

# — PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

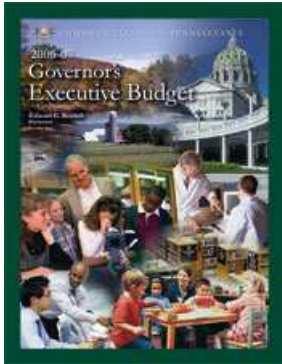
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Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

February 13, 2006

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## **Rendell Proposes Over \$100 Million in Environmental Funding Shifts, Reductions**



Gov. Rendell proposed a 2006-07 budget that includes shifts and reductions in over \$100 million in environmental funding for the Keystone Recreation, Parks and Conservation Fund, abandoned mine reclamation, oil and gas well plugging, watershed restoration, recycling grants, environmental education and support for county conservation districts.

The proposed reductions this year are on top of cuts [proposed by Gov. Rendell over the last three years](#) that Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty said “run deep” at budget hearings in 2005.

The largest change was a diversion of over \$63 million from the Realty Transfer Tax away from the Keystone Recreation, Parks and Conservation Fund allocated to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to the General Fund to help balance the budget in 2006-07.

This change is proposed as a one time diversion that parallels a proposed change in the way grants are awarded from the Keystone Fund. Grants would be awarded based on anticipated revenues to the Fund, rather than cash on hand as was done in the past.

The budget request also takes the maximum amount authorized-- \$30 million-- from the Environmental Stewardship Fund to finance the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund.

This transfer means a corresponding decrease in funding for farmland preservation (\$1 million), abandoned mine reclamation (\$3.4 million), oil and gas well plugging (\$1 million), watershed restoration (\$1.3 million) and sewer and water system projects (\$1.6 million) from the Fund.

Funding for county conservation districts would be reduced by \$900,000, nutrient management program support for farmers was reduced by \$986,000, the Chesapeake Bay Education Program was reduced to \$0 from \$300,000.

Grants to start up municipal recycling programs were cut \$8.5 million (in anticipation of the sunset of the Recycling Fee) and Small Business Pollution Prevention Grants were cut \$767,000.

The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority expects to award only about \$303 million in funding for drinking water, wastewater, stormwater and other projects this coming year. This year it funded \$353 million in projects. This decrease is in part due to cuts in federal funding and in funding from the state Environmental Stewardship Fund.

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As is usually the case, the Governor’s budget eliminated certain “legislative budget initiatives” in environmental agency budgets, including funding for scrap tire cleanup, safe water projects, however, the line item for black fly spraying that proved so controversial last year was not touched.

Gov. Rendell did include a new \$508,000 Deep Mine Safety initiative in DEP’s budget to support more frequent safety inspections in underground coal and mineral mines.

Just last year voters approved an environmental bond issue to provide \$625 million over six years in additional funding for farmland preservation, abandoned mine reclamation, watershed restoration, State Park improvement and sewer and water projects.

Here’s a quick summary of the proposed environmental budget changes—

	<b>2005-06</b> [dollars in	<b>2006-07</b> thousands]	<b>Change</b> (decreases) or increases
<b>DEP</b>			
All Funds	657,318	667,617	+ 10,299
General Fund	192,168	177,768	- (14,400)
Federal Funds	145,492	146,576	+ 1,084

Note: in fiscal 2002-03 DEP’s total budget was \$728.2 million

<b>DCNR</b>			
All Funds	387,697	311,397	- (76,300)*
General Fund	97,979	96,635	- (1,344)
Federal Funds	47,715	26,825	- (20,890)

\*due primarily to changes in the Keystone Recreation, Park, Conservation Fund

Note: in fiscal 2002-03 DCNR’s total budget was \$322.9 million

<b>Fish &amp; Boat Commission</b>			
All Funds	34,995	35,500	+ 505
State Funds	25,245	27,514	+ 2,269
Federal Funds	9,486	7,678	- (1,808)
General Fund	14	16	+ 2

Note: in fiscal 2002-03 the Commission’s budget was \$43.3 million

<b>Game Commission</b>			
All Funds	79,542	79,832	+ 290
General Fund	52,828	53,432	+ 604
Federal Funds	483	739	+ 256

Note: in fiscal 2002-03 the Commission’s budget was \$68.4 million

<b>Agriculture</b>			
Conservation Districts	1,660	1,210	- (450)
Nutrient Management Fund	3,206	2,220	- (986)

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	<b>2005-06</b> [dollars in	<b>2006-07</b> thousands]	<b>Change</b> (decreases) or increases
<b>Environmental Stewardship Fund</b>			
Oil & Gas	1,000	0	- (1,000)
Abandoned Mine Reclaim	3,400	0	- (3,400)
Watershed Restoration	23,148	21,751	- (1,397)
Sewage/Water Grants	3,999	2,310	- (1,689)
Farmland Preservation	10,749	9,521	- (1,228)
Transfer to Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund*	20,000	30,000	+ 10,000

\*(transfer authorization to HSCA ends after 06-07)

<b>DEP</b>			
Conservation Districts	3,550	3,100	- (450)
Chesapeake Bay Ed.	300	0	- (300)
Recycling Grants	36,000	27,500	- (8,500)
Small Business Pollution Prevention Grants	1,267	500	- (767)
Deep Mine Safety Initiative		508	+ 508

<b>DCNR</b>			
Forest Insect/Disease Control	2,000	3,000	+ 1,000
Grants to Land Trusts	8,493	9,999	+ 1,506
Natural Diversity Conservation Grants	735	750	+ 15
Keystone Fund*			
General Government	47,762	29,997	- (17,765)
Grants & Subsidies	81,189	34,996	- (46,193)

*\*Note from Governor’s budget book: A one-year reduction of the 15 percent transfer to the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund is proposed effective July 1, 2006, accompanied by obligation of revenues in the Keystone Fund in the year collected rather than the subsequent year. The transfer rate is proposed to be 2.1 percent for fiscal year 2006-07. Effective July 1, 2007 the annual 15 percent transfer to the Keystone Fund would resume.*

**Links:** [Budget Includes Funding to Speed Water Quality Permits](#)  
[Governor’s Budget in Brief- PDF](#)  
[Text of Budget Address](#)  
[Table of Contents of “Big Budget Book”](#)  
[Governor’s 2006-07 Budget Request Webpage](#)  
[Senate Democratic Appropriations Committee Budget Summary](#)

## Session Schedule

The House and Senate return to session February 13 and will then break until March for [budget hearings](#).

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- EPA Releases Clean Energy-Environment Guide to Action
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- PA Center for Environmental Ed Newsletter Online, New Contact
- Pennsylvania State Park Visitors Can Now Make Reservations Online
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## Feature

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

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## On the Hill

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### On the Senate, House Agenda

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

### Calendars

The House starts the week with these bills on their Calendar-- [House Bill 2067](#) setting limits on state spending through a constitutional amendment.

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

### Committees

The House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee holds an informational meeting on Energy Policy this week to hear remarks from the Energy Association of PA, Energy Coordinating Agency of Philadelphia and the Consumer Advocate to the Public Utility Commission.

In the Senate, the Community and Economic Development Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1063](#) providing additional funding to expand the PA Small Business Development Centers (Centers provide the [EMAP environmental assistance services](#)) and the Appropriations Committee will meet to consider [House Bill 213](#) establishing penalties for eco-terrorism and [House Bill 893](#) changing procedures for shutting off water for nonpayment of sewage bill.

The [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) will hold its first Environmental Issues Forum of 2006 featuring a presentation from Innovative Rail Concepts.

### Senate/House Bills Moving

Legislation expanding the tire recycling program was given final approval and sent to the Governor, the House passed an extension of the Recycling Fee and legislation requiring counties to defend conservation easements this week. Here's a rundown.

## Senate

**Tire Recycling:** [House Bill 1114](#) expanding the waste tire recycling program was passed by the Senate and was sent to the Governor. The last day for his action is February 18.

**Capital Budget:** [House Bill 2317](#) (Feese-R-Lycoming) 2005-2006 Capital Budget for flood control, Keystone Recreation, Environmental Stewardship projects was referred back to Senate Appropriations.

