughout southeastern Pennsylvania, thereby improving water quality conditions with each project. TreeVitalize has provided more than 1000 trees for use by the PWC in projects at the Colledgeville Dam site, locations around the Green Lane Reservoir and at the East Greenville Water Treatment Plant site. TreeVitalize is supported by the PA Horticultural Society, DCNR, DEP and corporate sponsors.

- **Corporate Environmental Award - Aqua Pennsylvania**

[Aqua PA](#) has assisted the PWC in a variety of ways for many, many years. In addition to regular financial contributions, Aqua PA is a major supporter of the TreeVitalize program, thus providing trees throughout the watershed. In addition, Aqua PA supports the Conservancy's annual Stream Clean-up both financially and with Aqua PA volunteers, they

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test the Conservancy's water supply regularly to ensure its safety for our program participants and staff, and Aqua PA is a vital partner on nearly all of our conservation projects.

- **Protector of the Watershed - Valley Forge Audubon Society**

[VFAS is located at Mill Grove](#), John James Audubon's boyhood home in Audubon PA. VFAS and Audubon National have undertaken a campaign to restore Mill Grove, preserving one of the most important properties along the Perkiomen Creek. In addition, VFAS has preserved the Meng Preserve in Lower Frederick Township. The Meng Preserve consists of acres of vulnerable diabase soils and forest lands on Stone Hill in Lower Frederick Township. Preserved lands on Stone Hill are critical to protecting water quality in Swamp Creek.

- **Friends of the Watershed - Adam & Gwen Supplee**

Adam & Gwen know the meaning of stewardship! Adam was instrumental in establishing the native plant "McCabe Garden" at the PWC headquarters. Adam & Gwen have both volunteered for conservation projects throughout the watershed including the basin naturalization project in Lower Providence and the Upper Frederick Scioto Creek effort. They were team leaders at the Collegeville Dam revegetation site, helping to plant more than 600 trees in record time. And they lead teams in the annual Stream Clean-Up. Gwen also serves on the PWC Special Events Committee.

- **Kids Making a Difference - Boyertown High School Science Class**

Rick Thomas's Science classes may have calluses on their hands but they also have a deep understanding of what it means to get involved! Over the last year, these Boyertown High School Science classes have invested hundreds of hours planting trees and shrubs in riparian buffers along the Perkiomen Creek and its tributaries in Upper Hanover and Collegeville. Great Attitudes and strong hands - what a combination!

- **Teaching Excellence - Jim Coffey, Upper Perkiomen High School**

Jim's students have been nominated for an award to be presented by the [Schuylkill Action Network](#) during Drinking Water Week in May. He is very modest about his involvement in inspiring these kids to work so hard for environmental issues but Jim has been teaching about water quality, stormwater management and watershed protection for more than a decade. In 2005 he convinced the Upper Perkiomen High School to make some changes to how they managed their stormwater on school property and directed his classes in planting the water gardens and swales.

The awards will be presented on March 23, at the Barn at Birchwood, Collegeville.

For more information, contact Lori Horning at [lorning@perkiomenwatershed.org](mailto:lorning@perkiomenwatershed.org)

### **Westmoreland Conservation District Wins National Award**

The [Westmoreland Conservation District's](#) communications efforts have been named the best in the United States by the National Association of Conservation Districts and the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.

The joint award for Excellence in Communications was made at NACD's annual meeting on February 1 in Houston, Texas was accepted by District Vice Chairman Ron Rohall.

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The judges evaluated entries from all over the nation for their effective use of a variety of communications media, including newsletters, special publications, media, and campaigns.

Some of the specific communication items for which the Westmoreland Conservation District was recognized include its newsletter, Landmarks; its most recent annual report, which featured a driving tour of conservation sites in Westmoreland County; and the wide variety of communications that promote its conservation-education program.

“Our board of directors recognizes the importance of communications and has made a solid commitment to these endeavors,” said Greg Phillips, district manager and CEO. “At the Board’s direction, we did a lot of work in 2005 to evaluate all of our communications efforts... and we enlisted the help of a variety of professionals – including a newly formed volunteer committee of communications experts – to help us make some subtle but important changes that increased their effectiveness. This award is strong validation that we are on the right track.”

The primary communications team includes Phillips; Mark Jackson, visual communications specialist; and Karen Jurkovic, communications consultant. The communications advisory team also includes: Ted Kopas, John Turack, and Anita Foriska.

