

-PA ——— Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

Audubon PA Urges Taking of More Deer, Eradication of Feral Swine – Video Blog



[Audubon Pennsylvania](#) this week urged the Game Commission to allow hunters to take more antlerless deer before tagging, rather than limiting the hunting of antlerless deer in certain areas and for the elimination of the state's feral swine population.

[The recommendations](#) were made by Kim Van Fleet, Important Bird Area Coordinator for Audubon Pennsylvania, in response to a proposal before the Game

Commission to limit the number of days hunters can take antlerless deer in Wildlife Management Units 2D, 2G, 3C, and 4B.

Video Blog: [Kim Van Fleet Gives Comments Before Game Commission](#)

“Less than a year ago, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources issued a report documenting the continued lack of regeneration on state forest lands in many of the areas affected by the proposed change,” said Van Fleet. “Now is not the time to limit the number of days available to hunters to harvest antlerless deer in these areas where the habitat is poor and deer vulnerability is low.”

“We ask you on behalf of Audubon's 30,000 members in Pennsylvania to please support the staff recommendation to allow hunters to harvest more than one deer at a time before tagging the deer where multiple daily harvests are permitted in Wildlife Management Units 2B, 5C, and 5D,” said Van Fleet. “This additional tool will allow recreational hunters to be much more effective in utilizing their antlerless tags for their intended purpose – controlling the population. Indeed, we would support expanding this useful practice to the rest of the Commonwealth.”

Van Fleet noted Audubon Pennsylvania has supported the Game Commission's scientific approach to managing the state's overabundant deer population, but noted there was no scientific data released demonstrating the need for the proposed change.

“At the very least, table the recommendation until your next meeting pending the public release of data supporting the change,” Van Fleet told the Commission. “As we have testified in the past, credible natural resource management must be based on science that is shared with the public.”

In addition to severely damaging forest habitats, deer cause an estimated \$90 million in crop losses and \$70 million in forest damage each year, according to the Department of Agriculture, over \$78 million in property damage from over 39,000 deer/vehicle collisions each year and are responsible for the dramatic increase in Lyme disease in the state, according to the Department of Health.

The [Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmens Club's Melody Zullinger](#) echoed some of the same concerns about making wildlife decisions based on sound science, but her group tentatively supported the proposal pending the review of more information.

Video Blog: [Melody Zullinger Presents Game Commission Comments](#)

“Our Board agreed to support such a proposal at this time provided it is justifiable and based on sound science,” said Zullinger. “From the beginning of this deer management program, PFSC has been supportive of following the biologists recommendations when they were made based on sound scientific data with the criteria of healthy deer and healthy habitat.”

In action the next day, the Game Commission gave tentative approval to the deer management programs to have a five day antlered deer only season in Wildlife Management Units 2D, 2G, 3C and 4B starting the Monday after Thanksgiving, followed immediately by seven days of concurrent, antlered and antlerless deer hunting.

The proposed package retains the two-week (12-day) concurrent, antlered and antlerless season in the remaining 18 WMUs. The change to the four WMUs is to evaluate the impact of changed season length on hunter success rates for future use as a new management tool.

"The goals of the deer management plan have not changed," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director. "The proposed changes to these four WMUs will give us another 'tool in the toolbox,' as we move forward with our deer management plan."

The Board specifically directed staff to prepare a four-year study to determine the impact and effectiveness of the proposed five-day antlered/seven-day concurrent season on the deer management plan before additional WMUs may be considered for this season configuration.

Final approval will be considered at the Commission's meeting in April.

Noting Pennsylvania now has a growing population of feral swine in five counties that can quickly destroy crops, wildlife habitat and spread disease in Pennsylvania's pork industry, Audubon Pennsylvania also called on the Commission to support plans for eradicating the feral swine population.

“We join with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, other conservation groups, the agriculture industry, sportsmen organizations, and state agency staff in calling for the immediate eradication of existing populations and measures to prevent the additional introduction and spread of feral swine in Pennsylvania,” said Van Fleet, noting the Governor's Council on Invasive Species called for the development of a Rapid Response Plan to deal with feral swine by April 1.

Feral swine found in Pennsylvania forests have either escaped from game farms or were deliberately brought into the state illegally. They can grow to be 400 pounds or more in size and have at least two litters of eight to 12 young each year. They are presently found in Bedford, Cambria, Montgomery, Union and Warren counties, with unconfirmed sightings elsewhere.

“Across the county where these animals have established breeding populations, they out-compete birds and game species such as deer and black bear for food, prey upon native species, severely restrict forest regeneration, destroy habitats, spread disease, damage agricultural crops, and threaten human safety,” said Van Fleet. “They are as bad as they sound.”

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Van Fleet recommended against allowing the incidental taking of feral swine during existing hunting seasons saying it would only serve to scatter swine populations into new areas, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Zullinger, from PFSC, also supported the eradication of the feral swine population saying, “We have serious concerns establishing seasons and bag regulations may create a mindset among hunters that these are game animals and that they are here to stay. Your goal should be to eradicate these animals.”

“We applaud the Commission for moving in the direction of a more science-based deer management program focused on indicators of both forest and deer health, and we are appreciative of your commitment to putting the long-term interests of forested ecosystems and wildlife at the forefront of your decision-making,” said Van Fleet. “You have stood up for Pennsylvania’s wildlife and habitat resources, and we are grateful.”

Citing serious concerns about funding for the Game Commission, Zullinger said PFSC would continue to work to get the Commission more financial resources.

“We are disappointed and discouraged that the current legislative body appears to have little interest in taking their role of fiduciary oversight seriously, other than to use it as leverage for personal agendas and to work against agency politics” said Zullinger. “Allowing wildlife management to be controlled by politics or emotion and personal desires over sound science only brings us closer to allowing those with the most money or political clout to set all wildlife management regulations.”

Pennsylvania Audubon has designated 85 Important Bird Areas across the state and is working actively to promote local efforts to monitor and protect these areas. According to a recent survey, Audubon Pennsylvania’s 30,000 members are 53 percent more likely than the general public to be hunters.

For more information, visit the [Pennsylvania Audubon Deer Management Forum](#) webpage or call 717-213-6883.

NewsClips: [Game Panel Hears More Complaints About Deer](#)
[Editorial: Lack of Foresight in Deer Troubles](#)

Link: [Deer Management is Vital to Ensuring Wildlife Diversity](#)

PA Farm Bureau Questions Game Commission Actions on Deer Program

[Pennsylvania Farm Bureau](#) expressed concern over decisions by the Game Commission this week to reduce doe season by five days in some areas of the state and to delay the effectiveness of a law designed to protect farmers from crop losses caused by deer and other animals.

Farm Bureau opposes a proposal that has received preliminary approval from the Game Commission. It would change the current deer hunting season by banning doe hunting for the first five days of the rifled season (the Monday through Friday that follows Thanksgiving) in four wildlife management units.

“Nearly 13,584 farms or more than 25 percent of Pennsylvania’s total land in agricultural production are contained within these wildlife management units, comprising almost two million acres of farmland. We are seriously concerned that efforts by the



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Commission to adopt the sweeping changes for deer seasons in these areas without scientific evaluation and justification will have harmful effects on farmers' ability to effectively manage and control wildlife damage on their farms and will result in serious and widespread damage to farm production," said PFB State Wildlife Committee Chairman Henry Karki.

During testimony before the Game Commission, Farm Bureau noted that the proposal could lead to increased deer populations in the affected WMU's, and therefore, increased losses on the farm. The Game Commission is expected to make a final decision on the issue in April.

Meanwhile, Farm Bureau is disappointed with the Game Commission's interpretation of [how to implement Act 26](#), which is a law that gives farmers the right to use someone from off-the-farm to shoot wildlife that causes damage to crops and trees, as long as they receive permission from the Commission. The Game Commission is requiring farmers outside of Special Regulations Areas to be enrolled in a public access program for up to two years and have deer depredation permits if the offending species is deer, before they could benefit from Act 26.

"We believe the new law clearly intended that farmers be able to take immediate action to deal with losses caused by deer and other wildlife. The Game Commission regulations will delay benefits of the new law for Pennsylvania agriculture," said PFB Wildlife Specialist Jeff Grove.

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Feature

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On the Hill

Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to voting session the week of February 4.

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

On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House published committee schedules and floor Calendars for the week of February 4—

Calendars

House (February 4): [House Bill 1742](#) (Pashinski-D-Luzerne) the Scrap Material Theft Prevention Act; [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate gas and energy prices; [House Resolution 518](#) (Petroni-D-Allegheny) commemorating the life and contributions of Lady Bird Johnson for her leadership role in preserving its natural beauty.

Senate (February 4): [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) making the first comprehensive revisions to the Bituminous Coal Mine Safety Act in 45 years, in-part based on recommendations made after the [2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue](#).

Committees

House: the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Bill 674](#) (Reed-R-Indiana) that would broaden the review of guidelines and policies by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission and [House Bill 1735](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) sorting out the property rights associated with coal bed methane recovery; the Consumer Affairs Committee meets to consider [House Bill 2200](#) (George-D-Clearfield) requiring utilities to adopt energy efficiency and demand-side management programs and [House Bill 2201](#) (McCall-D-Carbon) amend Title 66 providing for a transition to market-based electric rates, requiring assistance to low-income customers and providing for advance payments of electric bills; the Finance Committee meets to consider [Special Session House Bill 1](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing a grant program and authorizing indebtedness for Energy Development Authority; and the State Government Committee briefing by the Department of General Services on riparian rights.