## House

**Recycle Fee Extension:** [House Bill 1902](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) eliminating the sunset date on the \$2/ton Recycling Fee and requiring Recycling Performance Grants to be used for local recycling and waste reduction efforts was passed by the House and now goes to the Senate.

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

## Game Commission May Not Make It Passed July 1 Without a License Increase

The new head of the Game Commission appeared before the House Game and Fisheries Committee this week with some grim news—the Commission may not have sufficient budget reserves to pay its bills passed July 1 if it does not receive a license fee increase.

“For fiscal year 2006-07, assuming that we balance the budget next year, we have insufficient funds to meet requirements on July 1,” said Carl Roe, Executive Director of the Commission. “I am sure you are concerned about what would happen if we do not get increased resources.”

Roe said the Commission would have to further reduce programs and people at a time when 10 percent of the Wildlife Conservation Officer district positions are already vacant.

The [annual report](#) submitted to the Committee noted hunting license sales were down 6 percent over the previous year.

Promising to increase communication with its partners, sportsmen’s clubs and the public on critical issues like deer management, Roe pointed to habitat improvement, the development of the new point-of-sale system for selling licenses and the recent environmental bond issue as highlights of the last year.

Roe reported \$5 million of new Growing Greener II funds were spent by the Commission to purchase bulldozers and other heavy equipment to be used in habitat improvement projects throughout the state. A priority this year will be to address the Commission’s high hazard dams.



**Carl Roe**  
**Executive Director**

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Private landowners will soon be able to benefit from the Game Commission's experience in habitat improvement through a new set of online tools.

"In the future, we plan to unveil information on our website that landowners can use to construct food plots, plan tree and shrub plantings and prepare other blueprints for habitat improvement of their land whether they own one-half of an acre or 100,000 acres," said Roe.

"We need to increase the public's awareness that their activities and involvement can have an impact. We need to engage the general public to assist in habitat development whether it is backyard, municipal parks, major conservation projects or large privately-owned tracts of land," Roe continued.

The Commission has also had success with managing non-game species like the Indiana bat and the reintroduction of bald eagles, peregrine falcons, otters and fishers.

Roe said the Commission is continuing its efforts to gather information from a variety of sources including hunters and a Citizens Advisory Task Force to help it shape deer management policies.

The Commission Board is expected to get recommendations on deer management from the Citizens Task Force and have a draft urban deer management plan at its April meeting.

In closing, Roe said, "We need to stand together and not let immediate individual program issues get in the way of our long-term goals of managing all wildlife resources and insuring our grandchildren have the same opportunity to pass on our love for the resource and our hunting and trapping heritage to their grandchildren."

A copy of [Carl Roe's testimony](#) and the [2005 Annual Report](#) are available online.

### Joint Committee Releases Report on Oil and Gas Leasing Operations

The Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee this week has released its report "[Oil and Gas Leasing Activities on Commonwealth-Owned Lands](#)," pursuant to House Resolution 394 of 2003.

The resolution was adopted in response to a policy proposed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in its draft final State Forest Resource Management Plan (SFRMP), unveiled in 2003, that would have terminated all future leasing of shallow natural gas reserves beneath Commonwealth-owned lands.

The report contains four recommendations regarding DCNR's oil and gas leasing policy:

- DCNR should retain the proposed ban on new oil and gas well sites and roads in bioreserve areas, old growth areas and wild and natural areas, allow limited use along steep slopes and high recreation impact areas (including buffer zones appropriate to such areas), but continue to grant waivers in buffer areas where greater environmental benefits occur;
- DCNR should replace the proposed blanket ban policy with one that would accommodate natural gas exploration and production in all geological horizons beneath State Forest lands under controlled conditions established in the leases;
- DCNR should adopt a lease structure that provides economic viability for gas production while ensuring protection for the state's forest reserves. Leases should reflect the Department of Environmental Protection's rules and regulations as closely

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as possible and ensure confidentiality of proprietary information contained in the leases; and

- DCNR should adopt a modified bonus and fee structure reflecting nationwide industry norms, in order to facilitate broad-based participation in the lease bidding process.

“The recommendations will allow for DCNR to continue its practice of multiple resource management on the 2.1 million acres of State Forest land in Pennsylvania. The recommendations will allow for mineral operations on DCNR-owned land that are in accordance with sound conservation practices and which are fully compatible with other uses and values including timber, wildlife, forests, recreation and water resource management,” said Committee Chairman Rep. Scott E. Hutchinson (R-64)

“The recommendations also allow for an ecologically safe opportunity to capitalize on the clean energy provided by natural gas, and maintain the revenue,” [\$3 million - \$4 million annually] “provided by the Oil and Gas Fund which has helped to finance the creation of eight new State Parks, supplement and expand 31 others, and purchase forest land,” added Committee Executive Director Craig D. Brooks.

The report notes that DCNR and a Gas Industry Work Group have been meeting for the past two years to work on possible changes to DCNR’s standard oil and gas lease agreement to reduce operational and access problems on State Forest lands, and have agreed upon several recommended changes, which are supported by the committee.

The proposals include a new dispute resolution section, continuation of the existing royalty rate of 12.5 percent and resetting of the rental rate to \$5 per acre per year with periodic reviews for appropriateness, establishment of certain drilling conditions and conditions for granting of waivers, and new language to ensure confidentiality of operators’ data while allowing free access as necessary to data by DCNR’s technical staff.

The proposed changes do not recommend a ceiling on the number of wells that would be allowed on State Forest land at any one time.

Pending legal reviews, the proposed changes to the standard agreement may be in place later this year, according to the report.

The Committee report also contains a history of oil and gas leasing in the Commonwealth, benefits to the Commonwealth from leasing and information on the SFRMP and its development.

[Oil and Gas Leasing Activities on Commonwealth-Owned Lands](#) is available online through the [Joint Committee’s website](#).

### House Committee Holds Hearing on California Car Standards

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, chaired by Rep. Bill Adolph (R-Delaware), held a public hearing this week to gather information on the best set of vehicle emissions regulations Pennsylvania should adopt in order to meet federal air quality standards.

“As chairman of the committee, I have heard arguments both for and against the California Low Emissions Vehicle standards and the federal vehicle emissions standards,” said Adolph. “This hearing was aimed at gathering reliable information that will help the state legislature determine which set of standards will benefit Pennsylvania’s air quality the most and help us meet federal air quality standards.”



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The hearing was specifically held to address the impact [House Bill 2141](#) (Geist-R-Blair), known as the Fuel Additive Regulatory Control Act, would have on Pennsylvania's ability to meet the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act of 1990. This legislation would require Pennsylvania adopt the federal vehicle emissions standards for new vehicles, rather than the California Low Emissions Vehicle standards.

Testifiers at the hearing included Kathleen McGinty, secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection; Allen Biehler, secretary of the Department of Transportation; Judy Katz, air protection division director of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Joel Schwartz, visiting fellow with the American Enterprise Institute; Greg Dana, vice president for environmental affairs of the Alliance of Automobile Makers; and Kevin Stewart, director of environmental health for the American Lung Association of the Mid-Atlantic.

[Secretary McGinty said](#) regulations proposing that Pennsylvania adopt the California standards will be published in the February 11 PA Bulletin for public review. That review will include three public hearings in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia.

Secretary McGinty said the California standards would allow Pennsylvania to take credit for more emission reductions from vehicles than the federal vehicle standards. Those reductions are necessary to attaining and maintaining the federal 8-hour ozone standard, she said.

She noted if emission reductions could not be achieved from this source, they would have to come from other sources to meet the ozone standard compliance deadline of 2010 in several areas of the state and then maintain the standard for ten years thereafter.

Other witnesses said the California standards would only result in a one percent difference in emissions by 2025, especially given the length of time it takes for the number of new vehicles to show up in the vehicle fleet in sufficient numbers.

One of the main issues brought up during the hearing was whether automobile manufacturers would raise the price of vehicles when forced to manufacture cars to meet new air quality guidelines. Possible increased cost to consumers is something the committee will take under consideration.