Interested individuals can sign up to receive District communications free-of-charge by calling the organization at 724-837-5271 or visit the [Westmoreland Conservation District website](#).

### **York Watershed Alliance Hosting “Next Steps to a Sustainable York” Workshop**

The Watershed Alliance of York County is sponsoring a free workshop on February 21 that invites individuals and groups for a discussion of projects that will promote the sustainability in the county.

The workshop builds on the 14 next steps identified in the “Pigs, Parks & Superstores: A Conference on the Sustainability of York County” in September and will be held from 7:00 to 9:00 PM, at the York County ANNEX (Pleasant Acres).

The September conference covered issues and topics such as those involving agriculture, environmental education programming, engaging local elected officials and council of governments, political action, advocacy, economics forum, promoting lifestyle alternatives, sustainability issues, tools to effect change, public participation, implementing sustainable systems locally, protecting living resources, natural resources valuation processes, leveraging financial resources, and Smart Growth talking points.

The Watershed Alliance of York is a coalition of stakeholders committed to being innovative leaders encouraging watershed-based planning, restoration and protection, through locally led conservation, education and stewardship initiatives, in York County and beyond.

For more information, contact Gary R. Peacock at 840-7430 or send email to [gpeacock@yorkccd.org](mailto:gpeacock@yorkccd.org).

Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)

### **McKean County Workshop Set on Wetlands, Stream Impact Issues**

The Department of Environmental Protection is sponsoring a workshop February 21 in McKean County to help local government officials, contractors and developers better understand how wetland- and stream-related issues can impact developments.

The session will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Foster Township Municipal Building, 1185 E. Main St., Bradford.

Presentation information will include: State and federal permitting related to wetlands, streams, ponds and more; Guidelines for maintenance or placement of culverts and bridge structures; Steps for developers to take when planning new development; Recommendations for commercial and industrial site development; Floodplains and what they mean for development; and, Guidelines for utility line stream crossings.

Reservations must be made by February 16 with DEP's Jennifer Mongera, 814-332-6816, [jmongera@state.pa.us](mailto:jmongera@state.pa.us) ; or Jeff Andrews at the Bradford Office of Community and Economic Development, 814-368-7170, [jandrews@bradfordpa.org](mailto:jandrews@bradfordpa.org) .

### **Webcasts Offer Free Energy Saving Advice to Manufacturers**

The U.S. Department of Energy's Industrial Assessment Centers will webcast a series of five lectures aimed at improving industrial energy management in February, March, April, May and June.

The lecture series is part of the national campaign to [Save Energy Now](#) announced by the U.S. Department of Energy in October.

The lectures will be presented monthly by professors, internationally-recognized experts in their fields, currently serving as IAC Directors at universities across the country.

Topics to be addressed and the date of each webcast include:

- February 15 - Energy Efficient Building Management Strategies;
- March 15 - Measuring And Improving Boiler Efficiency;
- April 12 - Combined Heat And Power;
- May 10 - Optimizing Combustion Systems; and
- June 14 - Steam System Management.

All presentations are free and will run from noon to 1 p.m. EST. [Register for one or all five events online.](#) The [presentations will be archived online](#) as well for later viewing.

For more information, visit [DOE's Industrial Assessment Centers webpage](#)

Questions about the IAC lecture series, Pennsylvania's support for [Save Energy Now](#), and IAC services in Pennsylvania can be directed to Ric Illig in the DEP Office of Energy & Technology Deployment at 717-772-5834, e-mail [rillig@state.pa.us](mailto:rillig@state.pa.us) .

### **Fundamentals of Geology Seminars for Professional Geologists Set**

The [Pennsylvania Council of Professional Geologists](#) is sponsoring a series of four Fundamentals of Geology seminars for professional geologists in February and March.

On February 16 and 17 two seminars will be held in Pittsburgh and on March 18 and 19 the same seminars will be repeated in Camp Hill (near Harrisburg).

For more information, visit the [Fundamentals of Geology and Practicing Geology Seminars for Professional Geologists webpage](#).

### **Federal Agencies Adopt High Performance, Sustainable Building Principles**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and several federal agencies, including the Department of Defense and General Services Administration, agreed to a set of guiding principles for designing, building, and operating federal facilities that will save energy and protect the environment.