Senate: the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Senate Resolution 224](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the cost for wastewater treatment plants to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy and [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to take steps to protect the Appalachian Trail; the Local Government Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1329](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) further providing for appeals and challenges to zoning ordinances, [House Bill 1330](#) (Kessler) further providing for appeals from official maps and local development ordinances.

Other: [Governor's Budget Address is available online](#) starting at 11:30.

Bills Introduced

The following bill of interest were introduced this week—

Chesapeake Bay Cleanup: [Senate Resolution 224](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the cost for wastewater treatment plants to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy. *The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee is scheduled to consider the resolution February 5.*

Plastic Bags: [House Bill 2198](#) (Bennington-D-Allegheny) limiting the use of plastic checkout bags.

Senate/House Bills Moving

Senate

Landowner Liability: [Senate Bill 497](#) (Robbins-R-Mercer) limiting the liability of landowners making property available for recreational purposes was passed by the Senate and now goes to the House.

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Deep Mine Safety: [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) making the first comprehensive revisions to the Bituminous Coal Mine Safety Act in 45 years, in-part based on recommendations made after the [2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue](#), was amended and reported from the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Diesel Idling: [Senate Bill 295](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) limiting diesel idling was amended to bring the bill more in line with regulations proposed by the Department of Environmental Protection and reported from the Senate Transportation Committee.

Trespass Penalties: [Senate Bill 1096](#) (Gordner-R-Columbia) providing for the disposition of fines for trespass in an account reserved for snowmobiles and ATVs was reported from the Senate Transportation Committee.

House

Great Lakes Compact: [House Bill 1705](#) (Harkins-D-Erie) authorizing Pennsylvania to join the Great Lakes Compact governing water withdrawals in the Lake Erie Basin was passed by the House and goes to the Senate for consideration.

Sludge Testing: [House Bill 792](#) (George-D-Clearfield) requiring municipalities to conduct sewage sludge testing on certain lands was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

State Park In-Lieu of Taxes: [House Bill 1970](#) (DeWeese-D-Greene) requiring DCNR to make in-lieu of tax payments for State Parks from Gaming Fund revenues was amended and reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Hazardous Sites Fund Reporting: [Senate Bill 913](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) providing for additional reporting of expenditures from the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund was amended to eliminate the funding provisions of the bill, was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and then referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

Litter Education: [House Bill 1319](#) (Siptroth-D-Monroe) providing additional penalties for scattering rubbish and acknowledgment of littering fines at the time of application for a learner's permit or driver's license was reported from the House Judiciary Committee with the recommendation the bill be re-referred to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Theft of Scrap Materials: [House Bill 1742](#) (Pashinski-D-Luzerne) the Scrap Material Theft Prevention Act was amended and is on the House Calendar for final action.

Local Planning: The House Local Government Committee amended and reported out [House Bill 1812](#) (Gillespie-R-York) amending the Municipalities Planning Code related to mediation and then tabled.

PEC Praises House Passage of Great Lakes Compact, Now Moves to Senate

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council thanked the House this week for passing the Great Lakes Compact, a multi-state agreement through which the Great Lakes states would be able to manage future water withdrawals from Lake Erie and the Great Lakes basin.

[House Bill 1705](#), formally known as the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact, was introduced by Rep. Patrick Harkins (D-Erie), who thanked the Pennsylvania Environmental Council for its support in remarks on the House floor.



“The Great Lakes Compact will be a significant step toward ensuring the long-term protection of the Great Lakes – a critical economic and community asset to northwestern Pennsylvania,” said Brian Hill, President and CEO PEC. “The long-standing bipartisan support for this collaborative agreement by both Governors Ridge and Rendell, as well as members of the General Assembly, demonstrates its significance to Pennsylvania. We commend members of the House, especially Representatives Patrick Harkins, John Hornaman (D-Erie), Curtis Sonney (R-Erie), and Bud George (D-Clearfield), for sponsoring and advancing this landmark legislation.”

The multi-state agreement creates a unified structure among the Great Lakes states for management of future water withdrawals outside of the Great Lakes basin. The Compact also requires states to adopt water conservation and efficiency measures to help maintain the vitality of the Basin’s water supply.

“The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River ecosystem is the largest concentration of unfrozen fresh surface water in the western hemisphere and it is our duty to develop and adopt sensible water management of the basin,” said Rep. Harkins.

“Of all the Great Lakes, Erie may be the most vulnerable to disruption because it has the smallest water volume and shallowest average depth,” noted Hill. “Even if water is withdrawn from Lake Superior north of Wisconsin, the water level will drop throughout the interconnected Great Lakes system. This could greatly disrupt the Erie harbor and all docks along the shore, with major economic implications, not to mention the significant harm to fish and other aquatic species in Lake Erie. It would be both an ecological and an economic calamity.”

Hill said such withdrawals represent “a significant threat as southern and western states already view the Great Lakes as key to their future community and economic development needs.”

Under both Governors, Pennsylvania negotiated with other Great Lake states, two Canadian Provinces, and representatives from business and industry, agriculture, environmental organizations, and other interests to establish the Great Lakes Compact. To date, Illinois and Minnesota have ratified the Great Lakes Compact, and legislation is pending in several other Great Lakes States.

“There is strong bipartisan support for this legislation in the General Assembly,” Hill said. “We urge the Senate to quickly advance House Bill 1705 to ensure the long-term protection of one of our most unique and valuable natural resources.”

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The legislation now goes before the state Senate where Sen. Jane Earll (R-Erie) has had a positive interest in the proposal. After adoption in Pennsylvania, the Compact must still be ratified by all eight Great Lakes states and approved by the U.S. Congress to become operational.

Senate Committee Approves Bill Limiting the Idling of Diesel Engines

The Senate Transportation Committee this week approved [Senate Bill 295](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) to reduce the noise and noxious exhaust fumes of idling tractor trailers.

The bill would bar commercial diesel vehicles from idling for more than five minutes during any 60-minute period.

"Diesel powered motor vehicles are major emitters of particulate matter and nitric oxide, which are substantial parts of ground ozone. This is a health concern in many parts of the state. With the new restrictions imposed in this bill, the time these vehicles can idle will be limited. We can help improve the air quality of the state," Sen. Browne said.

The legislation, as amended by Transportation Committee Chairman Sen. Roger Madigan (R-Bradford), provides a specific series of exceptions to the five-minute limit including: traffic, operation of basic equipment to prevent an unsafe situation or when operation is necessary to prevent a health emergency, maintenance or inspection, armored vehicles loading or unloading and mechanical problems requiring extended idling-provided proof is submitted.

In addition, passenger buses may idle for 15 minutes in 60 for passenger comfort, to comply with driver rest periods where no alternative power source exists and when the outside temperature is less than 40 degrees or more than 75 degrees Fahrenheit (which expires May 1, 2010) and if the diesel motor is 2007 or newer and has a CARB (California Air Resources Board) certification

Any person who violates the provisions of SB 295 could face fines ranging from \$50 to \$150. Senator Browne said the restriction on idling would help Pennsylvania's environment, while helping reduce Pennsylvania's energy dependence.

"Idling motor vehicles needlessly waste hundreds of millions of gallons of diesel fuel," Sen. Browne said. "By enacting this restriction, we will save fossil fuels and make Pennsylvania less energy dependent. This legislation meets many of our goals for the environment and energy independence that we have set in the Senate."

House Environmental Committee OKs Sludge, In-Lieu of Tax, HSCA Bills

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee reported out legislation requiring testing of sewage sludge, providing in-lieu of tax payments to municipalities for State Park lands and additional reporting of expenditures from the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund. The bills include:

- [House Bill 792](#) (George-D-Clearfield) requiring municipalities to conduct sewage sludge testing on certain lands;
- [House Bill 1970](#) (DeWeese-D-Greene) requiring DCNR to make in-lieu of tax payments for State Parks from Gaming Fund revenues was amended; and
- [Senate Bill 913](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) providing for additional reporting of expenditures from the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund was amended to remove the provisions related to funding.

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The Majority Chairman of the House Environmental Committee is Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) and the Minority Chair is Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

House Committee Hears Comments on Energy Proposals, Will Vote Next Week

The House Consumer Affairs Committee held a hearing this week on proposals by House Environmental Committee chair Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) and House Majority Whip Rep. Keith McCall (D-Carbon) that attempt to ease the transition to market-based electricity rates after the rate caps come off most of Pennsylvania in 2010.

The bills include [House Bill 2200](#) (George-D-Clearfield) requiring utilities to adopt energy efficiency and demand-side management programs and [House Bill 2201](#) (McCall-D-Carbon) amend Title 66 providing for a transition to market-based electric rates, requiring assistance to low-income customers and providing for advance payments of electric bills.

The Committee is set to consider voting on the bills on February 5.

The Committee heard comments from a variety of witnesses during the lengthy hearing including the Public Utility Commission, the Consumer and Small Business Advocates, electric generators and distributors, union representatives and an environmental group.

PUC [Commissioner James Cawley](#) said the Commission, which already has in place rate mitigation regulations, supports open, fair and transparent power procurement, promotes energy efficiency and demand-side management as well as consumer education electric market issues. Commissioner Cawley then outlined a series of amendments the PUC would like to see to the bills.

In response to questions, Commissioner Cawley said extending the existing rate caps “may seem appealing, but you can only defy gravity for so long” and an extension would make matters worse. Electric prices have been capped for 14 years as a result of the 1996 electric competition law in Pennsylvania.