Estimates presented to the Committee ranged from zero additional cost to over \$3,000 per car if Pennsylvania adopts the full California standard.

Another concern of committee members was the control Pennsylvania would be giving up to another state if California's standards, and therefore all future changes to the standards, were adopted.

"Many people seemed to think that what we are dealing with here is a no-brainer and that we should simply adopt one or the other and be done with it," said Adolph. "What they have to realize is that the committee is working to find the best possible set of regulations for Pennsylvania as a whole. We need to consider the long-term ramifications if we are to adopt one set of regulations over the other. Our environmental health as a state is a serious issue and we need to make sure we have all the facts before making a decision that will have a long term impact of the citizens of Pennsylvania."

This hearing follows hearings on this topic by the House Democratic Policy and Senate Environmental Resources and Energy and Transportation committees.

## Environmental Issues Forum Set for February 13

The [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) will hold its first Environmental Issues Forum of 2006 featuring a presentation from Innovative Rail Concepts.

The principals of the firm Innovative Rail Concepts of Lafayette Hill, PA, Michael McNamara and Charles Nygard, will discuss the development of its unique product – a composite railroad tie manufactured primarily from recycled waste material.

Innovative Rail Concepts and its partners expect to begin full scale manufacturing in the next two months and the firm is planning to expand its base of manufacturing to Altoona within the next year and a half, using raw materials from the Commonwealth and creating new recycling opportunities for materials formerly landfilled.

The Forum will start at noon in Room 205 of the Matthew J. Ryan Building in Harrisburg.

The Joint Committee is chaired by Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango).

## Bills Introduced

**Mine Safety Equipment:** [Senate Bill 1092](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) requiring additional breathing apparatus, lifeline cords and wireless tracking devices in underground mines.

**Sunday Hunting:** [House Bill 2435](#) (Tigue-D-Luzerne) authorizes hunting antlered deer on two Sundays during hunting season.

## In Other News

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### Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Launches 2006 Great PA Cleanup!



The [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Alliance](#) this week launched its effort to involve thousands of Pennsylvanians in picking up litter for the third annual [Great PA Cleanup!](#).

Last year, 140,000 volunteers cleaned up more than 11,000 miles of roadways, 12,000 acres of parkland and 3,500 miles of streams.

Groups that register their cleanup events through the [Great PA Cleanup website](#) will be eligible for free disposal of the trash they collect at participating landfills, get a supply of gloves and safety vests and are eligible for entry into reward contests in Pennsylvania and nationally to thank volunteers and groups for their participation.

Events must be registered by no later than April 20 to qualify.

The website also has materials to help promote cleanup events, identify resources in their county to help with anti-litter and dumping issues, register results, links to anti-litter education materials and much more.

Want to participate in an event? You can find one near you at the [Great PA Cleanup website](#).

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The featured cleanup this year will take place April 22, in conjunction with Earth Day, although the entire cleanup -- with a special emphasis on [Audubon's Important Bird Areas](#). -- will be held from March 1 to May 31.

The formal kickoff of the 2006 Great PA Cleanup! was led by KPB co-chairs Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty and Bill Heenan, Steel Recycling Institute.

Speaking at the Thomas W. Holtzman Elementary School in Susquehanna Township, Dauphin County, DEP Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty spoke to Megan Krot's third-grade class.

"I need your help to clean up Pennsylvania. You can make a difference, whether it is in the neighborhoods where you live, the parks where you play, or the forests 'Where The Wild Things Are,'" McGinty said, citing the popular children's book by Maurice Sendak.

"Litter and illegal dumping affect everyone's quality of life," McGinty told the students while holding a rehabilitated great horned owl. "I want you to ask all your friends and every adult you know to get involved in this year's Great Pennsylvania Cleanup."

"It takes a shared commitment from residents, neighborhood groups, nonprofit organizations, government agencies and our state's large and small businesses to prevent litter," said William Heenan, co-chairman of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful with McGinty. "Whether you join an existing cleanup or organize one of your own, every resident can help us succeed in making Pennsylvania a much more attractive place to live, work and play."

This year's cleanup includes a focus on [Audubon Pennsylvania](#) and its [Important Bird Area program](#). Audubon Pennsylvania has identified 82 Important Bird Area sites encompassing more than 2 million acres of the state's public and private lands. The voluntary IBA program combats threats to the most essential and vulnerable bird habitats through proactive habitat conservation measures.

"Reversing the damage litter and illegal dumping do to bird habitats is key to preserving Pennsylvania's natural ecosystems," Audubon Pennsylvania Executive Director Dr. Timothy D. Schaeffer told the class. "Through efforts such as the Great Pennsylvania Cleanup, we will maintain Pennsylvania's wilderness and urban bird habitats so that one day you can show your grandchildren the white clouds of migrating Snow Geese as they stop in central Pennsylvania and the peregrine falcons hunting the skies above our downtowns."

This year's Great Pennsylvania Cleanup also features exciting incentives.

Everyone can visit the new **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** to enter drawings for six weekend vacations in some of Pennsylvania's most scenic spots and to enter the national Keep America Beautiful sweepstakes for a Honda Accord hybrid-powered vehicle.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is again playing a major role in the Great PA Cleanup.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is supported and sponsored by a wide range of businesses, trade organizations, civic and environmental groups, and state and local government agencies.

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The departments of Conservation and Natural Resources, Environmental Protection and Transportation are members of the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful alliance. PennDOT supports the cleanup by providing participants with free gloves, safety vests and trash bags.

Last year, Keep America Beautiful presented PennDOT with one of six Keep America Beautiful/U.S. State Department of Transportation Partner Awards for its role in making the Great PA Cleanup a tremendous success.

Members of the Pennsylvania Waste Industries Association, also part of the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful alliance, are again offering free landfill space to dispose of nonrecyclable waste collected during the cleanup.

PA CleanWays, a nonprofit group dedicated to fighting illegal dumping and litter, is leading the KPB alliance's cleanup effort this year. PA CleanWays is coordinating all cleanup event registrations and collections reporting.

Here's a list of organizations sponsoring Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and the Great Pennsylvania Cleanup: AAA Mid-Atlantic; Audubon Pennsylvania; Best Buy; departments of Conservation and Natural Resources, Environmental Protection and Transportation; County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania; Cities: Allentown, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh; GreenTreks Network; Home Depot; Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries; Keep Lancaster Beautiful; Keep Philadelphia Beautiful; Keystone Sanitary Landfill; PA CleanWays;

Pennsylvania Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus; Pennsylvania Builders Association; Pennsylvania Downtown Center; Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association; Pennsylvania Horticulture Society; Pennsylvania Host Municipal Inspectors; Pennsylvania Organization of Watersheds and Rivers; Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation; Pennsylvania Resources Council;

Pennsylvania Soft Drink Association; Pennsylvania State Association of Borough Managers; Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors; Pennsylvania Waste Industries Association; Pocono Mountains Vacation Bureau; Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania; Schuylkill Keep It Pretty; Sierra Club of Pennsylvania; The Steel Recycling Institute; United States Steel; and Waste Management.

For information on the Great Pennsylvania Cleanup, and to find or register a cleanup event, visit the new [Great Pa Cleanup website](#).

Interested individuals also can call toll-free at 1-888-548-8372 for more information.

### **Applications Now Being Accepted for Compost Infrastructure Development Grants**

The Department of Environmental Protection is now accepting applications for its [2006 Compost Infrastructure Development Grants](#) through May 4.

Under the program, qualified existing and operating for-profit business entities and nonprofit organizations in this Commonwealth are eligible for grants to increase the quantity of yard and/or food wastes collected and processed in this Commonwealth.

Additional consideration will be given to applications that are developed in consultation with the [Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center](#)

[Applications are available online](#) or by contacting Laura Chambers, DEP Bureau of Waste Management, [rchambers@state.pa.us](mailto:rchambers@state.pa.us), 717-783-2388.