Energy efficiency is a key element of the principles, officially titled, "[The Federal Leadership Memorandum of Understanding to adopt Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings](#)."

Agreed to at the White House Summit on Federal Sustainable Buildings, the guiding principles integrate design, energy performance, water conservation, indoor air quality, and sustainable materials to ensure that new buildings are among the most energy efficient in the country.

They also outline that building components should exceed the energy code, and that the actual energy performance of a building, during and through the first year of operation, should be verified against its design target using EPA's Energy Star performance rating system for buildings.

The federal government owns approximately 445,000 buildings with a total floor space of over 3 billion square feet, in addition to leasing 57,000 buildings comprising 374 million square feet of floor space. If federal buildings reduce energy by 10 percent, in 10 years taxpayers would save \$420 million dollars and reduce greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those from more than 625,000 cars.

For more information, download the [Guiding Principles for Federal Leadership](#) and visit the [Energy Star buildings webpage](#).

### **Nominations Invited for PA CleanWays Litter Hawk Youth Award Program**



PA CleanWays this week invited nominations for its [Litter Hawk Youth Award Program](#) for two age groups, 10 and under and 11 to 18. The deadline for nominations is March 31.

The Litter Hawk program gives youth and teens a chance to illustrate their concern about littering and illegal dumping prevention, recycling, proper disposal, beautification, and stewardship through visual arts, language arts, and community outreach.

Entries will be judged on creativity and the project's ability to convey the chosen theme. Three winning entries in each age group will receive gift cards in the amount of \$75 (10 and under) and \$100 (11-18). Awards will be announced during Earth Month (April).

This program was developed by PA CleanWays with support from the Department of Environmental Protection.

PA CleanWays has chapters in the following counties: Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Cumberland, Elk, Fayette, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson (also serving Clarion and

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Clearfield), Lawrence, McKean, Mifflin, and Somerset. Affiliates include: PA CleanWays of Allegheny County, Inc., PA CleanWays of Greene County, Inc., and Clinton County CleanScapes, Inc. (serving Clinton, Centre, and Lycoming Counties).

For more information, visit the [Litter Hawk Youth Award Program webpage](#), or contact the PA CleanWays office at 877-772-3673.

### **Student Interns Wanted - Western Pennsylvania Conservancy**

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is seeking applicants for several internships for the summer season at locations throughout Western Pennsylvania. The application deadline is March 15.

**Northwest Fish and Mussel Intern -- 2 openings (May-October, dates are flexible) --** Northwest Field Station is seeking interns for summer field sampling of fish and freshwater mussels in the Allegheny and French Creek watersheds.

Qualified individuals should possess or be working toward a bachelor's degree, with experience working with macro invertebrates, fish and/or freshwater mussels preferred. SCUBA certification is strongly desired. GPS & GIS experience helpful, but not required.

Must be able to swim; be willing to work on various water vessels; spend long hours out-of-doors; and travel to different field sites with overnight stays. Positions are located at Lake Pleasant in Erie County. Housing is available and will pay an hourly wage.

**County Natural Heritage Inventory Intern (2) (May 1-Sept. 30) --** Responsibilities include transporting and setting up field equipment; plant and animal specimen collection; note taking; measurement and recording of ecological data & other documentation of populations of rare plant, animal & natural communities; and navigation using map & compass and /or GPS. Successful candidate will be at least a junior majoring in an environmental course of studies.

Coursework in biology and ecology required. Field study and GIS experience very helpful. Must be able to traverse rugged terrain and spend long hours out-of-doors, and travel to field sites throughout Western Pennsylvania. Position is based in Pittsburgh and will pay an hourly wage.

**Botany Intern (unpaid) (June through August) --** Description: Will assist the Botanist with field surveys and, to some extent, reporting. Will include some long days in the field working at times under adverse weather conditions. Qualifications: Strong conservation ethic. Interest in learning the native flora. Willingness to spend several consecutive days away from home on a regular basis.

**Conservation Data Intern (unpaid) --** Internship dates and term length are flexible, although the Intern must be able to complete at least 160 hours of work. Assist in the management of Natural Heritage Program computer and manual files by entering information from literature, reports, field surveys, data tables; mapping locations in GIS;



## PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

researching record errors; and carrying out clerical tasks as needed. Develop skills in GIS, GPS, Oracle, Access and data management.

