

# — PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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## **UPDATED: Senate Leaves, House Comes Back Monday to Work on Budget**

The Senate left town on a six-hour call after the Appropriations Committee reported out a \$750 million highway and transit funding bill. The House voted 102 to 96 to non-concur in the Senate-passed general state budget sending the bill back to the Senate and a possible conference committee. The House plans to return to session July 2.

Gov. Rendell blamed the budget hold up on the Senate because they refused to adopt a tax on residential and business electric bills to support his \$850 million Energy Independence Initiative bond issue to fund clean and renewable energy projects. Gov. Rendell is insisting his energy proposal be adopted before he signs the state budget.

Legislation to enact the fee to support the energy program is pending in the House Rules Committee -- [House Bill 1201](#) (George-D-Clearfield)-- and in a companion bill is in the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee -- [Senate Bill 716](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne).

Various combinations of legislative leaders and staff from the Rendell Administration are cloistered away hashing through the issues. If talk could generate energy, the Capitol at this time of year could power the country.

The Senate Appropriations Committee's approval of a \$750 million highway and transit funding bill did not please Gov. Rendell who has already said that amount of money may not be enough. Gov. Rendell said the Commonwealth needs at least \$1 billion in new transportation funding.

On the energy issues, the House approved another piece of the Governor's Energy Independence Initiative [House Bill 1203](#) (Hornaman-D-Erie), although not the bill that includes the system benefit fee to fund the program.

The House also sent [Senate Bill 815](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne), extending the storage tank pollution prevention program through 2012, to the Governor for his action. [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing uniform environmental covenants for brownfield site redevelopment was also passed and sent to the Senate for its action.



Clarion River, Kennerdell Overlook  
South of Cranberry, Venango County

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In a bipartisan vote of 36 to 14, the Senate passed one potential solution to funding the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund in [Senate Bill 913](#) (MJWhite-R-Venango) that would transfer \$3.3 million of proceeds from the Realty Transfer Tax each month to the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund before the allocations are made in the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund. *(See separate article.)*

The Senate also took final action on [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-D-Allegheny) relating to landowner liability and opening land to recreation and sent the bill to the Governor.

[House Bill 496](#) (George-D-Clearfield), that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transportation escorts, was amended by the Senate and sent back to the House for a concurrence vote.

*(See Senate and House Bills moving for a complete list of actions.)*

The lack of a state budget will mean a shutdown in “non-essential” state services and slots casinos beginning July 9, according to the Rendell Administration.

Gov. Rendell reminded legislators that as mayor of Philadelphia, he took the brunt of a 40-day transit strike.

As legislation continues to fly back and forth between the House and Senate, Calendars and Committee meeting schedules are almost meaningless.

In this *Digest* we capture the movement of bills of interest so far this week, but we will publish a special issue next week when (we hope) the budget dust has settled.

**NewsClip:** [Stalemate Emerges Over State Budget, Rendell's Other Priorities](#)  
[State Budget is Late for 5th Year](#)  
[Rendell, Legislators at Odds, Budget Expires](#)  
[Changes, Yes, But Budget's Still a Struggle](#)  
[House Rejects Budget on Deadline as Senators Leave Town](#)  
[Senate Advances Transit Package](#)  
[House Approves \\$500 Million Capital Budget](#)  
[Bumsted: Poor, Poor, Philly Loses Again](#)

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### Session Schedule

The Senate is on a six-hour call and House is scheduled to be back in voting session July 2.

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### Feature

- Bald Eagles Heighten Their Presence in Pennsylvania

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## On the Hill

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### On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House are scheduled to be in voting session at least Saturday (*see Session Schedule*), so Calendars and Committee schedules are in a state of “flux.” Here’s what we know at the moment...