## **Rendell Orders Re-Inspection of PA Underground Mines**

Gov. Rendell this week ordered the re-inspection of each of the Commonwealth's 77 active underground mines in the next 30 days, and urged the state's mine operators to heed the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration's call for a voluntary "timeout" to discuss safety with workers.

"In combination with MSHA's efforts, the work of our state inspectors will provide a thorough inspection of the sensitive areas of our underground mines, including the areas where significant hazards could exist and addressing issues specifically involved in the accidents in West Virginia," Governor Rendell said.

The Department of Environmental Protection's Bureau of Mine Safety will conduct intensified inspections, concentrating efforts in the working sections by looking at roof control plans, ventilation, cleanups, electrical equipment and rock-dusting procedures. The safety inspectors also will examine all seals and sealed areas to check construction work and ensure adequate ventilation.

For more information, visit the DEP's [Deep Mine Safety webpage](#).

**NewsClip:** [State Orders Safety Checks of PA Mines](#)

## **Holmes Safety Association Offering Students Mine Safety Scholarships**

The Joseph A. Homes Safety Association is offering [scholarships to individuals](#) currently employed or who are pursuing careers in the mining industry, safety and health fields for high school graduates, undergraduates or graduate students.

The deadline for applications is April 1, according to [DEP's website](#).

Applicants must have been accepted by an accredited college or university mine safety, occupational or industrial health and safety, industrial hygiene, safety management or other related safety programs.

For other requirements and an application form, visit the [Homes Safety Association Scholarship webpage](#).

## **Ignore the Groundhog, Think Spring! Attend a Tree Tender Workshop**

If prognostications of six more weeks of winter have you down, take action and think about warmer weather and attend one of the upcoming "Tree Tender" class on how to plant and care for trees sponsored by the [TreeVitalize Program](#).

TreeVitalize, a partnership to restore tree cover in the five-county region in Southeastern Pennsylvania, is offering classes this Spring on how to plant and care for trees on these dates—

- Bucks County: Heritage Conservancy, Aldie Mansion, 85 Old Dublin Pike, Doylestown - March 23, 30 and April 6, 6 - 9 p.m.;
- Montgomery County: Lower Merion Township Administration Building, 75 East Lancaster Ave., Ardmore, April 18, 25 and May 2, 6-9 p.m.; and
- Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 100 N. 5th Street, 5th Floor, May 10, 17 and 24, 5:45 to 8:45 p.m.

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During nine hours of Tree Tender training, participants will learn about tree biology, identification, pruning and root care, as well as how to fundraise, manage volunteers, and work with local government.

DCNR spearheads the TreeVitalize project with many public and private partners. The training was designed and is being taught by staff from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and Penn State Cooperative Extension.

Students are expected to volunteer time to community tree planting projects in exchange for training. Groups also may qualify for free or discounted trees upon completing the program.

TreeVitalize hopes to educate as many as 2,000 citizens in tree planting and care over the next three years. So far, 906 citizens have been trained. The \$8 million program also has a goal of planting more than 20,000 shade trees in neighborhoods in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties.

Other TreeVitalize partners are the state Department of Environmental Protection; Aqua Pennsylvania; Philadelphia Eagles; PECO, an Exelon Co.; U.S. Forest Service; Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; Morris Arboretum; William Penn Foundation; Pennsylvania Landscape and Nursery Association; Penn State Cooperative Extension; Fairmount Park Commission and county and local governments.

Registration for all classes is required. Classes are open to all residents of the five county region.

For more information about the classes, visit the [Tree Tender webpage](#) or contact Mindy Maslin at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society at 215-988-8844

Visit the [TreeVitalize website](#) for more ideas on how to improve tree cover.

### **Game Commission Offers Seedlings to Property Owners for Habitat Improvement**

The Game Commission is again offering the "[Seedlings for Habitat Program](#)" that provides landowners with 50 or more acres of land open for hunting up to 500 free seedlings to improve habitat for wildlife.

Those cooperators with enrolled acreages exceeding 500 acres are eligible for one free seedling per acre enrolled up to a maximum of 10,000 seedlings annually.

New this spring, Pennsylvania landowners may purchase seedlings for wildlife food and cover, watershed protection, soil erosion control, and for reclamation of disturbed areas, such as surface mine site and utility right-of-ways.

For order forms and information on pick up and shipping options, visit the [Seedlings for Habitat Program webpage](#).

### **Westmoreland County Smart Growth Partnership Accepting Award Nominations**

The Westmoreland County Smart Growth Partnership is accepting nominations for its 2006 Smart Growth Awards through March 31.

The awards will recognize smart growth developments, plans and individuals and groups in Westmoreland County that have distinguished themselves by how close they come to achieving the [10 Smart Growth Principles](#) established by the group.

Award categories include: existing development, proposed development, municipal plan implementation, community service and a student award.

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For more information contact the Smart Growth Partnership at 724-836-7048 or send email to: [sgpwc+@pitt.edu](mailto:sgpwc+@pitt.edu) .

### DCNR Adds New Watersheds to State Rivers Conservation Registry

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week formally added watersheds in Armstrong, Chester, Delaware, Indiana, Monroe, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties to the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry.

The new watersheds include:

- [Cherry Creek, Caledonia and Mount Minsi Creek watersheds](#) in Monroe County;
- [Darby Creek Watershed](#) in Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties;
- [Lower Crooked Creek Watershed](#) in Indiana and Armstrong counties; and
- [Tacony-Frankford Creek Watershed](#) in Philadelphia County.

For more information on the benefits and process of qualifying for this designation, visit the [Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry webpage](#).

### DEP to Hold Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Steering Committee Meetings

The Department of Environmental Protection has scheduled a series of [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Steering Committee](#) meetings to hear from groups on the initiatives Pennsylvania is taking to reduce nutrient and sediment loads to the Bay.

Upcoming meetings are scheduled for February 17 and March 3 in the Rachel Carson State Office Building (*See Calendar of Upcoming Events*)

Both the Senate and House Environmental Resources and Energy Committees have held hearings on DEP's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy to hear concerns from municipal authorities, farm groups, builders and environmental groups. (*PaB 9/23-05*)

Given the variety of items covered in these meetings, DEP has begun to post meeting documents and related information to the department's [Chesapeake Bay website](#).

### Pennsylvania American Water Accepting Entries for Watershed Art Contest



**John-Paul Heil**  
**2005 Grand Prize Winner**

Pennsylvania American Water is accepting entries for its fifth annual [Protect Our Watersheds Art Contest](#) for fifth graders in areas served by Pennsylvania American Water.

The deadline for entries is March 31.

The contest encourages students to utilize their artistic talents to express the importance of protecting Pennsylvania's watersheds and water resources. As part of the entry, students are asked to write a short description of how watershed protection impacts them personally.

Winners will be selected based on creative vision, artistic talent, understanding of watershed protection and the ability to communicate that understanding.

Four students will be recognized statewide: two regional first- place winners will be rewarded a \$500 educational savings bond and two second-place winners will receive a

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\$250 educational savings bond. All entrants will receive a Watershed Champion certificate.

In addition, the first-place winners will compete for the grand prize, having her/his artwork printed on "Bloomers" cards distributed by Pennsylvania American Water. Bloomers are seed-filled gro-cards that, when planted and tended, produce a variety of wildflowers.

"The art contest is a fun and creative way for students to learn about the importance of protecting a most valuable natural resource: water," said Dan Warnock, president, Pennsylvania American Water. "These students are the future stewards of our land and resources, so it's critical that we help to increase their understanding of the impact humans have -- positively and negatively -- on our watersheds and ultimately on our drinking water sources."

The company received over 180 entries from across the state for the 2005 contest. Last year's grand-prize winner, John-Paul Heil, a home school student from Camp Hill, Cumberland County, wrote in his brief entry comments, "Watersheds are important to all forms of life. If our natural resources are destroyed, our future will be destroyed as well."

Awards will be presented in May during Watershed month.

[The 2005 contest winners are posted online.](#)

For more information and contest entry materials, visit the [Protect Our Watersheds Air Contest webpage](#) or contact Communications Manager Joi Corrado at 717-531-3228 or [jcorrado@amwater.com](mailto:jcorrado@amwater.com).