[Sonny Popowsky](#), PUC Consumer Advocate, said the bills pending before the Committee provide the kind of legislative framework that is needed by Pennsylvania electric consumers.

[William Lloyd](#), Small Business Advocate, said he is concerned that having the General Assembly make major changes to the PUC present mitigation strategy through legislation could result in rules that are less favorable to small business customers.

[Doug Biden](#), President of the Electric Power Generation Association, said consumers in the Commonwealth will be best served by legislation supporting competitive markets and competitive procurement of electricity supplies and it would be a significant mistake to return to the past and authorize regulators to take charge of these fundamental choices.

[J. Michael Love](#), President and CEO of the Energy Association of PA, said the overall direction of greater conservation and energy efficiency along with demand-side management is an essential path for Pennsylvania instead of relying on natural gas for the new electric generation.

[Morgan O'Brien](#), Chairman and CEO of Duquesne Light, provided the Committee with the perspective of a company that has already gone through the transition to market-based electric rates. “Duquesne Light has been without rate caps for over five years, and our rates to residential and small business customers are lower today than they were fifteen

years ago, and they will continue to be lower through the end of 2010, without any special legislation to aid in that transition or any need to phase in rate hikes to avoid price shock.”

[Lisa Crutchfield](#), Senior Vice President, PECO Energy Company, said the legislation pending before the committee does not fully promote competitive markets or provide for full cost recovery, nor do the bills envision utilities providing energy-efficiency and demand-response programs to their customers and for these reasons her company is not supporting the legislation.

Other electric generators and distributors also provided comments on the bill, including: [Stephen Feld](#), Associate General Counsel FirstEnergy, [Doug Krall](#), PPL Electric Utilities, [Aldie Warnock](#), Vice President at Allegheny Energy, [Richard Hudson](#), Strategic Energy, [Daniel Allegretti](#), Constellation Energy Resources and [Mark Baird](#), Reliant Energy, Inc.

[Carl Wood](#), Utility Workers Union of America, and [Paul Simon](#), International Representative of IBEW, both warned of the dangers of unreasonable rate increases and supported the legislation.

[John Hanger](#), President and CEO of PennFuture, urged the Committee to pass both of the bills as soon as possible saying the expiration of rate caps will boost electric prices between 20 and 50 percent and consumers need energy conservation programs and other tools to reduce their electric bills. He noted this expected increase in rates is still below the price increases that occurred with natural gas over the last 14 years.

Rep. Joe Preston (D-Allegheny) serves as Majority Chair of the Committee and Rep. Bob Godshall (R-Montgomery) serves as Minority Chair.

Rep. Perry Announces Legislation to Help Fund Chesapeake Bay Cleanup

Rep. Scott Perry (R-Cumberland) said this week he will introduce legislation that will help increase the environmental quality of the Chesapeake Bay without placing an unfair burden on local governments or taxpayers.

“This bill calls for greater accountability, organization and cohesiveness in the deployment of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy developed by the Department of Environmental Protection,” Rep. Perry said.

Rep. Perry explained the Commonwealth entered into an agreement with several other states to improve the environment in and around the Chesapeake Bay. These agreements outline certain standards for states to curtail pollution to the bay, and from these agreements, DEP put together a Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy.

To help limit pollution to the bay and fulfill the goals and standards set in the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy many wastewater treatment plants around the Commonwealth will need to be upgraded.

“While the Tributary Strategy has a laudable environmental goal, its practicality in terms of implementation costs, especially to local governments, is proving to be very problematic,” Rep. Perry said. “Businesses and homeowners are already seeing the effect in their sewer bills.”

The proposed legislation, known as the Chesapeake Bay Strategy Improvement Act, would address several key issues including:



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- Providing an appropriation of up to \$300 million over 10 years to help local governments fund the needed plant upgrades to reduce nutrient discharges;
- Providing an appropriation of up to \$50 million over 10 years to help fund agricultural best management practices to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff;
- Affording wastewater treatment facilities access to low-interest loan financing to assist in meeting local matching funds requirements;
- Creating the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Nutrient Trading Board. The board will be made up of stakeholders in the nutrient trading process. Its overall mission will be to provide independent oversight and management to a reliable and viable nutrient trading process;
- Authorizing changes to municipal bidding requirements to facilitate the acquisition of nutrient credits by wastewater treatment facilities;
- Requiring an economic impact study of the overall costs and benefits of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy;
- Authorizing a more appropriate and realistic phase-in schedule for wastewater treatment plan compliance; and
- Requiring that nutrient and sediment reduction, storm water control and other water quality requirements be encompassed in legislation subject to review and approval by the General Assembly.

Rep. Perry said he is currently seeking co-sponsors for his legislation and will introduce within the month.

House Environmental Committee to Consider Coal Bed Methane, Rule Review Bills

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets February 5 to consider legislation on property rights associated with coal bed methane and a bill to broaden the review of guidelines and policies published by state agencies.

The bills include:

- [House Bill 674](#) (Reed-R-Indiana) that would broaden the review of guidelines and policies by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission; and
- [House Bill 1735](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) sorting out the property rights associated with coal bed methane recovery.

The Majority Chairman of the House Environmental Committee is Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) and the Minority Chair is Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

Chesapeake Bay Cleanup, Appalachian Trail on Senate Committee Agenda

The Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets February 5 to consider a resolution calling for totaling the costs of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup and legislation requiring municipalities to do more to protect the Appalachian Trail.

The bills include [Senate Resolution 224](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the cost for wastewater treatment plants to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy and [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to take steps to protect the Appalachian Trail.

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

Other News

CBF Calls for Increased Funding for Successful REAP Farm Tax Credit Program

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation this week called for increasing funding for the highly successful [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act \(REAP\)](#) farm conservation tax credit program to at least \$50 million in the next state budget.

In the first 10 days of accepting applications, the State Conservation Commission received over \$10 million in applications. Now over 260 applications have been received, requesting \$11.3 million in projects - maxing out the first-year budget of \$10 million.



“The tremendous response to REAP demonstrates that farmers are willing to implement best management practices on their farms,” said Matthew Ehrhart, Executive Director of CBF’s Pennsylvania office. “REAP is a practical solution that will help farmers better protect water quality while at the same time helping their own bottom line.”

In what amounts to a huge success for the supporters, organizers, and sponsoring legislators of REAP, this level of interest proves that financial opportunities for agriculture are needed and welcomed by Pennsylvania’s farmers.

“We’re glad to see such a positive response in such a short timeframe,” said Mary Bender, REAP Director for the State Conservation Commission. “While the application requests for this fiscal year have gone beyond our budget, we will continue to accept applications until February 8th and encourage farmers who are in the process of submitting an application to continue to do so.”

“We’d like to thank our legislators and the Governor for enacting REAP,” said Ehrhart. “The State Department of Agriculture and the SCC should also be commended for their ability to pull the program together so quickly.”

Agriculture contributes a significant amount of nitrogen and phosphorus pollution to the Susquehanna River, and ultimately to the Chesapeake Bay. With increasing pressure on Pennsylvania to meet water quality regulations, farmers need new options to help them decrease pollution and soil erosion. REAP is designed to fulfill that need –but clearly additional funds are necessary in order to meet the demand.

“REAP will make significant improvements to our statewide water quality and to local economies. We hope the Governor and our legislators will recognize the demand for the program and increase next years budget to the originally proposed \$50 million.”

For more information, visit the State Conservation Commission [REAP webpage](#) or the [CBF REAP webpage](#).

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County Conservation Districts Launch into the New Year on a Positive Note

Approximately 170 representatives of county conservation districts and partnering agencies attended the [PA Association of Conservation Districts' Winter Meeting](#) in State College from January 16-18.

Delegates at the meeting were concerned that the current Pennsylvania prevailing wage threshold was too low and hindering potential agricultural and conservation projects. Consequently, the following motion was approved at the PACD Executive Council Meeting to replace current prevailing wage policy:

“PACD supports an increase in the threshold of the prevailing wage law.

Following each twelve month period thereafter, the estimated cost threshold shall be increased by an annual cost adjustment calculated by applying the percentage change in the consumer price index. Because of the limited amount of funding available for conservation projects, this increase will allow conservation districts to work more effectively with the agricultural and conservation community.”

In addition to the policy discussions at the conference, PACD held a Conservation Partnership Forum. A panel representing five state and federal agencies along with PACD officers and DEP region directors participated in a discussion with attendees on issues and concerns with conservation programs. Topics such as the Farm Bill, [Resource Enhancement and Protection Program \(REAP\)](#), contract renewals for watershed specialist positions, and the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy were addressed.

Another panel discussion was held on “Thinking Outside the Funding Box.” Representatives from the departments of Environmental Protection and Community and Economic Development, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Foundation for PA Watersheds, and Westmoreland Conservation District showed how grant and other funding opportunities can help conservation districts meet funding challenges.

The Conservation Partnership’s Leadership Development Committee held a session titled, “Developing and Fostering Relations with County Government.” Additionally a PACD Issues Forum provided updates on Chapter 102 (erosion and sediment control) and Global Warming’s Impacts on PA’s Fish and Wildlife. Karl Brown, executive secretary of the State Conservation Commission, spoke about latest developments with REAP.

Ken Meck, Lancaster County Conservation District Director, was elected PACD treasurer. Susan Marquart, PACD Executive Director, stated, “We are pleased to have Mr. Meck as our newly elected treasurer. His experiences as a conservation district director in Lancaster County will serve our Association well.”