Qualifications: Applicants should have completed at least their sophomore year majoring in environmental science, biology, or a related field. Familiarity with computers, GIS, and positioning tools such as GPS and topographic maps are strongly desired.

To apply, send resume and letter of interest, including availability dates to: Nancy Bassett, SPHR, Senior Director Human Resources, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Box R, Mill Run, PA 15464.

### **Environmental Education Workshops for Teachers Set for March, May**

Two separate environmental education workshops have been set for teachers sponsored by Saint Vincent College and the Fish and Boat and Susquehanna River Basin commissions.

**On March 21** the Fish and Boat and Susquehanna River Basin commissions will host a “Wild About Shad” educators workshop featuring hands-on aquatic and fisheries activities at PPL’s Holtwood Environmental Center, Lancaster County.

Educators will receive Project WILD Aquatic K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide and Act 48 continuing teacher education credits.

The workshop will run from 8:30 to 4:30 and the cost is \$15.

For more information contact Ann Devine from SRBC at 717-238-0423 ext. 314 or send email to: [adevine@srbc.net](mailto:adevine@srbc.net). Deadline for registration is March 14.

**On May 19** Saint Vincent College is hosting a teacher education workshop based on the classic writings of conservationist and author Aldo Leopold.

The Leopold Education Project workshop is an innovative, interdisciplinary, critical thinking, conservation and environmental education curriculum based on Leopold’s writings that teaches the public about humanity’s ties to the natural environment.

Act 48 credits are available to meet teacher continuing education requirements.

For more information, [register online](#), go to the [Saint Vincent College Environmental Education Center website](#) or contact Angela Belli, 724-805-2051, or send email to: [angela.belli@email.stvincent.edu](mailto:angela.belli@email.stvincent.edu), or Beth Langham 724-805-2298

Checkout the Winter 2006 issue of the [Wetland Whispers newsletter](#) from the Center.

### **Bucks County Group Looking for Environmental Education Partners**

Organizers of a new Bucks County Nature Center are looking for an existing nonprofit group with whom they can affiliate to create a four acre environmental education center.

The mission of the group is to educate young children (K-5) about the sensory and interdependent worlds of nature/animals/people, and demonstrate the wisdom of land and water management that protects and enhances the quality of life in the region.

They are hoping to create a system that prevents storm water runoff, increases water staying on the property, and to create a space where experimental methods of water management can be explored and developed.

For more information contact Susan Talia deLone by sending email to: [sdelone@comcast.net](mailto:sdelone@comcast.net) .

## Pittsburgh Voyager Announces Contest to Name New Green Vessel



In honor of the arrival of a new boat for the environmental education fleet of Pittsburgh Voyager, the organization is holding a “name that boat” and poster contest for students throughout Western Pennsylvania.

The contests are open to students in grades 4-12. Deadline for submissions is February 28.

“[Name That Boat](#)” asks students to create a one to three-word name for the new vessel, keeping its green design in mind.

“[What a Green Boat Means To Me](#)” challenges students to create an 8.5” x 11” poster that expresses creatively the design and mission of the new vessel.

The poster contest must be entered by mail, but students are able to enter the boat-naming competition online, with the help of a parent.

Winners will be announced this spring at a special April event featuring speaker Jean-Michel Cousteau, filmmaker and founder of the Oceans Futures Society.

Prizes in the contest include 90-minute Adventure Voyages for the winning students and their classmates, and the chance to be honorary captain or crew when the new vessel sails into the Port of Pittsburgh.

At 90 feet in length, the new boat has a capacity of up to 150 people, and has been engineered according to the principals of green, environmentally friendly construction and operations.

The new craft features bio-diesel generators to power electric propulsion systems, abundant use of natural light, and other features that help to conserve resources and minimize waste production.

[Pittsburgh Voyager](#) is a non-profit river education center operating from downtown Pittsburgh.

For contest entry information, visit the [Pittsburgh Voyager Contests webpage](#).

## Students Invited to Enter Junior Duck Stamp Wildlife Art Contest



PA’s Kristina Bohrman,  
2005 Best of Show Entry

Students are invited to enter the federal [Junior Duck Stamp Program Art Contest](#) sponsored by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and hosted in Pennsylvania by the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum in Philadelphia.

Entries must be postmarked by March 15.