### Senior Volunteers Seek New Members to Help Track Health of French Creek

Neither snow nor rain nor dark of night stops members of the French Creek Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corp from doing their part to keep an eye on French Creek's health.

These volunteers are active year round, doing monthly water chemistry tests and biannual macroinvertebrate studies. Members regularly gather to collect samples from area streams and take them to a lab at Allegheny College for analysis.

In addition to the actual field-testing days, the French Creek PaSEC meets monthly. Recent guest speakers included Jennifer Hill from the DEP's Northwest Regional Office who spoke about Total Maximum Daily Loads as a way to determine the greatest amount of a given pollutant that a water body can receive without violating water quality standards and designated uses.

With so many miles of water to check, the French Creek, PaSEC would like to expand its group and train new members to cover more testing sites in Crawford County. Anyone aged 55 and over is invited to join volunteers in the field to learn about what the group is doing. Those that find it interesting are invited to go to meetings and to undergo hands-on training sessions.

Meadville resident Clara Sheakley became interested in the PaSEC by talking with some members, and she decided to give it a try. Heading out into the field with the group, Sheakley says, "Tests have always fascinated me. It's interesting to see what information you can gather from a jug of water!"

Because she does not have a background in chemistry, she admits it was intimidating at first. "It's scary, but the manual lays out the steps – it's doable." Sheakley



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also finds the fellow group members to be extremely helpful and friendly. “The others seem to be really devoted to what they are doing. They are very serious about it.”

The PaSEC uses standardized protocols to assess physical, chemical, and biological indicators in streams. This data can be used as a screening tool to determine where further study is needed and the success or failure of restoration efforts. The data is housed in a database that includes an open component with fields for a limited number of parameters and can be utilized by other volunteer monitoring groups not following the PaSEC's standardized protocols.

The French Creek PaSEC is a part of a statewide program created by DEP's Citizens' Volunteer Monitoring Program and the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement.

For more information about the French Creek PaSEC contact Crawford County RSVP at 814-335-6111 or visit the [Pennsylvania Senior Environment Corps webpage](#).

### Trout Unlimited Abandoned Mine Cleanups Featured in WPSU Documentary



Restoration efforts on the [Kettle Creek Watershed](#) sponsored by Trout Unlimited and other partners were featured in the “Water: An Endangered Resource” documentary aired by WPSU-TV this week in State College.

“This is a tremendous opportunity to raise public awareness of acid mine drainage,” said Dr. Colson Blakeslee, an active TU member and longtime spokesperson for Pennsylvania

conservation efforts. “This problem is seldom discussed but is quietly affecting over 3,000 miles of rivers and streams throughout Pennsylvania.”

Drainage from abandoned coal mine sites is often highly acidic and full of dissolved metals, a deadly combination for aquatic life. Cleanup efforts will result in improved fishing and other recreational opportunities that generate significant incomes for local communities. In addition, the restoration of these rivers and streams will reduce drinking water treatment costs and make available clean water supplies that attract industrial and commercial users.

Trout Unlimited has been working with the local Kettle Creek Watershed Association to restore the Kettle Creek watershed in Clinton, Potter, and Tioga Counties since 1998, and recently expanded its focus to the entire West Branch Susquehanna River basin. More than 1,100 miles of streams are impaired by abandoned mine drainage in the West Branch Susquehanna watershed.

“Many opportunities exist for local communities to get involved in cleanup efforts,” said Amy Wolfe, TU Director of Abandoned Mine Programs. “This documentary takes the important step of educating Pennsylvania citizens and policymakers about the need for guaranteed and permanent solutions at the highest levels of government.”

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For more information, visit the [Kettle Creek Watershed webpage](#) and download a copy of “[Restoring the Wealth of the Mountains: Cleaning Up Appalachia’s Abandoned Mines.](#)”

### **POWR Takes Watersheds Data System On the Road**

The Pennsylvania Organization for Watershed and Rivers has scheduled additional workshops in Tannersville and Williamsport to make watershed groups aware of the new PA Watersheds Data System.

The scheduled workshops include—

Feb. 16 – Monroe Campus of Northampton Community College, Tannersville, 6-8 p.m.

March 16 – Lycoming College in Williamsport, 6-8 p.m.

More workshops are planned for Pittsburgh, Carlisle and Southeast PA, so watch the POWR website for upcoming dates. (*courtesy [Watershed Weekly](#)*)

**NewsClip:** [PA State Watershed Data System Workshops](#)

### **PA Environmental Council Sponsors Stormwater Retrofit Workshops in Southeast**

The [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) is sponsoring a series of three Stormwater Retrofit Workshops in Southeastern PA that are geared to engineers, contractors, municipal officials and interested citizens.

The workshops will be held on--

- March 15 - Neshaminy Watershed, Doylestown Township Building, 425 Wells Rd, Doylestown;
- March 22 - Chester-Ridley-Crum Watershed, West Goshen Township Building, 1025 Paoli Pike, West Chester; and
- April 5 - Darby-Cobbs Watershed, Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Education Center, 700 Cobbs Creek Parkway, Philadelphia (along Cobbs Creek).

Each 3-hour workshop will feature design concepts and BMP retrofit recommendations to improve stormwater management at developed sites.

Engineers/designers will discuss site-specific design concepts and BMPs.

Workshops will take place from 8:30 a.m. to Noon.

To register call, Liz Feinberg at PEC’s Philadelphia Office, 215-592-7020, Extension 113 or send email to: [lfeinberg@pecpa.org](mailto:lfeinberg@pecpa.org).

Funding for this program is generously provided by: Department of Environmental Protection Coastal Zone Management Program, William Penn Foundation, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, Philadelphia Water Department. (*courtesy [Watershed Weekly](#)*)

### **Codorus Creek Water Research Forum Set for March 2**

Are watershed investments worth it? That’s the question the first Codorus Creek Water Research Forum will attempt to answer March 2 at the Penn State York Conference Center.

Scientists from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Risk Management Laboratory are planning the initial steps in a research project to test the effectiveness of watershed restoration projects in the Codorus Creek Watershed in York County.

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The Water Research Forum is an attempt to bring together interested individuals and organizations to share the wealth of water quality and other data restoration projects have gathered in the Corderus.

The Forum will help defined “effectiveness” and review existing research information to identify gaps for further work.

The event is sponsored by the [Watershed Alliance of York](#) and the Penn State York – [Corderus Creek Restoration Efficacy Program](#) and will run from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

To register, send an email to: [mph13@psu.edu](mailto:mph13@psu.edu) by February 17.

For more information, contact Dr. Matthew Hoch at the same email. (*courtesy [Watershed Weekly](#)*)

### **POWR Arranges For Legal Services for Watershed Group Members**

Watershed group members of the PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers will soon have available a new benefit – pro bono legal assistance from the Harrisburg law firm of LeBoeuf, Lamb, Green & MacRae, LLP.

Starting in March, POWR expects to offer this service to members on a first come, first served basis. Up to ten hours of legal counsel will be available to five watershed groups.

For more information on this new service and to see if your group qualifies, contact Judy Jordan, POWR, by calling 717-234-7910 or sending email to: [jjordan@pawatersheds.org](mailto:jjordan@pawatersheds.org) . (*courtesy [Watershed Weekly](#)*)

### **DEP Increases Incentives for Reclaiming Abandoned Mine Lands**

The Department of Environmental Protection [announced this week](#) it was increasing the funds available to the Reclaiming Financial Guarantee Program that provides lower-cost bonds to coal operators who reclaim and then reclaim abandoned mines.

Since 1996 the Guarantee program has helped finance the reclamation of 2,117 acres saving Commonwealth taxpayers about \$12.7 million in reclamation costs. Over 100 coal operators have used the program.

DEP has now increased funding for the Program from \$800,000 to \$1 million and increased the limit per operator to \$300,000 and per permit to \$100,000.

For more information, visit the [Reclaim PA webpage](#).

### **EPA Releases Clean Energy-Environment Guide to Action**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week released, “[The Clean Energy-Environment Guide to Action](#)” that lays out state-level policies that will promote clean energy.