She went on to say, “Our winter meeting gave representatives from conservation districts the opportunity to participate in the many educational opportunities available during the conference, to network with other district representatives, and to meet with partnering state and federal agencies.”

The panel discussion on “Thinking Outside the Funding Box” presented funding ideas for conservation districts to explore.

For more information, visit the [PA Association of Conservation District Association website](#).

[Visit the PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

Partners Celebrate Improvements to Swamp Creek Mine Water Treatment Facility

The Department of Environmental Protection has successfully refurbished a key acid mine drainage treatment facility that will maintain the fish population in 52 miles of Swamp Creek in Elk County and two lakes.

It is estimated that the bodies of water contribute up to \$4 million annually to the state's tourism industry.

"The Swamp Creek acid mine drainage treatment facility has allowed thousands of Pennsylvanians to enjoy fishing on East Branch Lake for nearly 40 years," said J. Scott Roberts, DEP's deputy secretary for mineral resources. "Without this facility, the lake couldn't be the important part of north central Pennsylvania's outdoor tourism industry that it is today. Now that we've successfully replaced the aging and outdated equipment at the facility, this lake will remain viable and attract visitors for many years to come."

The \$133,000 project replaced aging and malfunctioning parts, many of which were no longer available from manufacturers. A new computerized feed system replaced the outdated equipment to facilitate the treatment process whereby lime is delivered from a silo to Swamp Creek as needed to neutralize acid mine drainage. The facility uses about 100 tons of hydrated lime per year.

An automatic alarm was also added to immediately notify plant operators of any problems.

Financing for the project came from the Scarlift Fund, a 1960s state bond issue administered by DEP.

"The Fish and Boat Commission is pleased to be a partner with DEP in maintaining this important fishing area as a recreational spot for Pennsylvanians and as an important cog in the tourism industry in this part of the state," said William J. Sabatose, president of the commission, who was on hand at the treatment facility today to mark completion of restoration work. "Water quality in these two rivers is greatly improved by the Swamp Creek treatment facility," said Sabatose. "In all, 52 miles of stream have been positively impacted by this project.

"The commission stocks tiger musky and lake trout here, which, together with native walleye and smallmouth bass, offer anglers a variety of opportunities that would not be possible without the acid mine drainage treatment facility on Swamp Creek," said Sabatose.

The Commonwealth has operated the hydrated lime treatment facility on Swamp Creek since it funded its construction in 1969. Operation and maintenance of the facility costs about \$20,000 a year, which is supported through DEP's Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation using Abandoned Mine Lands money Pennsylvania receives from the federal government. Up to 30 percent of this money can be used for acid mine drainage treatment.

Within months of going online, the treatment process raised the pH level in East Branch Lake from between 4 and 5 to above 6, making it possible for the lake to support a variety of fish species.

"Without this treatment, the East Branch Lake fishery simply would not exist," said Roberts. "This project restores and protects our environment, enhances enjoyment of our state's outdoors, and creates jobs by promoting the tourism industry."

NewsClip: [Program Removes Acid Mine Drainage From Elk County Waterways](#)

Connoquenessing Creek Watershed Plan Available for Public Review

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy will present the draft Watershed Conservation [Plan for Connoquenessing Creek](#) and its tributaries in Allegheny, Beaver, Butler, and Lawrence counties at a series of public meetings in February.

Area residents are encouraged to attend one of the scheduled public meetings to review the draft plan, which creates a vision for the watershed community, and provide their comments.

The deadline to submit comments is March 28.

Meetings are scheduled for February 19 at the Ellwood City Borough Auditorium (use rear entrance); February 20 at Harmony Museum’s Stewart Hall; and February 21 at the Penn Township Municipal Building (East Airport Road off of Route 8 south of Butler). Meetings will be held from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m. with formal presentations being held at 6:30 p.m.

Copies of the Watershed Conservation Plan will be available for review at each meeting, before and after the presentation. Copies also will be available for review at County Conservation Districts, local public libraries, and [on the project website](#).

WPC developed the Watershed Conservation Plan in cooperation with the Connoquenessing Watershed Alliance, local municipalities, agencies, and individuals using a locally driven planning process.

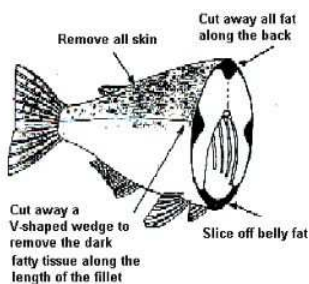
The plan focuses on natural resources such as land, water, plants and animals; cultural resources such as recreation and history; and socio-economic impacts of the watershed, and makes recommendations based on public input to conserve or enhance its valuable assets.

The goals of the Connoquenessing Creek Watershed Conservation Plan are to actively engage the watershed community in addressing water-quality concerns, promoting sound planning, and protecting the cultural, historical, and natural resources of this diverse rural-urban watershed through educational and recreational opportunities.

Funding for the plan is provided, in part, by a grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund under the administration of Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

For more information, please contact Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, [Freshwater Conservation Program](#) at 724-459-0953.

Pennsylvania Fish Consumption Advisory Updated



State officials responsible for monitoring Pennsylvania waterways and protecting public health this week released an updated list of [fish consumption advisories](#).

The advisories are developed through a partnership of the Fish and Boat Commission and the departments of Environmental Protection, Agriculture and Health.

“Pennsylvania’s fish advisory message is consistent with the story being told throughout the country—eat fish, but choose wisely,” PFBC Executive Director Dr. Douglas Austen said. “Pennsylvania’s waters offer a bounty of clean, safe fish for people to eat. The information provided in our advisory serves to guide consumers about their choices.”

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All recreationally caught sport fish in Pennsylvania are subject to a one-meal-per-week consumption advisory. This blanket advisory is designed to protect the general population, especially pregnant women, women of childbearing years, and young children. One meal is considered to be one-half pound of fish for a 150-pound person. The advisories do not apply to fish raised for commercial purposes or bought in stores or restaurants.

“Enjoying outdoor recreation in Pennsylvania’s beautiful countryside is a great pastime and it’s important to our tourism industry,” said DEP Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty. “No one should be discouraged from fishing or eating fresh fish in moderation. We just want to make sure anglers have the most up-to-date information when they fish Pennsylvania’s waterways.”

“When properly prepared, fish provide a diet high in protein and low in saturated fats,” Health Secretary Dr. Calvin B. Johnson said. “People can get the health benefits of eating fish and reduce exposure to organic contaminants by properly cleaning, skinning, trimming and cooking the fish they eat.”

Proper preparation generally includes trimming away fat and broiling or grilling the fish to allow remaining fat to drip away. Juices and fats that cook out of the fish should not be eaten or reused for cooking or preparing other foods. Mercury, however, collects in the fish’s muscle and cannot be reduced by cleaning and cooking methods.

In addition to the general statewide advisory, Pennsylvania has four other categories of consumption advisories that can be issued if test results suggest it: two meals per month; one meal per month; one meal every two months; or do not eat.

Current and updated advisories are published in the Summary of Fishing Regulations and Laws, which is provided to each purchaser of a Pennsylvania fishing license.

More information, visit the [Fish Advisory webpage](#).

Gov. Rendell Seeks Applicants for Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Gov. Rendell is seeking qualified candidates to serve on the [Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council](#), which is one of eight regional councils established by the Magnuson Act to develop fisheries management plans and advise the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Pennsylvania has one obligatory seat to fill for a vacancy that will occur on Aug. 10, and also has the opportunity to submit names for one at-large seat.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, governors are encouraged to nominate individuals from the recreational charter fishery with hook and line and rod and reel experience; representatives from the commercial sector; or people with knowledge and experience in the conservation and management of marine resources, habitat and ecosystem approaches to management or consumer affairs.

Those interested in being considered for the position or who wish to nominate someone are encouraged to contact Don Morabito in the Governor's Office of Public Liaison by February 15 at 717-787-5825 or send email to: dmorabito@state.pa.us.

Game Commission OKs Wildlife Project Grants, Wildlife Teamwork Coordinator

The Game Commission this week approved four projects that will study or help species of concern and manage globally-significant habitats in-state and approved a contract to coordinate Northeast Wildlife Teamwork Strategy projects that will help species and habitats of greatest conservation need.

Funded from an allocation provided by the [State Wildlife Grants Program](#), administered through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Federal Aid Program, the projects will cost a combined \$265,000.

The SWG program focuses on endangered species prevention and ensuring that common species remain common. To be eligible for SWG appropriations from the federal government, Pennsylvania developed a "Wildlife Action Plan" that focuses on species with low and declining populations and species that are in great need of proactive conservation, by monitoring more abundant species for which Pennsylvania bears a special responsibility in their long-term conservation, and by incorporating habitat-level management rather than case-by-case, species-specific intervention.

"The SWG program has made Pennsylvania a better place for many species of concern and provided managers with important background to improve resource management programs," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director. "This work, conducted largely by both local and national partners to our agency, has accomplished great good for wildlife and the environment. But there's much more work to do, and the cost of doing that research and intervening usually becomes more expensive with each passing year. That's why the SWG program is critical to Pennsylvania. It makes an important difference for some species before it's too late."

The U.S. Congress has recently reauthorized the SWG Program, from which Pennsylvania annually receives about \$2 million.

The projects approved by the Board today are as follows:

Assessing Risks of Wind Energy Development for Priority Species, Including Golden Eagles: This \$70,000 project will collect information on where and how America's unique eastern population of golden eagles migrates through Pennsylvania, and use these data to provide statewide maps assessing the relative risk to eagles, and other birds of prey, from development of wind power plants. These maps will provide a critical tool for managers and legislators to guide safe development of wind power throughout the state and to prevent a rare species from becoming endangered. The work is headed by Todd Katzner of the National Aviary.