All entries for the contest need to be of native North American waterfowl species painted or drawn and sent to the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge, 8601 Lindbergh Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19153 and postmarked by March 15.

Open to all students aged K-12, the federal Junior

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Duck Stamp Program combines environmental education with the arts as youth in each of four age classes (K-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12 grades) compete for prizes and the chance to move on to national judging in Washington.

First, second, third and honorable mention winners will be judged for each age group and the overall best of show will then compete for the national prize.

Last year Kristina Bohrman, age 16 and a Junior at Pocono Mountain West High School, Pocono Summit, Pennsylvania, won Best-of-Show in the Pennsylvania Federal Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest.

Kristina designed a drake wood duck in watercolor to win First Place, grades 10-12 and Best-of-Show. Bohrman's winning entry was forwarded to the Best-in-the-Nation Competition, to compete with entries from all states and two U.S. Territories for the National Grand Prize.

First Place National Winner receives a \$5,000 cash award and a free trip to Washington, DC in the summer of 2006 to attend the First Day of Sales Ceremony, along with art teacher, one parent/guardian, and the Junior Duck Stamp state coordinator. The national first place winning design is used to produce the Federal Junior Duck Stamp.

The Second Place Winner receives a \$3,000 cash award; and the Third Place Winner receives a \$2,000 cash award. A separate judging will be held for the Conservation Message with the following awards: First Place \$500; Second Place \$300; and Third Place \$200. All National and State winning designs will be displayed during the year and returned to the students.

Contest entries are grouped in four categories by grade level. In addition to the Best-of-Show winner, there will be three first place winners, three second place winners and three third place winners in each category. There will also be 16 honorable mentions in each age category. Each entrant will receive a certificate of participation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program and Design Contest, contact State Coordinator, Gary M. Stolz at 215-365-3118, e-mail [gary\\_stolz@fws.gov](mailto:gary_stolz@fws.gov) or write: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, 8601 Lindbergh Blvd., Philadelphia, PA 19153.

Applications and further details can also be obtained on line at the [Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest webpage](#).

### **Reminder -- 2006 Environmental Educators Conference March 24-26**

Just a reminder the PA Association of Environmental Educators will hold their 2006 Conference in Ligonier from March 24 to 26.

Visit the [Conference webpage](#) for more information.

Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)

## Feature

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### Teaming Up for the Environment – Part I Townships Collaborate with Conservation Districts

*By Jennifer L. Hawbaker, PA Township News*

When time and money are tight and townships are facing environmental issues from stormwater management and soil erosion to rapid development, how can they address every concern of their own?

Fortunately, they don't have to.

In all but one of the states 67 counties, conservation districts are here to help municipalities care for their natural resources in an ever-changing world. Their programs have expanded to keep pace with the needs of the residents, local governments, and the many other groups they serve.

Now it's up to townships to make the most of the education, guidance and technical assistance available.

#### **Pike County**

The long-time residents of Delaware Township in Pike County treasure their scenic vistas and slower-paced way of life. So do a lot of recent transplants from metropolitan New York and New Jersey, some of whom arrive not very well-versed in the intricacies of the rural lifestyles.

“We had people move in who thought their septic system was an irrigation system and started to pull it all apart,” says township supervisor Ileana Hernandez. “People have to understand that whatever they do in their yard affects not just that property but all the groundwater in the area.”

The need to educate a population that has doubled over the last 10 years is clear, as is the need to manage the natural resources throughout Pennsylvania's fastest growing county. That's a tall order for townships that already have their hands full with the day-to-day business of running a municipality. And that's where the [Pike County Conservation District](#) comes in, providing education and technical assistance to make sure that a growing population doesn't mean dwindling or deteriorating resources.

#### **The Evolution of Conservation Districts**

Conservation districts developed as a reaction to the drought-stricken “dust bowl” days of the 1930s, mainly to prevent soil erosion and conserve water resources.

The state legislature authorized counties to establish these districts in 1945, and today, every county but Philadelphia has one. They are just as diverse as the groups they serve, with varying levels of resources and different focuses depending on local needs.

“In the first 20-some years of their existence, they dealt mostly with the federal Soil Conservation Services on agriculture-related issues,” said Karl Brown, executive secretary for the State Conservation Commission. “In the early '70s, there was a shift in focus when they took on responsibility for erosion and sedimentation control from the state, and that has been evolving ever since.”