#### House

**Calendar:** [House Bill 1201](#) (George-D-Clearfield) making changes to Title 66 (Utility Code) consistent with Gov. Rendell’s Energy Independence Proposal, including the proposed system benefit charge; [House Bill 221](#) (Tangretti-D-Westmoreland) establishing an Historic Preservation Incentive Grant Program; [House Bill 1320](#) (Siptroth-D-Monroe) establishing a program within DEP for the disposal of home-generated medical sharps; [House Resolution 112](#) (Mann-D-Lehigh) directing DEP to implement policies that encourage electronic waste recycling; [House Resolution 122](#) (George-D-Clearfield) petitioning the President and Congress to increase funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program; [House Resolution 268](#) (Rohrer-R-Berks) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study Game Commission forestry and mineral development policies; [House Resolution 180](#) (Yudichak-D-Luzerne) establishing a commission to study the Commonwealth’s fragmented system of local governments.

#### Senate

**Calendar:** (*No Calendar information was available at press time.*)

#### Bills Introduced

Several more environmental bills were introduced this week...

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**Traffic Lights:** [House Bill 1615](#) (McGeehan-D-Montgomery) establishing a program to install light emitting diodes in traffic lights to improve energy efficiency.

**Neighborhood Energy Assistance Tax Credit:** [House Bill 1653](#) (Mustio-R-Allegheny) creating a Neighborhood Energy Assistance Tax Credit for business that contribute to a neighborhood energy organization.

**Wildlife Management Units:** [House Bill 1667](#) (Mahoney-D-Fayette) providing for citizen task forces for wildlife management units, mandatory deer harvest report cards and deer populations on state game lands.

### On the Governor's Desk

The following bills reached the Governor's Desk so far this week...

**Landowner Liability:** [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-D-Allegheny) relating to landowner liability and opening land to recreation was passed by the Senate without change and now heads for the Governor's desk.

**Storage Tanks:** [Senate Bill 815](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) extending the storage tank pollution prevention program through 2012 was reported from the House Appropriations Committee and passed by the House without amendment. It now goes to the Governor for his action.

### Senate/House Bills Moving

Here's the rundown on environmental bills moving in the General Assembly this week....

#### Senate

**Landowner Liability:** [House Bill 13](#) (Readshaw-D-Allegheny) relating to landowner liability and opening land to recreation was passed by the Senate without change and now heads for the Governor's desk.

**Hazardous Sites Cleanup Funding:** [Senate Bill 913](#) (MJWhite-R-Venango) authorizing the transfer of certain excess fine and penalty revenues to the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund was referred to and reported from Senate Appropriations Committee with amendments. The amendment would transfer \$3.3 million of proceeds from the Realty Transfer Tax each month to the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund before the allocations are made in the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund. The bill was then passed by the Senate 36 to 14. (*See separate article.*)

**Nuclear Plant Fees:** [House Bill 496](#) (George-D-Clearfield) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transportation escorts was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, re-referred to and reported from the Senate Appropriations Committee and passed by the Senate. The bill now returns to the House for a concurrence vote.

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**Transmission Lines:** [Senate Resolution 129](#) (Stout-D-Washington) expressing opposition to the designation of national corridors of interest in Pennsylvania for electric transmission lines was reported from Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and adopted by the Senate.

**Alternative Energy Standards:** [Senate Bill 715](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) amends the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act incorporating the Governor’s Energy Independence Proposal changes was referred back to the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

**Keystone Fund:** [Senate Bill 728](#) (Scarnati-R-Jefferson) restoring the State System of Higher Education allocation from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund for fiscal year 2006-07 was passed by the Senate and sent to the House. Similar legislation - [House Bill 1295](#) (Hanna-D-Clinton)—was amended and reported from and then back to Senate Appropriations Committee and re-reported as amended.

**PUC Nominees:** The Senate confirmed the nominations of Ty Christy and Kim Pizzigrilli to the PUC.

### House

**Storage Tanks:** [Senate Bill 815](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) extending the storage tank pollution prevention program through 2012 was reported from the House Appropriations Committee and passed by the House without amendment. It now goes to the Governor for his action.