Utilization of Wet Scrub-Shrub-Dominated Habitat Types By Willow Flycatchers and Other Priority Bird Species: The willow flycatcher is a Wildlife Action Plan species of concern, also identified by Partners in Flight as a species of concern at the continental scale. This \$80,000 project will determine if the willow flycatcher and other WAP priority species utilize specific wet thicket habitat types by comparing habitat characteristics of sites where species were observed with those unused. Understanding habitat selection patterns and the ability to identify potential breeding areas for the willow flycatcher and other wet-thicket priority species is crucial to their management. The project is headed by Ephraim Zimmerman with Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Casparis Mine Bat Hibernaculum Gating Project: This \$15,000 project will protect hibernating bats from harassment by reinforcing an earthen barrier at the mine entrance and installing a bat gate. The mine will then be more favorable for use by Indiana and other bat species, as well as provide additional habitat for Allegheny woodrats. The work will be led by Christopher W. Sanders of Sanders Environmental Inc.

Restoration and Management of Globally Significant Pennsylvania Barrens Habitats:

This \$100,000 project will implement WAP priorities to restore and manage globally-significant ridgetop, mesic-till and serpentine barrens sites in Pennsylvania, as well as use the priorities to leverage additional management and provide basic information for private landowners and public agency partners on management needs and techniques on both private and public lands. The Nature Conservancy will implement management recommendations and establish monitoring programs for barrens vegetation communities and invertebrate, bird and mammal priority species as defined in WAP to adapt management techniques that will maximize benefits to these priority species and habitats. The work will be headed Todd Sampsell of The Nature Conservancy.

In related action, the Board also approved a contract with the Wildlife Management Institute through the Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies to allow WMI to annually coordinate Northeast Wildlife Teamwork Strategy projects that will help species and habitats of greatest conservation need.

Many of the species, habitats and conservation actions targeted in the regional strategy are covered in the Wildlife Action Plans for participating Northeast states. This partnership will strengthen efforts to develop, coordinate, fund and implement multi-state regional conservation projects.

WMI has agreed to provide overall coordination of this effort, and to collect and manage state monies provided to support the cooperative work among the states, as well as raise matching monies for projects.

WMI also will take NEFWA identified regional conservation needs, coordinate the solicitation of prospective cooperators and matching funds, develop an annual list of projects, prepare contracts and amendments for approved regional projects and write annual and performance reports.

NEFWA is asking each state in the northeastern United States and the District of Columbia to provide up to four percent of their annual SWG appropriation for funding projects under the regional teamwork strategy.

The funding provided through this agreement will not require any net reduction in the Game Fund, and any Game Fund monies used for these projects will be replenished by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the SWG funds.

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

Land Purchases, Exchanges, Oil/Gas and Coal Leases OK'd by Game Commission

The Game Commission this week approved several land purchases, land donations, exchanges and three oil/gas and coal leases on Game Commission lands.

"The agency's Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management and Northcentral Region land managers have worked diligently to acquire these lands," explained agency Executive

Director Carl G. Roe. "The acquisitions, which amount to about 6,525 acres, surely will brighten the future for wildlife and hunters and trappers in north-central Pennsylvania."

[A list of lands acquired, donated are available online.](#)

Western PA Conservancy Sells Property to Fisherman's Cove Conservation Group

The [Western Pennsylvania Conservancy](#) has sold 207 acres in Venango County to Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation, an organization formed to protect the Allegheny River watershed.

Conditions of the sales agreement ensure the permanent protection of this property, which has both conservation and archaeological significance. The land will be open for public recreational use.

"The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is very pleased to sell this property to the Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation, which shares our conservation goals for this natural, scenic and historic property," said WPC President and CEO Tom Saunders. FCPF President Cathy Kentzel added, "This acquisition and partnership with WPC forms the cornerstone of our organization's efforts to preserve the natural and historic legacy of the region."

WPC sold the parcel for less than its market value in order to enable its purchase by Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation. Purchased by WPC from Robert and Rachel Kerr between 1973 and 1976, the property consists of a wooded plateau and a steep, tree-covered hillside facing the Allegheny River and Sandy Creek. It includes approximately 50 acres of level river frontage.

The property is bounded by Sandy Creek and private lands on the west and north and on the east by the Allegheny River. Archaeological and historical studies of the property show that it was intermittently used over the past 9,000 years by the region's indigenous American Indian populations as well as by early settlers and their descendents.

Dr. Sue Ann Curtis, an FCPF director and expert on the region's cultural history, said, "The property provides an important record of economic, social and political change in the region over time and the adaptations made by its indigenous peoples and subsequent settlement by frontier pioneers and their successors. Preservation of this record is a key mission of the Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation."

WPC and the [Archaeological Conservancy](#), a national non-profit organization dedicated to acquiring and preserving the nation's best remaining archaeological sites, will act as co-holders of a conservation agreement on the 207-acre parcel that was jointly developed by the three conservation organizations.

Paul Gardner, The Archaeological Conservancy's Midwest regional director, said, "The Kerr site is an intriguing late prehistoric occupation site that has seen little scientific investigation. The Archaeological Conservancy is happy to play a role in permanently protecting it for future generations of Pennsylvanians."

The conservation agreement places permanent restrictions on this land, prohibiting subdivision as well as oil and gas exploration there. A conservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, is a commonly used, effective and legally binding means to protect natural and cultural resources for the benefit of future generations. WPC holds 145 conservation agreements, protecting more than 30,000 acres in Western Pennsylvania.

Plans for the Kerr Tract property include working with forestry and other specialists to restore the natural forest plant assemblage, creating habitat for indigenous

animal species, protecting the riparian buffer, understanding and preserving the property's culture-history, and using the property as an outdoor classroom to promote public awareness and understanding of the importance preserving the region's great diversity.

DCNR Has Nearly \$50 Million Available for Recreation, Conservation Grants

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week announced it has \$50 million in grants available to communities and non-profit organizations to help fund community recreation, open space, land trust, rails-to-trails, rivers, and conservation projects under the [Community Conservation Partnerships Program](#)

Applications are due April 25. DCNR is also sponsoring a series of [grant writing workshops](#) in February.

"Investing in Pennsylvania's natural resources is critical for our commonwealth's future," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "Our parks and forests, greenways and trails provide economic opportunities for businesses, communities and our hardworking men and women, and they provide recreational activities for millions of people."

Funding comes from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, which is administered through DCNR. The department is offering a series of workshops around the state to help interested applicants with the application process.

"We want to help grant writers and managers gain insight into our program priorities and application requirements," Secretary DiBerardinis said. "There are tremendous opportunities for communities to create or improve community parks, greenways, trails, rivers and open space, which not only enhance quality of life, but also economic vitality."

The three-hour workshops, co-sponsored by the [Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society](#), will take place from 9 a.m. to noon on:

- February 5, Hotel Carlisle and Embers Convention Center, Carlisle;
- February 6, Genetti Hotel & Suites, Williamsport;
- February 7, The Inn at Nichols Village, Clarks Summit;
- February 13, Blair County Convention Center, Altoona;
- February 20, Holiday Inn, Clarion;
- February 21, Four Points by Sheraton Pittsburgh North, Pittsburgh;
- February 26, Scanticon Hotel & Conference Center at the Radisson Hotel Valley Forge Convention Center, King of Prussia; and
- February 28, Holiday Inn Conference Center, Breinigsville.

For more information, or to register for the workshops, contact the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society at 814-234-4272.

For more information, [download the workshop schedule](#), or visit the [Community Conservation Partnerships Program webpage](#) for more information.

PPG in Pittsburgh Becomes Founding Reporter of The Climate Registry

[PPG Industries](#) has become a founding reporter of [The Climate Registry](#) as it sets aggressive greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals.

The Climate Registry is a non-profit organization established to measure and publicly report GHG emissions in a common, accurate and transparent manner consistent across industry sectors and borders.

“PPG has demonstrated exemplary environmental leadership by courageously stepping forward to support The Climate Registry in its preliminary stages,” said Gina McCarthy, chair of The Climate Registry. “We are deeply grateful for its integral support in helping to address the challenge of climate change.”

By joining the group, PPG has voluntarily committed to measure, independently verify and publicly report its GHG emissions on an annual basis using The Climate Registry General Reporting Protocol. The protocol is based on the internationally recognized GHG measurement standards of the [World Resources Institute](#) and [World Business Council for Sustainable Development](#).

“I applaud PPG for becoming the first Pennsylvania-based company to join The Climate Registry,” said Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty, a board member of the registry. “The company’s commitment to reducing greenhouse gases reflects an understanding that conducting business in an environmentally-conscious manner is also sound financially. I encourage all companies in Pennsylvania to join this important program and get a jump on crafting solutions that are a boost to their businesses.”

The global supplier of paints, coatings, chemicals, optical products, specialty materials, glass and fiber glass set its GHG emission goals late last year. PPG said it aims to reduce its total energy intensity 25 percent from 2006 to 2016 and its total global GHG emissions 10 percent from 2006 to 2011.

“Reducing greenhouse gas emissions demonstrates our corporate-wide commitment to improving the global environment and increasing the efficiency of our operations,” said James A. Trainham, PPG vice president, science and technology.

In addition to taking action to reduce emissions, PPG continues to improve its energy efficiency. The company reduced its energy use by just over 1 percent annually each of the last five years, saving about \$40 million overall. Meeting its new energy savings goal would realize a savings of \$15 to \$20 million a year at today's energy prices.