And that's just the beginning.



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Many Pennsylvania townships associate the conservation districts with dirt and gravel road funding, since the state allocates funds to the districts, which in turn pass that money on to municipalities.

Their charge does well beyond that, however, to include environmental education; forest, stormwater, floodplain and nutrient management; agricultural preservation; abandoned mine land reclamation; biosolids; erosion and sedimentation pollution control; and more.

“One of the things that makes each conservation district different,” Brown says, “is that they’re created as independent entities like a municipal authority would be created. Over the years, they’ve established varying relationships with their county governments.”

About half of the districts, Brown says, operate almost completely independently of the county, while the other half have varying degrees of county oversight. Each is led by a board of directors made up of local volunteers, and the Pennsylvania Conservation Commission provides state-level oversight and support to the 66 district offices.

The funding that allows the districts to carry out their mission and offer most of their services for no charges comes from a variety of sources, a reality that many township supervisors can related to.

Some funds come from line items in the budgets of the state departments of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, and others include Chesapeake Bay money allocated to DEP, the Nutrient Management Fund administered by the state Department of Agriculture and various grant sources.

In fact, says John Orr, the Dauphin County Conservation District manager, “I think we have 25 different funding sources. It is very complex.”

One thing that remains uniform statewide is the districts’ charge to work with local governments. “The law allows them to meet and work with municipalities,” Brown says. More specifically, it empowers county conservation districts to help local governments with subdivision and land development reviews, developing and implementing stormwater management plans, and administering programs for flood control, and other natural resource concerns.

As the responsibilities of township supervisors have evolved, so has the focus of the conservation districts. Now more than ever, townships across the state are finding out just how valuable a collaborative relationship with county conservation districts can be.

### **Community Planning in Pike County**

That’s especially true in Pike County, where the conservation district is providing planning services that would otherwise take a big bite out of the townships’ budgets.

To make sure natural resources remain a principal focus in the face of unprecedented growth, the district partnered with the county commissioners and county planning office to obtain state funding for a community planning initiative. Townships are a primary beneficiary.

“We’re providing a couple of things to municipalities through the initiative,” says Susan Beecher, manager of Pike County Conservation District. “We’re offering natural resource inventories and build-out analyses based on current zoning and land use regulations. We’re also doing municipal ordinance evaluations, looking at how land use plans support resource conservation, and making recommendations and providing funds for townships that want to implement any of those recommendations.”

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Part of the project includes providing the municipalities with natural resource inventories in GIS – or geographic information system—format. A township official can pop a CD supplied by the conservation district into the computer and quickly see how to see resources relate to any property in the township. And better yet: Townships won't be on their own in the effort.

“We're hoping to have one of the people in the county planning office go in and do a tutorial and show them how to manipulate the information,” Beecher says. “A lot of our focus in the last 10 years has been to provide education and outreach to municipal officials on not just natural resource conservation topics but growth management and open space conservation.”

In addition to offering planning and conservation-related workshops to township officials, the conservation district is taking the lead in helping all the area newcomers get acquainted with their surroundings.

“A lot of people from New Jersey or New York don't understand the concept of local government,” says Ileana Hernandez, a supervisor for Delaware Township in Pike County, “so the district has held workshops on how local government works. They've also had a great series of workshops on open space and land development rights.”

Although the conservation district has been providing townships with planning-related resource management information for years, the townships did not have the means to use that information on their own.

“They were very receptive to the concepts but were telling us that they didn't have the financial and technical resources to get the information into their ordinances,” Beecher says. That's when the district started looking for funding to help the municipalities and found it through the state's Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program.

Lehman township, which supervisor Paul Menditto says is the fastest growing township in Pike County, looks to the conservation district for expertise in stormwater management, land use planning, and a host of other concerns. “We have our applicants submit plans to the conservation district for review, which takes the burden off of us,” Menditto says. “Otherwise, we would have to hire outside help and spend more in engineering review fees. Having the conservation district as a partner helps us be more efficient and avoid putting an extra burden on the taxpayers.”

### **Spelling Out Expectations in Westmoreland County**

Townships in Westmoreland County know all about partnerships and have solidified their relationships with the county conservation district in writing.