**Uniform Covenants:** [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing uniform environmental covenants for brownfield site redevelopment was passed by the House and sent to the Senate for action.

**Alternative Energy Standards:** [House Bill 1203](#) (Hornaman-D-Erie) amending the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act in line with Gov. Rendell’s Energy Independence Proposal was passed by the House and now goes to the Senate for action.

**Utility Code Changes:** [House Bill 1201](#) (George-D-Clearfield) making changes to Title 66 (Utility Code) consistent with Gov. Rendell’s Energy Independence Proposal, including the proposed system benefit charge, was reported from the House Rules Committee and is now on the House Calendar for action.

**Electric Distribution:** [House Bill 1530](#) (Dermody-D-Allegheny) providing for electric supplier long term contracts was reported from House Rules Committee and is now on the House Calendar for action.

**Weatherization:** [House Bill 913](#) (Vereb-R-Montgomery) providing for a Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program and authorizing additional funding was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and re-referred to the House Rules Committee.

**Historic Preservation Grants:** [House Bill 221](#) (Tangretti-D-Westmoreland) establishing an Historic Preservation Incentive Grant Program was reported from House Appropriations Committee and is on the House Calendar for action.

**Capitol Budget:** [House Bill 1589](#) (Evans-D-Philadelphia) providing for a Capitol Budget for environmental, recreation, transportation, economic development and other projects was reported from and back to the House Appropriations Committee.

**Home Generated Sharps:** [House Bill 1320](#) (Siptroth-D-Monroe) establishing a program within DEP for the disposal of home-generated medical sharps was reported from the House Rules Committee and is now on the House Calendar for action.

**Appeal of Land Use Plans:** The House Local Government Committee reported out [House Bill 1329](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) further providing for the jurisdiction of common pleas court in reviewing challenges to land development ordinances and amended [House Bill 1330](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) also providing for appeals from land use resolutions and maps was amended and reported from Committee.

**Study of Local Governments:** [House Resolution 180](#) (Yudichak-D-Luzerne) establishing a commission to study the Commonwealth's fragmented system of local governments was amended and reported from the House Local Government Committee and is now on the House Calendar for action.

**Fluoridation:** [House Bill 1649](#) (Barrar-R-Chester) requiring the fluoridation of public water supplies was reported from the House Health and Human Services Committee and re-referred to the House Rules Committee.

### **Senate Committee Moves Mine Families First, Transmission Line Bills, Nuclear Fees**

The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee this week reported out bills that would establish the Mine Families First Program, a resolution expressing opposition to electric transmission line routes and legislation increasing fees on nuclear power plants.

They include:

- [House Bill 483](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) establishes the Mine Families First Program to deal with the needs of families of mine workers involved in an emergency. The legislation is based on steps taken by Gov. Schweiker and the Department of Environmental Protection during the 2002 Quecreek Mine Rescue;
- [House Bill 496](#) (George-D-Clearfield) that would increase fees on nuclear power plants and for transportation escorts; and
- [Senate Resolution 129](#) (Stout-D-Washington) expressing opposition to the designation of national corridors of interest in Pennsylvania for electric transmission lines.

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

### **Senate Approves Hazardous Sites Cleanup Funding Plan, Others Pending**

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The Senate this week approved by a vote of 36 to 14 a proposal to fund the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program by using revenues from the Realty Transfer Tax earmarked for the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund.

[Senate Bill 913](#), which would generate about \$40 million annually for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund, would replace a temporary funding scheme for the program that took \$50 million out of the Environmental Stewardship (Growing Greener) Fund that finances watershed restoration and abandoned mine reclamation projects over the last two years to finance the Hazardous Sites Program.

Gov. Rendell has proposed a \$2.25/ton fee on municipal waste disposed in Pennsylvania to fund the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program that was included in [House Bill 1206](#) (Surra-D-Elk) that was reported out of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee last week by one vote and is now pending in the House Rules Committee.