The Guide details states' experiences with cost-effective clean energy policies and strategies that meet energy, environmental, and economic objectives. The guide covers energy efficiency, clean energy supply and clean distributed generation.

EPA estimates that if all states implemented cost-effective clean energy and environment policies, the expected growth in demand for electricity could be cut in half by 2025, and more demand could be met through cleaner energy supply. This translates into

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an annual savings of \$70 billion in energy costs by 2025, while preventing the need for more than 300 power plants and eliminating greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those from 80 million vehicles.

EPA issued the guide at the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) Energy Outlook Conference in Washington, D.C. "The guide to action will help us avoid recreating the wheel. We look forward to learning from the experiences of other states what works and which policies yield the biggest bang for the buck," said Sara Ward, director, Ohio Office of Energy Efficiency.

Pennsylvania and eleven other states are part of EPA's Clean Energy-Environment State Partnership Program.

For more information, visit the [Clean Energy-Environment Guide to Action](#) webpage.

### EPA Recognizes Landfill Methane Partners For Greenhouse Gas Reductions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency this week recognized the latest accomplishments of landfill methane partners who have reduced emissions of methane and created renewable energy sources, including two Pennsylvania organizations.

Biodiesel Industries, Chester County, Pa. and the Department of Environmental Protection received partner and project of the year awards for excellence in reducing landfill methane emissions and creating renewable energy, along with six others.

EPA has assisted in the development of more than 200 landfill gas energy projects in the past 10 years. In 2005 alone, landfill gas energy projects in the U.S. provided over 9 billion kilowatt hours of electricity and 74 billion cubic feet of gas for corporate and government end users. The emissions reductions associated with these projects last year were equal to those from 13 million vehicles. The energy equivalent would be powering 725,000 homes and heating 1.2 million homes.

The partners accepted the following awards at EPA's Ninth Annual Landfill Methane Outreach Program Conference and Project Expo in Baltimore.

Here more on the Pennsylvania award winners--

- **Project of the Year:** Direct Use. Chester County, Pa. and Granger Energy - Landfill gas from the Lanchester Landfill is delivered to four local companies, offsetting their reliance on natural gas and providing considerable cost savings; and
- **State Partner of the Year:** The Department of Environmental Protection - The state agency provides a full spectrum of technical assistance services, financial incentives, and renewable energy programs for landfill gas energy development.

[Information about other award winners is available online.](#)

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

For more information, visit the [Methane to Markets webpage](#).

**NewsClip:** [Granger Energy Wins Project of Year Award](#)

## PA Center for Environmental Ed Newsletter Online, New Contact Information



**Kathleen Paul**  
**New PCEE Director**

The February issue of [EE Connections](#), the online newsletter of the [PA Center for Environmental Education](#), is now available along with new telephone and address information for the Center—they moved!

Don't miss the special message from the new director of the center Kathleen Paul and these other newsletter stories--

**General EE:** Gov. Rendell Awards \$116,000 in Small Business Advantage Grants; Farmland Preservation Funds, Alternative Fuels Promoted at Farm Show; \$8.5 Million for Clean Energy Projects Announced; Wildlife in Winter: Animal Tracks; EPA Awards \$263,443 for Pennsylvania's Wetlands Program; Call for Presentations Announced

**K-12 News:** PA CleanWays Environmental Fairs; Trout Unlimited Youth Fishing Camp Applications; Pittsburgh Voyager Holds Teacher Training Workshop; How Mother Nature Collection; Free EPA Software Tool;

**Higher Education:** Applied EE Program Evaluation --Online; Duke Master of Environmental Management Program -- Online; MS in Environmental Education --Online;

**Professional Development:** Pennsylvania Rural Water Association 2006 Annual Conference; Pennsylvania No-Till Alliance Meeting; Reminder: PAEE Annual Conference Wild Resources Education Workshop; Green Building as a Teaching Tool; and

**Grants and Awards:** Watershed Restoration Grant Applications; Nominations for 2006 Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards; 2006 Karl Mason Award; American Ground Water Trust Scholarships; Brower Youth Awards

PCEE has moved its offices to a new location in Slippery Rock. Its new street address is 164 South Main Street, Slipper Rock, PA 16057 and new phone number is 724-738-9020. Send email as always to [info@pcee.org](mailto:info@pcee.org) .

## Pennsylvania State Park Visitors Can Now Make Reservations Online

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week unveiled a new online Pennsylvania State Parks reservation system that offers visitors the ability to make reservations at campsites and other park facilities across the state.

Users can search for available campsites, picnic pavilions and other facilities online as well as make reservations at their convenience.

Visit the new online system at [www.visitPAparks.com](http://www.visitPAparks.com) or park visitors may call the toll-free number 1-888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757) to receive information and make reservations.

## Join the Great Backyard Bird Count February 17-20, Everybirdy Counts!



The [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) returns for its ninth season February 17-20. The National Audubon Society and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology encourage everyone to count birds with a buddy!

Bird enthusiasts of all ages can share their love of birds with a friend, a child, a scout troop, a class, or a co-worker-opening new eyes to the joy of birding and the fun of creating a unique snapshot of winter bird abundance and

distribution across the continent.

Every pair of eyes is needed and “everybirdy” counts, whether in a backyard, on a high-rise balcony, in a park, or on any of the 730 million acres of public lands.

In 2005, participants sent in more than 52,000 checklists, with a record-breaking 613 species and more than 6 million birds counted. These millions of sightings generate what would be impossible otherwise-continent-wide information about where the birds are and how their numbers compare with those of previous years.

Anyone with Internet access can see the results in maps and charts as the sightings pour in.

"The level of energy created each February by Great Backyard Bird counters is phenomenal," said Dr. Paul Green, director of Citizen Science for Audubon. "What always amazes me are the new discoveries made by people across North America. Some bird watchers even send digital photos to back up their reports. Last year participants sent in more than 1,000 photos and many are now part of the GBBC web site gallery."

In 2006, for the first time, the Lab of Ornithology and Audubon are launching an element of friendly competition. Awards will be given to localities that submit the most checklists, record the greatest number species, or count the highest number of birds.

Last year's top numbers: 433 checklists from Gautier, Mississippi, 169 species from Corpus Christi, Texas, and 291,246 birds from Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge, Missouri.

A photo contest will also be held based on bird pictures taken during the event and submitted for posting on the GBBC gallery. Winners will be announced after all the data from the event have been submitted.

Everyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to seasoned experts. During the count, bird watchers tally up birds for as little as 15 minutes, or for as long as they like, keeping track of the highest number of each bird species they see together at one time. People are encouraged to report birds from public lands and local parks, as well as from their backyards.

Participants enter their numbers online at the [Great Backyard Bird Count webpage](#) and can explore sightings maps, lists, and charts as the count progresses.

## **Making Environmental Connections, Society of Women Environmental Professionals**

On March 1 the Capital Chapter of the Society of Women Environmental Professionals will hold a special “Making Environmental Connections” workshop at the C. Ted Lick Wildwood Conference Center, Harrisburg Area Community College.

The program will feature panels on brownfield redevelopment, drinking water/water quality, alternative energy, air quality and student mentoring.

For more information contact Beverly Reinhold by sending email to: [breinhold@state.pa.us](mailto:breinhold@state.pa.us) or calling 717-783-6589.

## **Farmers Invited to Cove Area Regional Digester Meetings**

The Board of Directors of the Cove Area Regional Digester Project would like to invite farmers to hear the latest developments of the digester project on February 27.

A Farmers’ Meeting will be held from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Martinsburg Fire Hall to provide an update on the latest digester developments and also discuss the new opportunities the digester will be offering to local farmers.

A Town Meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Martinsburg Memorial Park. The project engineer will discuss the project in detail and explain the benefits of the regional digester to the local community. Questions concerning the project will be entertained at the conclusion of the presentation.

Registrations will be accepted by calling the Cove Digester office at 814-793-0090 or by sending email to: [CoveDigester@EarthLink.net](mailto:CoveDigester@EarthLink.net) . Please indicate if you will need transportation to the meeting. Lunch will be provided.