“When I first started here 20 years ago, we developed some municipal memorandums of understanding, and they grew into cooperative partnership agreements,” said Anthony Quadro, assistant district manager for the [Westmoreland County conservation district](#). “It spells out our relationship with them in a mutual agreement so they don't perceive us as coming in and stepping on their toes.”

As a result, everyone involved knows what their role is and how they can contribute to the overall goal of resource conservation. “We've worked very hard to say, ‘We want to help you out, and we think you can help us out to result in a mutual benefit,’” Quadro says. “We have been able to accomplish a lot.”

Those accomplishments include addressing issues unique to certain parts of the state, such as timber harvesting. When a company harvests on private land and issues arise



with erosion and sedimentation control, Quadro says, the landowner often asks the township to do something to keep the problems in check.

“It sometimes acts as the impetus for an ordinance,” he says. “We try to direct the municipalities and be proactive to work together on that and head off any problems.”

The conservation district has done that in part through the timber harvesting workshops it holds for municipal officials. Some municipalities, including Allegheny township, also have an agreement that the district will review any logging plans before the township issues permits. This helps to identify and correct potential issues before they become a reality, saving time and money for everyone involved.

“When the conservation district comes out on site, it speeds up the resolution process,” says township manager David Soboslay. “People know they are the experts, and it certainly makes a difference.

“Also,” he adds, “it’s hard to beat the price.”

The conservation district is also keeping townships up to speed on the new federal regulations for municipal separate storm sewer systems, or MS4s, and recently offered a workshop on the topic.

“We’re trying to act as a ‘go-between’ for the state and the municipalities,” Quadro says, “and help them figure out exactly what they need to do.”

With a mix of rural, agricultural, and developing areas in this county, the issues go beyond timber harvesting and stormwater management. Donegal township, for example, started working with the conservation district years ago, mainly to address pollution issues on the 25 miles of dirt roads in the township.

“The dirt and gravel road projects got us working with them quite a bit,” says Tom Stull, Jr., township supervisor and roadmaster. “they’ve also helped us in getting permits to put a small bridge in and have worked with local farmers to improve the water erosion problems on their properties.”

On one road, the township is still looking for solutions to erosion and stormwater runoff caused by years of strip mining, and the conservation district is helping to provide the answer. After a heavy rain, residents who live beside the road find their yards awash in sediment and new streams flowing where none had been before.

“This area had been strip-mined in the ‘70s and also in the late ‘90s and was never put back 100 percent right,” Strull says. “When the private property owners alerted us to how the streams had moved, we went to look and see if our road was causing it, but it was the strip mining. Now we’re working with the conservation district to see how we can alleviate the excess runoff.”

The township has also worked with the conservation district on other road erosion problems that are especially prevalent in this mountainous area.

“Probably eight or 10 times a year, we meet with the soil conservation staff and talk about different things we’re doing to get their professional opinion,” Stull says. “I feel they’ve really helped us improve the quality of the streams in our township.”

At one time, Stull says, if a township supervisor heard the words “conservation district,” he would wonder what he had done wrong. Fortunately, that attitude is changing.

“Don’t be afraid of using the conservation districts, because they will work with you,” he says. “They’re not out to fine or penalize you. They’re here to help.”

**Next Week, Part II** – See how townships are working with conservation districts in Dauphin, Chester and McKean counties.

*Reprinted with permission from [Pennsylvania Township News](#), January 2006 edition.*

## Quick Clips

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

[Airborne Deer Research](#)

[Deer Management Issues Growing](#)

[Wanted: Green Ideas for Perry County](#)

[Recycled Magazines Generate Dollars for Ronald McDonald Charities](#)

[Consider Urban Windmills](#)

[Windmills Spinning on Bear Creek Mountain](#)

[Greene at Heart of Great Gas Debate](#)

[Op-Ed: Gasifying Coal Could Ensure Its Future](#)

[PA Wind Farms Have Positive Impact](#)

[AEP Files Plans to Build 550-Mile Power Line](#)

[Penn State Converts to Green Fuel](#)

[Editorial: Rising Energy Prices Area Concern](#)

[Op-Ed: Mercury Debate is Tainted by Scare Tactics](#)

[Land Trust Allows Owners to Preserve Properties](#)

[Conservancy Targets Two Bushkill Township Properties](#)

[Initiative to Give Boost to Preservation Efforts](#)

[Lebanon Targets \\$2 Million for Land Preservation](#)