Last year Gov. Rendell proposed and the General Assembly approved taking all of the \$75 million in Realty Transfer Tax revenue earmarked for the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund and divert it on a one-time basis to the General Fund.

The Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund is used for several other critical purposes, including:

- Finances cleanup projects at abandoned industrial facilities and contaminated sites where the responsible party is either unknown or financially unable to conduct the necessary work;
- Ensures a statewide emergency response network and enables DEP to provide interim cleanup actions to remove contaminants and stabilize serious environmental releases;
- Provides the Commonwealth's 25 percent match for the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, the federal hazardous waste program, and the state's 10 percent match for the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation Liability Act, commonly called Superfund;
- Finances the investigation of illegal hazardous waste disposal sites, and provides relocation expenses for residents and businesses affected by the release of hazardous substances; and
- Supports DEP's Household Hazardous Waste Program, including electronics recycling and mercury diversion to prevent hazardous chemicals from entering state landfills.

### **Environmental Covenants Bill Ensures Brownfields Remain Safe**

A daycare center could never be located on a former hazardous waste site under [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley (R-Chester) creating environmental covenants that passed the House this week.

Land use limitations such as those imposed on brownfields or sites with underground storage tanks, or those previously used to dispose solid or hazardous waste, would be known and enforceable under environmental covenants to be put in place under the bill.

“Pennsylvania has done a great job encouraging the recycling of land contaminated by commercial activity. Under previous laws, many brownfields have rehabilitated and readied for reuse, as opposed to pristine land being developed for industrial use,” said Rep. Rubley. “My proposal creates environmental covenants to ensure that these properties are

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catalogued, and that future uses after the land is transferred to new owners are consistent with the permissible uses of the land.”

An example of a use that would be prevented under Rubley’s bill is a situation discovered in New Jersey, where a property contaminated with mercury was converted into a day-care center, potentially endangering those children and workers with mercury poisoning.

Currently, there is no good way to ensure that a brownfield cleanup site will be used according to restrictions. The covenant protects both the previous owner and future occupants of the site, ensuring that the land is either restored to a noncontaminated state or used according to restrictions in the covenant.

Covenants describe the property, the activity and use limitations on the property, and identify every holder of the covenant. Environmental covenants agreed to by property owners, local governments and the Department of Environmental Protection are enforceable in court if a change in use occurs that exceeds the uses allowed in the covenant. They can also be terminated by a foreclosure or eminent domain, or when all parties agree, which could occur if a site cleanup has taken place. Covenants can also be amended or terminated in court when circumstances change.

DEP would establish and maintain a registry of all environmental covenants and changes made to them. A key benefit of the registry is that one single statewide listing will be maintained in addition to county-level listings.

Environmental covenants will apply to activity and use limitations required under the Land Recycling Act and the Storage Tank and Spill Prevention Act.

If a remediation under either act was created prior to the effective date of this measure, it must be converted to an environmental covenant within five years. Deed notice requirements under the Solid Waste Management Act or the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act may be in the form of an environmental covenant.

### **House Committee Holds Hearing on Flooding Along the Delaware River**

The House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee held a public hearing this week on flooding and flood mitigation efforts along the Delaware River.

Presenting testimony were Cathleen Curran Myers, Deputy Secretary for Water Management, Department of Environmental Protection, Diane Tharp, a private citizen, Walt Conway, Mayor of Delaware Water Gap, and John Comey, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, who submitted comments for the record.

[Cathleen Myers](#) noted Pennsylvania is one of the most flood-prone states as a result of over 83,000 miles of streams and rivers and hilly topography and said since 2004 alone Pennsylvania experienced three major flooding events in the Delaware River basin, a frequency not equaled since 1955.

Myers noted DEP’s 2007-08 budget includes \$2.2 million in added support for technical assistance for stormwater and flood planning, including the creation of an Interagency task force with a senior level Flood Mitigation Coordinator to work full time of flooding issues.