**Link:** [The New Math of Energy Production: Cows+Manure=Gas+Electricity](#)

## **Help Wanted: PA Environmental Council Seeks President-CEO**

The [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) is seeking applicants for the position of President-CEO recently vacated by Andrew McElwaine. The deadline for applications is February 20.

The mission of the Council is to protect and restore the natural and built environments through innovation, collaboration, education, and advocacy. PEC believes in the value of partnerships with the private sector, government, communities and individuals to improve the quality of life for all Pennsylvanians.

The Council was established in 1970 and is well known for its role in environmental policy discussions and decision-making in the State capital, in both the regulatory and legislative arenas.

The President and CEO is responsible for managing the overall staff, including two affiliated entities, Enterprising Environmental Solutions, Inc and Point Lookout Farmlife and Water Preserve Foundation, Inc.

Interested and qualified candidates may apply in confidence by submitting a resume, cover letter, and compensation requirements to: Dewey & Kaye Attn: Pennsylvania Environmental Council Search, 20 Stanwix Street, 9th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, or send email to: [pec@deweykaye.com](mailto:pec@deweykaye.com) or fax: 412-281-5925

## Help Wanted: PA Resources Council Seeks Litter Education, Writer

The [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) is seeking individuals to fill two positions: an Environmental Program Specialist for anti-litter and beautification programs and a Technical Writer. Both positions are at Ridley Creek State Parks in Delaware County.

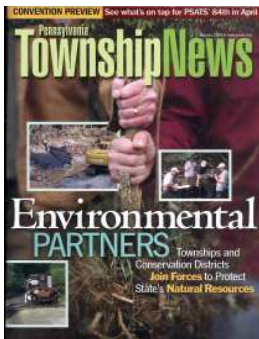
**Environmental Program Specialist:** Seeking candidates for a six-month, 40 hour/week program specialist position in its regional office at Ridley Creek State Park. Duties include implementing anti-litter and beautification programs in five-county Philadelphia area; conducting community outreach events (some weekend work required); and scheduling and assisting with Litterbug mascot appearances (schools, towns, community fairs, events, etc). Successful candidate must have good public speaking, organizational and writing skills, be physically capable of lifting 30 pounds, setting up event displays and working both in and out-of-doors and have own transportation. Must be able to work with diverse groups, ranging from business/community leaders to small children. B.S./B.A., Environmental Science, Ecology, Business Management, or related program preferred. Job could develop into a full time position with benefits.

**Technical Writer/Administrative Assistant:** Seeking candidates for a full time position in its regional office at Ridley Creek State Park. Duties include maintaining membership database, serving as primary writer/editor of newsletters, press releases and reports, and updating recycling information in yellow pages for over 150 regional directories. Additional duties include serving as event coordinator for annual fundraiser dinner, assisting with public relations, and scheduling/organizing PRC events. Successful candidate must have BS/BA degree in business, communications, marketing or related field and excellent organizational, writing and communications skills. Computer expertise includes MS Word, MS Excel, MS Access, QuickBooks, PageMaker (In Design). Must be physically capable of lifting 20 pounds and setting up event displays. Attractive benefits package provided.

Please submit a cover letter and resume for these positions to: B. Van Clief, Pennsylvania Resources Council, Inc., 3606 Providence Rd., Newtown Square, PA 19073, or [vanclief@prc.org](mailto:vanclief@prc.org) . No phone calls please!

## Feature

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

*By Jennifer L. Hawbaker, PA Township News*

*[Continued from last week...](#)*

### Getting Municipal Feedback in Dauphin County

[In Dauphin County](#), it's clear that municipalities and the conservation district are ready and willing to help each other. There,



the communication works two ways, and that's why district manager John Orr recently called on several municipal officials to talk about how the district can best help municipalities make informed, sound decisions on issues that affect water quality.

"They wanted to know how the conservation district can best related to the various levels of understanding, from a citizen to an elected official to the expert who is designing a site plan for development," says Michael Rimer, manager for West Hanover township in Dauphin County.

"How do you begin to educate those participants in stormwater management, and what kind of program do you develop to get everybody on board?" Rimer asks. "The meeting was a think tank where we could talk about our ideas. It's a very complex problem for the district: knowing how to get down to the local level, to the board of supervisors, who always have a lot on their plate, to start thinking about these kinds of issues."

The district is working hard to get everyone thinking about resource conservation and will be offering workshops to help the municipalities understand the impact that municipal decisions can have on water quality issues.

An on-site best practice demonstration focusing on stormwater management will continue the education process. Sixteen stations offer a close look at potential solutions to runoff issues, Orr says, and address how to get water back into the ground, rather than treating it as a waste product.

"We want to help municipal officials understand the importance of how they craft the development that's occurring in their municipalities," he says. "We are not trying to stop development but help them understand how it can occur with less adverse environmental impact. We are here to give municipal officials options. It's ultimately their decision how they manage things. In the end, we all win."

While water quality is a big focus for the conservation district, it's only one of many areas where townships can find assistance and technical support. A recent workshop, for example, provided municipal and county officials with information on how to define and maintain agricultural security areas. And townships even get into the act with issues not directly under their control.

"Our West Nile virus program doesn't have a direct tie to municipal government," Orr says, "but our coordinator works very closely with the municipalities." The conservation district will help local government officials answer questions from residents, he says, and always coordinates with them before any spraying takes place.

### **Coordinating Efforts in Chester County**

[In Chester County](#), conservation district manager Dan Greig thinks the best recipe for success is for the county's municipalities to work in coordination with the district. "Units of government are getting tied more and more closely together," Greig says. "In order to get the job done, it's going to have to be all of us working together."

This can apply to just about every area of the conservation district's expertise, but Greig is referring specifically to the U.S. environmental Protection Agency's National pollutant discharge elimination System Phase 2 Program, which requires permits for certain municipal separate storm sewer systems. The program was developed to reduce the amount of sediment and pollution entering surface and groundwater from storm sewer systems.

“Most of our municipalities are MS4s, and we need to work together to meet those requirements,” Greig says.

That working relationship goes well beyond the MS4 regulations. For example, Greig says, Chester County still has its share of agriculture, and mushroom farming is one of the area’s specialties.

“One thing we do get involved in is ordinance review,” Greig says, “primarily when it affects agriculture or deals with stormwater.” Ordinances related to composting facilities, mushroom farms, and intensive agricultural operations have been a focus of the conservation district, as well as for the townships.

“If we don’t have good coordination and talk to each other when there are issues,” he adds, “little problems can become big. We want to address any problems when they’re still small.”

### **A Growing Resource in McKean County**

In northwestern Pennsylvania, the commissioners in rural [McKean County](#) are working to make their county conservation district more than just a conduit for dirt and gravel road funds. With only one part-time employee, there hasn’t been much time or money to explore the programs common to other conservation districts.

“The previous board of commissioners had always looked at it as something they couldn’t afford to go to,” says commissioner Cliff Lane. With a shift in thinking, thought, the commissioners are now asking if they can afford not to expand the district’s role in the county.

“The commissioners are all on board to hire a full-time conservation district manager and a watershed specialist,” Lane says. “We’ve also located a place in the county for them to have an office and are going to decide if the conservation board will do the hiring and directing or just take an advisory role.”

Lane hopes the increased staff will be able to find more funding to increase the services offered still further. “Our DEP representative told us of at least eight other funding sources that we’re not even tapping,” he says. “There’s a lot happening here.”

### **Getting Involved**

With so much happening in county conservation districts across the state, townships can only benefit by being a part of the process, and the county associations of township officials can help make that happen.

“Any of the county associations can become eligible to nominate a township official to serve on the county conservation district board of directors,” says PSATS Executive Director R. Keith Hite. “Because the conservation districts and townships share similar responsibilities and goals, both can benefit from a closer tie between the two.”

PSATS provided county association officers with the paperwork needed to become a nominating organization earlier this year. County association officials needing more information can contact their county conservation district or the Pennsylvania Conservation Commission.