PPG previously committed to reducing its GHG emission intensity from sources in the United States 18 percent from 2002 to 2012. It achieved this in 2006, six years earlier than the projected date.

Pennsylvania and 38 other U.S. states, five Canadian provinces, three Native American tribes, two Mexican states and the District of Columbia are the founders of The Climate Registry.

Grants to Help Small Businesses Conserve Energy, Reduce Waste

The Department of Environmental Protection this week awarded 29 small businesses grants to conserve energy and reduce waste totaling more than \$186,000 in [Small Business Advantage Grants](#).

“Energy costs are one of the leading concerns for businesses today and, as the national economy begins to slow, those companies that can conserve power and improve energy efficiency will be better able to weather this economic downturn,” said Gov.

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Rendell. “These grants have helped encourage investments by our small businesses that are keeping them competitive in the market, promoting environmental stewardship, and bolstering their bottom line.”

The grant program provides a 50 percent match of up to \$7,500 for equipment or processes that reduce energy consumption, promote pollution prevention, and increase profitability. Examples include high-efficiency heating and cooling systems, motion sensors that shut off lights when rooms are empty, and auxiliary power units that allow long-haul truckers to turn off their engines during layovers without sacrificing heat and electricity.

The grants will leverage more than \$2.9 million in private investments by small businesses.

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

PA Has Critical Need for Improved Electrical Infrastructure to Prevent Blackouts

Pennsylvania businesses and citizens have an urgent need for improved electric transmission infrastructure or they could face rolling blackouts in just a matter of years, according to a new coalition called [Pennsylvanians for Reliable Power](#).

That was the message of state and national electric industry experts, along with representatives from Pennsylvania business and labor organizations, who held a news conference in Harrisburg today to sound the alarm on the need for updated electric transmission infrastructure in the region.

Gene Barr, Vice President of Political and Regulatory Affairs for the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, explained that the need for the improvements is at a critical level in the state.

“Energy is the lifeblood of commerce. Therefore these infrastructure improvements are crucial not only for the future success of Pennsylvania businesses but for the overall economic viability of our state,” said Barr. “Energy efficiency, alternative energy sources and demand side management are a great start but will only get us part of the way there. We need transmission expansion as well.”

Former Public Utility Commission Chairman John Quain built on Barr’s sentiments by explaining that currently, Pennsylvanians’ demand for energy is outstripping the state’s supply and capacity and it’s now absolutely necessary to invest in improved transmission infrastructure to fix the problem.

“All the pieces of the puzzle must be in place to continue to provide reliable power to Pennsylvania’s businesses and homes. We can’t just focus on generation and demand-side management, because generation means nothing if we don’t have reliable transmission lines in place,” said Quain. “Waiting three years to see if demand-side management works is not an option, because by that time it will be too late.”

David Taylor, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Manufacturers Association, described how the 2003 electricity blackout, which started in Ohio and spread across the northeast U.S. in a matter of seconds, cost billions of dollars in economic loss. The blackout taught everyone that the nation’s power grid is becoming much more complex, interconnected and congested, he added.

“Right now we have a chance to deal with our energy problems before there is a catastrophic failure,” said Taylor. “Currently, manufacturing is a strong industry in Pennsylvania, providing about 414,000 jobs statewide. In order to maintain and create new

jobs and overall competitiveness in Pennsylvania’s business climate in the future, we must fight for reliable electricity infrastructure in our state. There would be a huge cost involved if we fail to act now.”

Robert O. Hinkel, former General Manager for PJM Interconnection Association -- the independent organization that operates the regional electric grid that includes Pennsylvania -- explained that regional and national energy industry experts have concluded that additional power lines are needed in the Mid-Atlantic region to prevent black-outs and brown-outs in the future.

“Our job, first and foremost, is to make sure we maintain energy reliability in the region. PJM has learned through our planning process that additional transmission lines are needed by 2011 or Pennsylvania will face serious reliability issues,” said Hinkel. “Additionally, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation issued a report in October highlighting the strong need for additional transmission investment in the region in order to keep pace with the nearly 18-percent growth in electricity demand that is expected over the next decade.”

Pennsylvanians for Reliable Power is a diverse coalition of concerned industry, labor and community groups formed to educate the community on the future of energy reliability in the state.

A complete list of coalition members and more information is available at the [Pennsylvanians for Reliable Power website](#).

NewsClip: [Coalition Sees Need for More Power Lines](#)

Chester County Offers 9 Free Certified Master Composting Classes

The Chester County Board of Commissioners, through the [Chester County Solid Waste Authority](#), are offering nine free Certified Master Composting Classes at three convenient locations.

Attendance is required during all three weeks to become certified. Identical classes are held at each location. All classes begin at 7:00 p.m. The workshops will be held--

- March 10, 17 and 24 at the Chester County Solid Waste Authority, 7224 Division Highway, Narvon;
- March 11, 18 and 25 at the Owen J. Roberts Middle School, 981 Ridge Road, Pottstown; and
- March 12, 19 and 26 at the Chester County Government Services Center – Room 171 601 Westtown Road, West Chester.

Trainees will learn how to compost, how to construct various compost bins, how to grasscycle, leafcycle and how to reduce food waste by vermi-composting. The Chester County Solid Waste Authority will provide training, materials, volunteer opportunities and support.

To register or for more information, call 610-273-3771 ext. 228.

[Visit the PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

Paper Recycling and Processing Techniques Workshop February 27

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On February 27 the [Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania](#), Department of Environmental Protection and Penn State Altoona will hold “[The Paper Chase](#),” a course for recycling and environmental professionals that will expand their knowledge and understanding of paper processing techniques and practices.

The course will be held in the Wildwood Conference Center of the Harrisburg Area Community College.

The meeting begins with a review of Act 101 (the Pennsylvania Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act of 1988, the major legislation dealing with recycling) by DEP staff.

Tim Skammer, from Accurate Recycling, will cover “What is Paper/How is it Graded.” This will be followed by a panel session - “How to Recycle Paper & Books” featuring Tim Skammer, Chris Lorson, from Staiman Brothers, a representative from Greenstar North America, Paul Flenders, from AbitibiBowater Recycling Division, and Bob Martin, from Booksavers, a book recovery firm.

The panelists will give an overview of single and/or dual stream vs. source separated materials recycling as well as managing the logistics in recycling office paper, newsprint, magazines, text books, catalogs, etc.

This will be followed by lunch which leads into a panel discussion that includes Craig Cope, Palmyra School District, Ed Barr, Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, Ric Laudenslager, Villanova University, Amy Farkas, Harris Township Manager, and Tim Breneisen, PA Recycling Markets Center.

They will present concepts concerning “The Three Ss of a Program – Space, Staff, and Stuff.” The day will end with Q & A.

Upon completion of this course, participants will receive a Penn State certificate verifying .6 CEUs earned towards the Recycling Professional Certification. Also, this course is a Required Elective for the Processing Specialization and the Processing Operator Course Certificate.

Advance registration and payment is required by February 11.

The Recycling Professional Certification program has been developed by PROP in conjunction with DEP. Courses are designed to introduce or update and enhance knowledge of recycling issues. Courses are taught from a practical standpoint, with real-life examples and problems.

The certificate is a structured series of courses that are offered at sites across Pennsylvania. Each course provides Continuing Education Units, a standardized measure based on classroom contact hours. Participants earn one CEU per ten hours of instructional contact. Certificate participants are required to earn a total of four CEUs during a four-year period and pass the Certification Examination.

For course fees and detailed information, please contact Jan Arnold, PROP Program Manager, by sending email to: jarnold@proprecycles.org or calling 814-742-7777. [The course brochure](#) is available online at the PROP website.

[Visit Our Professional Services Directory](#)

EPA Annual RecycleMania Challenge for Colleges, Universities Now Underway



College recycling efforts are being tested under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [RecycleMania 2008](#) which began January 27 and continues through April 5.

EPA Region 3 beat other regions by registering 75 schools for the competition and Pennsylvania leads all the states for the second straight year with 35 schools registered.

The Pennsylvania schools include: Bloomsburg University, Bucknell University, Carnegie Mellon, Chestnut Hill College, Dickinson College, Gettysburg College, Indiana University of PA, Juniata College, Lycoming College, Millersville University, Saint Vincent College, Shippensburg University, Temple University, University of Sciences of Philadelphia, Villanova University, Wilkes University and Wilson College.

Region 3 will recognize six schools for their accomplishments at the competition's conclusion, and the top school in each state will receive an excellence award for achieving the rank of Number 1 in the "Per Capita Classic" category.

Results will be posted at the [RecycleMania 2008 webpage](#).

County Commissioners Priorities, Including Farmland Preservation, Recycling Fee

County leaders from throughout Pennsylvania this week unveiled their list of [2008 key legislative priorities](#) while calling upon state leaders to strengthen their commitment to improving equity in county taxation, and to provide sufficient and fair levels of funding for mandated human services.

Among the priorities were strengthening the integrity of farmland preservation programs and legislation authorizing counties to adopt a recycling fee.

Dave Coder, Greene County Commissioner and president of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, said, "These 2008 priorities call attention to the wide variety of issues with which counties must deal every day. Often, our citizens and state lawmakers are not aware of the scope of services counties provide, frequently with great budgetary struggle. Counties are in the forefront every day meeting the wide array of citizens' needs."