Myers said the recent flooding on the Delaware River was not caused by overflowing New York City reservoirs as some contend. In fact, Myers said, seven of the ten worst main river floods occurred when no reservoir overflows contributed water.



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Filling reservoirs tend to halve the peak rate of flooding out of a reservoir, according to Myers.

Myers said several steps were taken to deal with flooding in the Delaware over the last year-- a [Delaware River Basin Commission](#) task force is due to issue a final report shortly on flooding and flood mitigation in the basin, a flood analysis modeling tool is being developed to evaluate possible changes in the operating of all 13 major basin reservoirs to reduce flooding and a Flexible Flow Management Plan is being developed by the parties to the 1954 Consent Decree on the operation of New York City reservoirs that govern flows in the Delaware River.

[Diane Tharp](#), private citizen, said flooding on the Delaware was caused by poor management and over-filling of New York City's reservoirs and said future operational plans for the reservoirs must include providing sufficient capacity to mitigate flood impacts.

Tharp also recommended that flows be maintained to support fish habitats and recreational activities.

Walt Conway, Major of Delaware Water Gap, provided the Committee with a history of flooding and flood damages in that community since 2004.

[John Comey](#), Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, noted this month marked the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1972 Agnes Flood which claimed over 100 lives and did more than \$3 billion damage to public and private property. Since 2003 eight major flood events occurred in Pennsylvania causing over \$400 million in damage.

Comey provided an overview of the activities PEMA undertakes before and after flood events.

The hearing was cut short because members had to return to the House floor to do other legislative business.

### Senate Confirms New PUC Commissioners

The Senate this week confirmed the nominations of Ty Christy and Kim Pizzingrilli to serve on the Public Utility Commission.

"The PUC's decisions have a direct impact on the lives and household budgets of millions of Pennsylvanians, as well as the continued economic success of our state," said Gov. Rendell. "I know Commissioners Christy and Pizzingrilli will work to ensure the fair regulation of public utilities and other businesses that are governed by the commission."

Christy, of Renfrew, Butler County, has more than 20 years of professional experience in the energy industry and is vice president of Americas Power Partners/Armstrong Services in Butler. He also is a board member of the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority, a position to which he was appointed by Governor Rendell in 2004. He also serves as treasurer of the PEDDA board.

Pizzingrilli was confirmed to serve a second term on the PUC. Pizzingrilli, a former Secretary of the Commonwealth, first joined the PUC in 2002. She is a native of Corry, Erie County.

### Other News

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#### 2007 Friends of the Lehigh River Award Recipients Recognized

The [Wildlands Conservancy](#) announced this week that Dennis Demara, Dean Druckenmiller, of the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority and the United States Army Corps of Engineers were this year's 'Friend of the Lehigh River' Award recipients.

The Friend of the Lehigh River Award is the Wildlands Conservancy's annual acknowledgement of individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, institutions, governmental bodies, and others who deserve to be recognized for their commitment to the Lehigh River.



"For the past eleven years, we have bestowed this honor to those who cultivate appreciation, advance knowledge, and demonstrate responsible stewardship and use of the Lehigh River and Lehigh River Valley," says Christopher Kocher, Wildlands Conservancy president.

The recipients were honored on June 25 during a ceremony that took place preceding a benefit concert performed by Air Products' band The Difference, as part of the Wildlands Conservancy's 11th annual Lehigh River Sojourn.

"All four of these awards recipients are truly 'Friends of the Lehigh River', whether it's for improvement of the quality of the Lehigh River itself or for the recreation benefits of those communities that surround the river," says Kocher. "They are our partners and the Wildlands Conservancy salutes them."

Here's more background on each award recipient:

**Dennis Demara** has served as the Regional Supervisor for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Northeast Region Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

As supervisor of the northeast region, he has been an advocate of the Lehigh River, and has facilitated many land protection, environmental restoration and environmental stewardship projects. These projects have helped preserve, protect and enhance the Lehigh River and its watershed.