[Work Continues on Greene River Tail Extension](#)

[Venango Intends to Have Natural Resources Survey Done](#)

[Brownfield Ready for Renewal](#)

## Watershed NewsClips

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

[Editorial: Pay to Clean the Chesapeake Bay](#)

[Stream of Conscience - Project Eyes Farm Support, Tributaries in 2nd Decade](#)

[Farming Programs Key to Reducing Nutrient to Chesapeake](#)

[Study Says Farm Conservation Programs Need More Green](#)

[Pittsburgh Riverfronts in Blossom](#)

[Spring Should See Start of Wilkes-Barre Riverfront Project](#)

[Stormwater Poses Problems Downstream](#)

[POWR Fundraising Tips for Watershed Groups](#)

[Start Checking Sojourn Website for Upcoming Trips](#)

Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)

## **Regulations**

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The Governor's Office published their semi-annual [Regulatory Agenda](#) which shows the schedule of regulations each agency should consider over the next six months, the Public Utility Commission published its [proposed Net Metering rule](#) under the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards for comment, and the Department of Environmental Protection published notice of [opportunity to comment on proposed 2006 nitrogen oxide](#) set-aside allocations.

### **[Pennsylvania Bulletin – February 4, 2006](#)**

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

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

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

## **Technical Guidance & Permits**

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No new technical guidance was published this week.

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

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

## **Calendar of Upcoming Events**

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

- [DEP's Annual schedule of board and advisory committee meetings for 2006](#)
- **February 8** – Governor's Budget Address.
- **February 8** – House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee will hold a public hearing on [House Bill 2141](#) (Geist-R-Blair) and adopting the California vehicle emission standards for Pennsylvania. North Office Building, Hearing Room 1. 9:00.
- **February 9** – House Game and Fisheries Committee meeting to hear a presentation on the Game Commission's annual and Growing Greener reports. Room 60 East Wing. 9:30.
- **February 13** – [Joint Legislative Air & Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) Environmental Issues Forum featuring a presentation by Innovative Rail Solutions, a distributor of railroad ties made from recycled materials. Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.

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- **February 13** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Ohio [Water Resources](#) Regional Committee meeting.
- **February 13** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Great Lakes [Water Resources](#) Regional Committee meeting.
- **February 14** – House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee informational meeting on Energy Policy to hear remarks from the Energy Association of PA, Energy Coordinating Agency of Philadelphia and the Consumer Advocate to the Public Utility Commission. North Office Building, Hearing Room 1. 9:00.
- **February 15** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Agricultural Advisory Board meeting. Next meeting April 19, Room 105 Rachel Carson Building, 10:00.
- **February 16-17** – [Fundamentals of Geology and Practicing Geology Seminars for Professional Geologists](#). Pittsburgh.
- **February 17** – DEP Tributary Strategy Steering Committee meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00 a.m.
- **February 17** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Potomac [Water Resources](#) Regional Committee meeting.
- **February 21** – **CANCELLED** – Environmental Quality Board meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for March 21.
- **February 23** – House Environmental Resource & Energy Committee informational meeting to understand the general, scientific, environmental, health and economic issues associated with reducing mercury emissions from power plants. North Office Building, Hearing Room 1. 10:00.
- **February 23** – House Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Room 140. 3:00.
- **February 23** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Upper Susquehanna [Water Resources](#) Regional Committee meeting.
- **February 27** – House Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Environmental Protection. Room 140. 2:30.
- **February 28** – House Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Agriculture. Room 140. 1:00.
- **March 1** – Senate Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Agriculture. Senate Majority Caucus Room. 1:15.
- **March 2** – Senate Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Senate Majority Caucus Room. 10:30.
- **March 3** – DEP Tributary Strategy Steering Committee meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 a.m.
- **March 9** – Senate Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Environmental Protection. Senate Majority Caucus Room. 1:15.
- **March 13** – Governor’s Renewable Agricultural Energy Council meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **March 18-19** – [Fundamentals of Geology and Practicing Geology Seminars for Professional Geologists](#). Camp Hill (near Harrisburg).

[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**

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

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

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

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

**Stories Invited**

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Send your stories about environmental issues, programs and positive actions to **PA Environment Digest** - [DHess@HolstonCrisci.com](mailto:DHess@HolstonCrisci.com) or go to [www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com](http://www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com) .

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