Environmental priorities include—

Integrity of Farmland Preservation: Counties have a role in land use planning, farmland and open space preservation. In response to rapid development and increasing land values in many parts of the state, counties support legislation that would authorize an optional county realty transfer tax of up to one percent, with revenue dedicated to preservation of farmland and open space.

Counties also seek changes to statutes governing other programs initiated by the state to protect farmland by authorizing property tax breaks, including the optional millage freeze and Clean and Green. Clean and Green must be amended to provide county assessment offices with clear guidelines on how to administer preferential assessment for Clean and Green-eligible properties where tracts of land are leased to an alternative energy developer for projects such as wind towers.

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Counties remain concerned about eligibility standards in the existing law, which allow non-farmer-owned mini-estates to receive preferential assessment at the expense of other local taxpayers.

County Recycling Fee Authorization: Due to a recent court decision, counties can no longer levy a local administrative fee to fund supplemental county recycling programs such as household hazardous waste collection; electronics recycling, recycling drop-off centers, illegal dump enforcement and cleanup, and tire recycling.

This ruling has left counties without a source of revenue to fund these programs and many supplemental local recycling programs will be cut or eliminated. A decrease in the availability of recycling programs will result in more recyclable goods filling up space in landfills, and a proliferation of illegal dumping on public and private lands.

This will have an adverse impact on the Commonwealth's environment and the quality of life of many Pennsylvania residents, and will undermine the public's investment in the Growing Greener bond initiative.

Counties are seeking express statutory authorization to re-instate administrative fees for recycling. CCAP urges the General Assembly to authorize a county administrative fee that would be dedicated to recycling programs, administration of those programs, and public education, such as is proposed in [House Bill 934](#) (Scavello-R-Monroe).

For more information about these county issues, visit the [CCAP website](#), or call 717-232-7554.

EPA Releases Multi-Cultural Environmental Outreach Materials

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week released two publications specifically designed to increase environmental awareness among multilingual communities.

"[Teach English, Teach about the Environment](#)" is a curriculum designed to help teach adult students English, while introducing basic concepts about the environment and individual environmental responsibility. The concepts introduced in the curriculum can help immigrants understand their role in contributing towards cleaner and healthier communities by reducing, reusing and recycling.

The second publication, "[Working Together for a Healthy Environment](#) – A Guide for Multi-Cultural Community Groups," is designed to help community-based organizations plan and execute community events that promote reducing, reusing and recycling. It has a brief introductory paragraph on the inside cover in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean.

PA Green Power Purchasing Leadership Showcased in the EPA Green Power List

The latest U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Green Power Partnership list of the [top 25 largest purchasers of green power](#) in the United States includes the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the University of Pennsylvania.

The EPA quarterly publishes its list of the Top 25 Partners in the Green Power Partnership whose annual green power purchases are the largest nationwide. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania placed 18th on the list - the only state represented - while the University of Pennsylvania came in at 25.

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In addition to the Top 25 list, EPA publishes several other lists, including Local Governments, Green Communities and Colleges and Universities. Montgomery County made the Top 10 Local Governments list, and Swarthmore, Delaware County, was honored as the No. 9 Green Community purchaser. The University of Pennsylvania was the number 2 College and University purchaser, and Penn State University was third.

[Lists of top green power purchasers are available online.](#)

National Green Economy Conference Set for Pittsburgh March 13-14

The [Green Jobs: A National Green Jobs Conference](#) will be held on March 13-14 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in Pittsburgh, Pa.

The Conference will launch a nationwide dialogue about moving our country rapidly toward leadership in promoting the benefits of a new green economy.

It has been designed for advocates representing the labor, environment and public health movements; local, state and federal policy makers; business leaders; economic and workforce development specialists; investors; and scientists and technology experts. It hopes to accomplish three objectives:

- Provide a forum for strategic interaction between the different constituents with a stake in the developing new green economy;
- Showcase key policy initiatives for the rapid expansion of green job growth and economic development; and
- Demonstrate to the importance of public and private investments in the emerging green economy and launch the public discussion on these ideas.

More than 50 experts and leaders will speak, including: Phil Angelides, Board Chair, Apollo Alliance, Joy Clarke-Holmes, Director of Public Sector Markets, Johnson Controls, Leo Gerard, International President, United Steelworkers, Gerry Hudson, Executive Vice-President, Service Employees International Union, Van Jones, Green for All & the Ella Baker Center, Katrina Landis, Vice President, British Petroleum, Ed Mazria, Architecture 2030, John Podesta, President and Chief Executive Officer, Center for American Progress, Carl Pope, Executive Director, Sierra Club, Lou Schorsch, CEO, Arcelor-Mittal, North America, Rich Trumka, Secretary-Treasurer, AFL-CIO and Dr. Beverly Wright, Director, Deep South Center for Environmental Justice

For more information and to register, visit the [Green Jobs: A National Green Jobs Conference website](#) or email conference coordinator Sue Cardillo at sue@mcmahon-cardillo.com. The registration deadline is March 3 – so don't delay.

Spotlight

***Guster* Is First Artist Featured on PA Environmental Council's New Website**



The musical group [Guster](#) is the first artist to be featured on the redesigned website of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, providing a new and unique way to attract visitors to learn more about environmental issues.

The song "Satellite," from *Guster's* newest album *Ganging Up on the Sun*, is the first to be streamed through the

[music link on PEC's website](#), which also highlight's Guster's support of environmental sustainability through Reverb Rock.

"We wanted to have some fun with the new web site, and letting people discover a variety of new music is a good way to do that," said Brian Hill, President and CEO of PEC. "We're absolutely thrilled that a band as dynamic and as environmentally pro-active as Guster has agreed to be our first featured artist, although we will also feature artists with many different styles, ranging from folk to jazz, not just rock.

A new artist or group will be featured periodically on the new web site, which was redesigned to make it easy for people to learn about PEC's initiatives on water quality, sustainable communities, and energy and climate change. The site also features PEC's new logo.

Guster hails from Boston, where three of the band members started playing as "Gus" while attending Tufts University in 1991. They released their first independent album in 1996 and signed a contract with Sire records in 1998 – the year they appeared on the Conan O'Brien Show. Their popularity has grown continually ever since.

[Reverb Rock](#), a non-profit organization that educates and engages musicians and their fans to promote environmental sustainability, was founded by *Guster* guitarist/vocalist Adam Gardner and his environmentalist wife, Lauren Sullivan, in 2004.

Reverb Rock helps touring artists to minimize their environmental footprint by implementing services such as carbon neutral concerts and venues; bio-diesel for vehicles and generators; waste reduction; biodegradable catering products; and recycling.

Reverb also works to offset the carbon footprints resulting from fans' commutes to concerts through a carbon offset program and provides services such as an eco-village at each concert, built to reflect each band's causes and interests, to inspire fans to take action.

The Dave Matthews Band Summer 2007 Tour had the highest fan participation rate ever and resulted in 3,312,424 tons of total CO2 reduction, with the combined efforts of the band and its fans. This is equivalent to 193 households not using electricity for one year or 325 passenger cars not being driven for a year (1.2 million miles of driving).

Guster's most recent tour, the Campus Consciousness Tour 2007, was greened by Reverb through efforts such as carbon-neutral concerts by offsetting global warming emissions with wind power through [NativeEnergy](#), bio-diesel-powered tour busses and trucks, and recycling at venues and on busses.

The goal of this tour was "to educate, inspire, and activate students, and above all leave a positive impact on each community and college/university that the tour reaches."

For more information about PEC's new music feature, please send email to: music@pecpa.org . Visit the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council music webpage](#) and subscribe to PEC's RSS news feeds at www.pecpa.org/rss_feeds .

Feature

Clearfield Creek Watershed Assn. Completes Klondike Mine Drainage Project

The [Clearfield Creek Watershed Association](#) completed a major project last November called the [Klondike Mine Drainage Treatment Project](#).



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Margaret Dunn and Cliff Denholm of [Stream Restoration Inc.](#) had the opportunity to spend a day touring the facility recently with John Foreman of the U.S. Environmental Research Service.

The project consists of installing two passive treatment systems which were constructed to treat two discharges of the long-abandoned underground Klondike Mine which operated in the 1940s and 1950s.

Though the drainage is largely forested and hosts part of State Game Land, the two discharges were responsible for about one-third of the acid load to Little Laurel Run, which significantly markedly decreases the alkalinity of Clearfield Creek. No fish or macroinvertebrates are present in the lower two-thirds of the stream, and brown iron oxide coats the stream bed.

In addition, as part of the project, a stream channel was reconstructed to prevent clean water in the stream from entering the underground mine, therefore reducing the generation of new mine drainage.

The passive system was designed by Dr. Art Rose and John Foreman and was constructed by Ligonier Construction Company.

Funding for the project came from a \$12,855 grant from the DEP Growing Greener Watershed Program, a \$391,512 grant from the U.S. EPA 319 Program, a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Office of Surface Mining Appalachian Clean Stream Program and a \$20,000 grant from the Western PA Watershed Program.

In addition, about \$20,000 of volunteer work was accomplished by members of the Watershed Association and by John Foreman.

The owners of the land on which the project was built included the Blair County Solid Waste Authority, the Hite-Dodson family whose ancestors once operated the Klondike Mine and Cooney Bros. Coal Company.