One of his most significant contributions to the health of the Lehigh River was his assistance with the completion of the Lehigh River Watershed Conservation Management Plan. His dedication to the preservation of the unique natural resources of the Lehigh River watershed and the preservation of significant open space is impressive.

In addition, Dennis also served 24 years as Carbon County Parks Director where he managed the park system and helped improve the recreational resources of the region.

**Dean Druckenmiller** was the driving force that organized concerned fishermen and the fishing community to form the Lehigh Coldwater Fisheries Alliance. With Dean at the helm, the LCFA has advocated for changes in the management of the Francis E. Walter Reservoir that have helped improve the quality of the river.

At his personal expense, Dean organized and guided drift boat fishing trips for agencies managing the river to allow them to experience the thriving trout fishing now available on the Lehigh River. Because of his efforts, the Lehigh River is a healthier waterway.

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The Northampton Borough Municipal Authority has worked jointly for many years with the Wildlands Conservancy and its mission to preserve the Lehigh River natural environment. The NBMA has worked with many partners to allow access to the river for sampling purposes and has provided water quality data about the river to agencies and the community.

In addition, the NBMA has worked to educate the community about water treatment by providing tours and participating in the Lehigh Valley Water Suppliers educational activities. The Northampton Borough Municipal Authority is a great partner and friend to the Lehigh River.

**US Army Corps of Engineers** designed and today operates the Francis E. Walter Reservoir and Dam. The USACE has worked closely with state agencies and community groups, to develop a new short-term flow management plan to increase water releases from the reservoir through the dam this year, improving recreation opportunities and improving coldwater conditions for trout.

The USACE engaged the public through multiple workshops and public meetings to garner public opinion on how to modify the management of the reservoir. The USACE has worked closely with state agencies and concerned user groups to development of recreation opportunities and environmental improvement on the Lehigh River.

In addition, the Corps, the Fish and Boating Commission and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources have secured funds to develop a water quality and flow computer model for the Lehigh River. The USACE has played a significant role in helping to improve the environmental quality and recreational opportunities in the Lehigh River.

For more information, visit the [Wildlands Conservancy webpage](#).

### Public Comment Invited on Wild Brook Trout Management Plan

The Fish and Boat Commission is inviting public comment on [adding naturally reproducing eastern brook trout](#) to the State Wildlife Action Plan, the document that prescribes conservation measures for species and their critical habitat before they become more rare and more costly to protect and restore.



Public comment will be accepted through August 3.

The [brook trout's](#) historic range and abundance has been considerably reduced throughout the east coast, including Pennsylvania. Habitat and water quality degradation caused by urbanization, acid mine drainage, acid deposition, and poor land use practices have contributed to the decline.

The addition of the species to Pennsylvania's State Wildlife Action Plan, if approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, would highlight the status of the Commonwealth's state fish. But it's more than a symbolic move.

Including brook trout in the state's Wildlife Action Plan would provide the Commission with more flexibility to fund, or receive funding for, projects that benefit the species.

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The native range of the eastern brook trout extends along the Appalachians from Georgia to Maine and encompasses 17 states. Of these states, 12 currently include the eastern brook trout in their Wildlife Action Plans.

The need for special attention to wild brook trout was documented by Pennsylvania and others as part of the [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture](#), a regional project of the National Fish Habitat Initiative.

In a 2006 report, the EBTJV noted that brook trout populations have been eliminated or greatly reduced throughout more than 70 percent of their historical habitat in Pennsylvania. These results reflect the condition of brook trout across their entire Eastern range, according to the assessment.

“Based on stream surveys by the PFBC conducted since 1976, wild brook trout populations have been documented in 1,524 stream sections covering a total of 5,044 miles of streams. Although this is a considerable wild brook trout resource, much of this resource is fragmented and primarily exists in first and second order headwater streams,” said PFBC Executive Director Doug Austen. “Adding wild brook trout to Pennsylvania’s Wildlife Action Plan is a logical step in conserving and enhancing our state fish.”