“We encourage township officials to participate in the appointment process and have township supervisors appointed to district boards,” says Susan Fox Marquart of the [Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts](#). “We’re always looking to enhance our partnerships with township officials and be working at the local level. Districts welcome the interaction and participation.”

“District board meetings are all open to the public,” she adds. “Any township official can certainly attend to find out what kinds of things the districts are doing.”

County associations can also encourage a greater connection between townships and conservation districts in other ways. “Invite a speaker from the district to your annual county convention business meeting,” Hite says. “Even a 15-minute spot will give township officials a valuable update on the services available through the conservation districts.”

Establishing a solid working relationship with municipal officials is a top priority for the [Luzerne County Conservation District](#). “One of the primary things we have recognized is that for us to accomplish our mission, we have to get the conservation message to the municipalities and help them implement it on the local level,” says district manager Josh Longmore.

To do that, the district is looking into creating a position that would focus on conservation education for municipalities and act as a liaison between local government officials and the conservation district. Ad that seems to be an idea that is taking shape at the state level, too.

“We’re floating a concept of putting municipal coordinators in local offices,” says Karl Brown of the [Pennsylvania Conservation Commission](#). “Their sole responsibility would be to get to know the municipalities.”

The county conservation districts are already making concerted efforts to work closely with local governments, even without a single position dedicated to that area. In Pike County, the close contact between the conservation district and the municipalities has benefited everyone involved: the district, the local governments, and the residents.

“I think there are so many opportunities for conservation districts to work with municipalities,” says Susan Beecher, manager of the [Pike County Conservation District](#). “I’ve been doing this for 16 years, and I feel very strongly that the types of work we’re trying to do and the goals we’re trying to accomplish in terms of resource conservation we really can’t do without partnering with municipalities.

“I’m gratified that we’ve taken the time to nurture these relationships,” she says. “I think there’s a mutual respect. It’s been a long road, and it’s not always perfect, but we’re accomplishing a lot more by working with our townships than without them. In the long run, our mission definitely will benefit from it.”

**Training Opportunity:** A “Working with Conservation Districts Environmental Partners with Townships” workshop will be featured as part of the [PSATS Annual Convention and Trade Show](#) April 23-26 in Hershey.

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

## Quick Clips

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

[Game Commission Sees Need for Expanded Deer Culling](#)  
[Advice for When Bambi’s in the Backyard](#)  
[New Law Helps Towns Hold Onto Open Space](#)

## PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

[Editorial: Act Now to Save Shrinking Open Space in Monroe County Township Seeks to Protect Scenic Vistas](#)  
[Chester County Plan Would Help Preserve Amish Farms](#)  
[Power Line Proposal Could Test New Law](#)  
[Why Small Firms Need EMAP to Reduce Costs](#)  
[Profile of a Successful Metals, Plastics Recycling Company in Monroe County](#)  
[The Hybrid Car That Could Be Built By Students](#)  
[Wind Turbine Maker Brings 250 Jobs](#)  
[DCNR Puts Wind Energy Lease in Somerset on Hold](#)  
[Grant Will Help With Asthma Detection in Schools](#)  
[Biologist Recognized for Work with Shad](#)  
[Op-Ed: Barns Must Be Saved](#)

### Watershed NewsClips

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

[Report Shows Removing Dam Had Little Effect on Conodoguinet Creek](#)  
[Sixth Graders to Examine Nine Mile Run](#)  
[Unity Township Backs Naming of Creeks](#)  
[\\$1 Million Allocated in Sullivan County Growing Greener Projects](#)  
[York County Seeks \\$1.2 M for Codorus Creek Project](#)  
[Department Investigates Locations of Mine Pools](#)  
[University of Delaware Heads Delaware River Basin Research Project](#)

### Regulations

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The Environmental Quality Board, the Environmental Hearing Board and the Public Utility Commission all published regulations this week. Here's a rundown...

The Environmental Quality Board published proposed regulations for comment that would adopt the [California vehicle emissions standards](#) and [exclusions from listings for certain hazardous wastes](#).

The Environmental Hearing Board published revised [Rules of Procedure](#).

The Public Utility Commission published [proposed standards and process](#) for qualifying alternative energy systems and qualifying alternative energy credits under the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – February 11, 2006](#)

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

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

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

## **Technical Guidance & Permits**

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The Department of Environmental Protection this week published a notice of availability for the [Final General Plan Approval/Operating Permit](#) for Portable Nonmetallic Mineral Processing Plants and [final guidance documents](#) on elements of the biosolids and drinking water programs.

Final: DEP ID: 362-2192-004. Guidelines for Identifying, Tracking and Resolving Violations for the Land Application of Biosolids. This document provides guidance concerning the implementation and execution of compliance and enforcement activities related to the land application of biosolids.

Final: DEP ID: 383-4000-002. Guidelines for Identifying, Tracking and Resolving Violations for the Drinking Water Program. This document establishes guidelines for addressing violations in the drinking water program in accordance with the Department-wide policy entitled "Standards and Guidelines for Identifying, Tracking and Resolving Violations," which was issued on April 6, 2004.

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

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

## **Calendar of Upcoming Events**

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

- [DEP's Annual schedule of board and advisory committee meetings for 2006](#)
- **February 13** – Senate Appropriations Committee will meet to consider [House Bill 213](#) (Godshall-R-Montgomery) establishing penalties for eco-terrorism. Rules Committee Room. Off the Floor.
- **February 13** – [Joint Legislative Air & Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) Environmental Issues Forum featuring a presentation by Innovative Rail Solutions, a distributor of railroad ties made from recycled materials. Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **February 13** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Ohio [Water Resources](#) Regional Committee meeting.

## PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

- **February 13** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Great Lakes [Water Resources](#) Regional Committee meeting.
- **February 14** – House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee informational meeting on Energy Policy to hear remarks from the Energy Association of PA, Energy Coordinating Agency of Philadelphia and the Consumer Advocate to the Public Utility Commission. North Office Building, Hearing Room 1. 9:00.
- **February 14** – Senate Community and Economic Development Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1063](#) (Pileggi-R-Montgomery) providing additional funding to expand the PA Small Business Development Centers (Centers provide the [EMAP environmental assistance services](#)). Room 461. 9:30.
- **February 15** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Agricultural Advisory Board meeting. Next meeting April 19, Room 105 Rachel Carson Building, 10:00.
- **February 16-17** – [Fundamentals of Geology and Practicing Geology Seminars for Professional Geologists](#). Pittsburgh.
- **February 17** – **CANCELLED** -DEP Tributary Strategy Steering Committee meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00 a.m.
- **February 17** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Potomac [Water Resources](#) Regional Committee meeting.
- **February 21** – **CANCELLED** – Environmental Quality Board meeting. Next meeting is scheduled for March 21.
- **February 22** – [DCNR Citizens Advisory Council meeting](#). Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **February 23** – House Environmental Resource & Energy Committee informational meeting to understand the general, scientific, environmental, health and economic issues associated with reducing mercury emissions from power plants. North Office Building, Hearing Room 1. 10:00.
- **February 23** – House Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Room 140. 3:00.
- **February 23** – **CANCELLED** – DEP Upper Susquehanna [Water Resources](#) Regional Committee meeting.
- **February 27** – House Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Environmental Protection. Room 140. 2:30.
- **February 28** – House Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Agriculture. Room 140. 1:00.
- **March 1** – Senate Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Agriculture. Senate Majority Caucus Room. 1:15.
- **March 2** – Senate Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Senate Majority Caucus Room. 10:30.
- **March 3** – DEP Tributary Strategy Steering Committee meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 a.m.
- **March 9** – Senate Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the Department of Environmental Protection. Senate Majority Caucus Room. 1:15.
- **March 13** – Governor’s Renewable Agricultural Energy Council meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.

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- **March 18-19** – [Fundamentals of Geology and Practicing Geology Seminars for Professional Geologists](#). Camp Hill (near Harrisburg).

### [DEP Calendar of Events](#)

#### [Watershed Events](#)

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

#### [Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

### Helpful Web Links

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

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

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

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

### Stories Invited

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

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