For more information, visit the [Clearfield Creek Watershed Association website.](#)

Grants & Awards

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

- **February 8** – [PA American Water Watershed Art Contest](#)
- **February 8**—[REAP Farm Conservation Tax Credit Closes](#)
- **February 19** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting.](#)
- **February 20**— [USDA Conservation Innovation Grants](#)
- **February 22**— [Allegheny County Global Warming Poster Contest](#)
- **February 22**— [Clean Water Begins and Ends With You Student Art Contest](#)
- **February 29**— [Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants](#)
- **February 29**— [Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund Grants](#)
- **March 17**— [Community Action for a Renewed Environment Grants](#)
- **March 31** – PAEP [Karl Mason Environmental Award.](#)
- **March 31**—[DEP Host Municipality Inspector Grants](#)
- **March 31**—[Pa CleanWays Litter Hawk Youth Award Program](#)
- **April 2** – [WREN Water Resources Education Project Grants](#)

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- **April 25**—**NEW**. DCNR [Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grants](#)
- **May 20** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **June 20**— DEP [Section 902 Recycling Development Grants](#)

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

Quick Clips

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

[Teach-in to Focus on Global Warming](#)
[Climate Change Young People's Crisis](#)
[Editorial: Summit on Environment Offers Climate for Change](#)
[New Vanpools Reduce Commuter's Carbon Footprint by Half](#)
[Game Panel Hears More Complaints About Deer](#)
[Editorial: Lack of Foresight in Deer Troubles](#)
[Editorial: PA Needs Siting Process on Windmills](#)
[Energy Law Will Alter American Households](#)
[Penbrook, PPL Save Energy, Fight Crime](#)
[PNC to Open Second Green Branch in the Midstate](#)
[Green Building Blooming in Chesco](#)
[Electricity Rate Caps at Issue](#)
[NRC Approves Power Upgrade to PPL Susquehanna Plant](#)
[License Renewal Application Available for Three Mile Island Unit 1](#)
[Drilling Set to Begin for Area's Natural Gas](#)
[US DOE Withdraws Funding for FutureGen Project](#)
[100% Recycled Paper Used at Northampton County Community College](#)
[Refurbished High School Becomes Community College](#)
[Tracey Vernon Named Director of DEP Brownfields Action Team](#)
[Allegheny, Armstrong, Bucks, Centre Receive Waste Planning Grants](#)
[Editorial: Appalachian Trail Must Be Protected](#)
[Western PA Conservancy Acquires Forest Land in Clarion County](#)
[Is Radioactive Waste Coming to Susquehanna County?](#)
[Editorial: Fallingwater is Commanding a Greater View](#)
[Eternally Green: Woodland Burials Are a Natural Alternative](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Schuylkill Conservation District A Lot More Than You Think](#)
[Groups Work to Restore Deer Creek as Trout Stream](#)
[Senate Candidates Debate Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Proposal Merits](#)
[Farmers Rising to Bay Challenge](#)
[Danville May Join Lawsuit Against DEP Chesapeake Bay Strategy](#)
[Municipalities Raising Money for Lawsuit Against Bay Strategy](#)

[Officials Speak Out Against Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy](#)
[Higher Waste Fees, Bay Strategy Ignite a Rebellion](#)
[Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Costs Could Triple Some PA Sewer Bills](#)
[DEP: No Relief for Chesapeake Clean-Up Costs](#)
[Editorial: Save the Bay, But Who Pays? A Suit Worth Joining](#)
[Editorial: It's Not Clear If Financial Help for Sewage Plants Will Suffice](#)
[Editorial: Cleanup Up Bay at Whose Expense?](#)
[Editorial: Sewer Authorities Need State's Help](#)
[Something Fishy in Middle School Classroom](#)
[Mahoning Creek Eats Away at Their Land](#)
[After the Delaware Flood, Neighbors Join Hands](#)
[Local Industries Cooperating With Water Conservation](#)
[How Will Federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Funds Be Spent?](#)
[Two Abandoned Mine Sites to Be Reclaimed at No Cost to Taxpayers](#)
[Program Removes Acid Mine Drainage From Elk County Waterways](#)
[Trout Unlimited: Delaware River Plan Dangerous to Trout](#)
[Editorial: Congress Sleeps While Lakes Infestation Grows](#)
[22 Whitewater Releases Planned for Lehigh River](#)
[DCNR Says Mining Destroyed Lake Dam in State Park](#)

Regulations

The Governor's Office published its semi-annual [Regulatory Agenda](#) outlining the schedule for consideration of regulation changes for each state agency. The Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental Quality Board and the Susquehanna River Basin Commission also published regulatory notices as well, see below.

The Department of Environmental Protection [published notice](#) of new source set-aside for the nitrogen oxide trading program. The Environmental Quality Board published a [correction to the proposed Triennial Review of Water Quality Standards](#) regulation.

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission [published notice of proposed changes](#) to consumptive use regulation for agricultural water uses.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – February 2, 2008](#)

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

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

No new guidance documents were published this week.

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

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- [DEP published notice of Water Resources Regional Committee meetings for 2008](#)
- **February 5**— Governor’s Budget Address. [Available online](#). 11:30.
- **February 5**—**NEW**. House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [House Bill 674](#) (Reed-R-Indiana) that would broaden the review of guidelines and policies by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission; and [House Bill 1735](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) sorting out the property rights associated with coal bed methane recovery. Room 39 East Wing. 9:00.
- **February 5**— House Consumer Affairs Committee meeting to consider [House Bill 2200](#) (George-D-Clearfield) requiring utilities to adopt energy efficiency and demand-side management programs and [House Bill 2201](#) (McCall-D-Carbon) amend Title 66 providing for a transition to market-based electric rates, requiring assistance to low-income customers and providing for advance payments of electric bills. Room G-50 Irvis. 9:00.
- **February 5**—**NEW**. Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Senate Resolution 224](#) (Vance-R-Cumberland) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the cost for wastewater treatment plants to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy and [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to take steps to protect the Appalachian Trail. Room 8E-B East Wing. 9:30.
- **February 6**—**NEW**. House Finance Committee meets to consider [Special Session House Bill 1](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing a grant program and authorizing indebtedness for Energy Development Authority. Room 205 Ryan Building. 10:00.
- **February 6**—**NEW**. House State Government Committee briefing by the Department of General Services on riparian rights. Room 205 Ryan Building. 9:00.
- **February 6**—**NEW**. Senate Local Government Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1329](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) further providing for appeals and challenges to zoning ordinances, [House Bill 1330](#) (Kessler) further providing for appeals from official maps and local development ordinances. Room 8E-B East Wing. 10:00.
- **February 13**— House Game and Fisheries Committee meets for a presentation of the Game Commission annual report. Room 205 Ryan Building. 9:00.
- **February 13**—**NEW**. Joint Legislative Budget and Finance Committee meets to release a performance audit of the Fish and Boat Commission. Room 8E-A East Wing. 10:00.
- **February 14**— House Game and Fisheries Committee meets for a presentation of the Fish & Boat Commission annual report. Room 205 Ryan Building. 9:00.

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- **February 19**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Agriculture. Room 140. 2:00.
- **February 22-23** – 2008 [Keystone Coldwater Conference](#). State College.
- **February 25**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Public Utility Commission. Room 140. 9:00.
- **February 25**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – PEMA, Homeland Security, Fire Commissioner. Room 140. 10:00.
- **February 25**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Budget Secretary. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 3:00.
- **February 26**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Insurance. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 10:30.
- **February 26**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Community and Economic Development. Room 140. 2:00.
- **February 27**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Transportation. Room 140. 9:00.
- **February 27**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Office of Consumer Advocate and Small Business Advocate. Room 140. 1:00.
- **February 26**—[PA Chamber Energy Summit](#). Harrisburg Hilton.
- **February 28**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Agriculture. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00.
- **February 28**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Health. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 10:30.
- **February 28**—[Pennsylvania Wild Resources Symposium](#). [Powdermill Nature Reserve](#). Pittsburgh.
- **February 28-March 2**—[PA Assn. of Environmental Educators Conference](#). Antiochian Village Camp and Conference Center near Ligonier, Pa.
- **March 1-2**— [Schuylkill Watershed Congress](#). Montgomery County Community College, Pottstown.
- **March 3**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Environmental Protection. Room 140. 9:00.
- **March 3**— House Appropriations Committee budget hearing – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Room 140. 10:00.
- **March 4**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00.
- **March 4**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Transportation. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 1:15.
- **March 5**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Environmental Protection. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 3:00.
- **March 6**— Senate Appropriations Committee Budget Hearing – Department of Community and Economic Development. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 1:15.
- **March 6**—**NEW**. House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee holds a hearing on [House Bill 1989](#) (Wansacz-D-Luzerne) establishing the PA Flood Grant and Assistance Program. Council Chamber, Scranton. 10:00.

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- **March 19**— Capital Region Water Board Meeting. Susquehanna River Basin Commission Building. 1:00. Contact: Cindy Rock, Cindy.L.Rock@comcast.net or call 717-633-7959.
- **March 28**— Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference and Shad Symposium. Holiday Inn, Fogelsville. Information, send email to: rkennedy@lehighconservation.org .
- **March 29**— [PennFuture’s Annual Watershed Conference](#). Chadd’s Ford.
- **April 1-2**— The Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry 2008 [Environmental Regulations & Technologies Conference](#). Eden Resort Inn & Suites, Lancaster.
- **April 17**— Sewage Task Force, [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) meeting. Penn Stater, State College. 10:00.
- **May 13-15**—[PA Water/Wastewater Association](#) annual conference. Valley Forge.
- **November 11**—**Cancelled**. Environmental Justice Advisory Board meeting. The new meeting date is November 19.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

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

Helpful Web Links

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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

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

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

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

Stories Invited

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

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