The Fish and Boat Commission is specifically recommending that eastern brook trout be added to the Action Plan at "Conservation Tier 5 - Maintenance Concern Level." Conservation Tier 5 contains species that are considered relatively abundant and fairly secure in Pennsylvania, but have undergone declines.

In September 2005, the Fish and Boat Commission and the Pennsylvania Game Commission submitted the Wildlife Action Plan to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This Wildlife Action Plan was required from each state and U.S. Territory in order to continue to receive funds under the State Wildlife Grants Program.

Since 2001, Pennsylvania has received over \$13.8 million with an annual appropriation of nearly \$2 million. This funding is shared equally between the Fish and Boat Commission and the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The intent of the Wildlife Action Plan is to manage proactively, not reactively, in order to keep “common species common.”

Comments should be sent to: Brook Trout/WAP/Public Comments, c/o Dave Day, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000.

### **Rural Water Assn. Announces Professional Office Conference**

The [Pennsylvania Rural Water Association](#) will hold its [Professional Office Conference](#) October 16-17 in State College. Three separate tracks have been designed specifically for board members, managers and office personnel of the water and wastewater industry.

Attendees will benefit from professional classes such as grant writing, effective meetings, marketing, public relations, and financial management. Additionally, the premiere course for the PRWA Management Certification program will also be presented at the conference.

PRWA has announced the following schedule of upcoming water and wastewater operators exams:

- September 11 -- Linesville, Crawford County (registration deadline is Aug. 15);
- September 13 -- Lawrenceville, Tioga County (registration deadline is Aug. 15); and
- November 8 -- Champion, Somerset County (registration deadline is Oct. 11).

Registration forms are available at the [Pennsylvania Rural Water Association website](#) or contact Carolyn with questions at 814-353-9302 or send email to: [ctyger@prwa.com](mailto:ctyger@prwa.com).

For more information, visit the [Professional Office Conference webpage](#) or call 1-800-653-7792.

### **Penn State Shows Running Tractors on Straight Biofuels is (Bio) logical**

A collaborative biofuel demonstration project involving Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences and machinery manufactured by Case New Holland is attracting worldwide attention and appears to have ramifications for the makers and users of all types of diesel-powered equipment.

For the past year, Penn State has been running two new, unmodified New Holland tractors on B100 biodiesel (fuel made from soybean oil with no petroleum-based component) with no ill effects. After extensive use on Penn State's farm fields, neither of the machines shows any sign of extra wear, according to Glen Cauffman, the University's manager of farm operations and services.

"Thus far, we have experienced no negative effects of B100," he says. "The tractors' power, fuel consumption and performance appear equal to that of machines running on petroleum diesel fuel.

"This spring, New Holland added a third, larger tractor to the study," Cauffman added. "The new model is just now being introduced to customers. It has a 150-horsepower, 'Tier III' engine, which is the newest generation of off-road diesels. This engine is completely computer controlled, providing cleaner exhaust emissions than previous diesels."

Using straight biofuel to power the tractors is the culmination of a process Cauffman and the College of Agricultural Sciences began about five years ago, when Penn State began an aggressive program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on imported oil. At that time, engine manufacturers were not endorsing biodiesel blends greater than B5 (5 percent biodiesel) and threatening to void equipment warranties if that mixture was exceeded.

Despite the then-premium price and scarce availability of biodiesel fuel, the college's Farm Operations and Services Department began using biodiesel in its 40-plus tractors, trucks and utility vehicles. But if Penn State Cooperative Extension was going to promote the use of higher rates of biodiesel, college experts knew that they had to offer information based on experience.

So Farm Operations began buying 100 percent biodiesel (B100) and "splash-blending" it with petroleum-based diesel fuel at the University Park campus to achieve a blend of B20 (20 percent biodiesel). Following the College of Agricultural Sciences' lead, the University in 2006 converted all of its diesel equipment to B20 biodiesel blend.

Cauffman and his staff decided to stretch the envelope even further, in collaboration with machinery company Case New Holland, by operating the two tractors on B100 biodiesel. Their goal is to learn what owners of diesels can expect when they choose to be independent of petroleum. Penn State Cooperative Extension will disseminate information generated from the demonstration project.

Other research with biofuels is ongoing in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, Cauffman noted. "The Pennsylvania Soybean Board funded projects to analyze

the effects of higher blends of biodiesel on engine crankcase lubricant, to develop and evaluate additives to improve cold-weather flow-ability of biodiesel, and to evaluate an alternative biodiesel formulation process.

"The biodiesel team at Penn State is growing 51 plots of various oil-seed crops, which offer alternative fuel-crop opportunities for Pennsylvania farmers," Cauffman adds. "In addition, 12 acres of canola are being grown for processing into biodiesel at the University."

Penn State's role in helping the country transition to green energy is important for both symbolic and practical reasons, points out Cauffman, who was recently honored as a "Biofuels Pioneer" by the environmental group PennFuture. "The University is setting an example for business and industry to follow," he says.

Because biodiesel is made in the United States, it keeps fuel-buying dollars at home, and is environmentally friendly, he explains. When burned in engines, biodiesel produces fewer emissions. Studies indicate that adding vegetable oil to a fuel mixture extends engine life and makes engines run smoother.

"If more businesses, farmers and heating-oil customers used biodiesel, it would improve air quality, reduce oil imports and give Pennsylvania's soybean growers more outlets to sell their product," Cauffman says. "Now all University equipment uses biodiesel, and we expect other businesses in Pennsylvania to make the conversion after Penn State demonstrates the viability."

### **Consumers Calculate How Energy Use Contributes to Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

With just a few clicks of the mouse and a ZIP code, consumers can see how their individual energy use is affecting the Earth.

[EPA's Power Profiler](#) calculates how much air pollution results from individual electricity use, the fuels used to produce that electricity and how to reduce the impact.

"EPA's Power Profiler makes it easy to research the air emissions that come from using electricity at home," said Bob Meyers, acting assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Air and Radiation. "All you need is a ZIP code and you're on your way to understanding your environmental impact."

EPA has updated the Power Profiler with recently released data on emissions and fuels. In addition to learning the emissions from their individual electricity use, users can see how they compare with national averages.

The air pollutants used in the calculator are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>). CO<sub>2</sub> contributes to global warming or climate change, while NO<sub>x</sub> and SO<sub>2</sub> contribute to unhealthy air quality and acid rain in many parts of the country.

Power Profiler displays the fuel mix in percent coal, oil, gas, nuclear, hydro-electric (water), and other renewable sources including biomass, wind, solar, geothermal, and landfill gas.

With information from the calculator on their monthly electricity use, consumers can assess their annual emissions. The site also guides users to other Web-based information showing how to reduce emissions from one's home or business through greater energy efficiency and use of renewable energy.

Power Profiler uses information from EPA's Emissions & Generation Resource Integrated Database a comprehensive source of data on the environmental characteristics of nearly all electric power generated in the United States.

Visit the [EPA Power Profiler online](#).

### **Emerald Ash Borer Found in Pennsylvania, Precautions Urged**

[Emerald Ash Borer](#), an invasive beetle that destroys ash trees, has been detected for the first time in Pennsylvania and a quarantine has been ordered for Butler, Lawrence, Allegheny and Beaver counties, according to the Department of Agriculture.



The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources also cautioned campers and others to avoid transporting firewood anywhere in the state to lower the risk of spreading the emerald ash borer to other areas.

Adult beetles were found on an ash tree in Cranberry Township, Butler County, by U.S. Department of Agriculture surveyors, through a joint effort by federal and state agriculture departments, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Penn State Extension. The Emerald Ash Borer has forced similar quarantines in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Maryland and Michigan.

“Emerald Ash Borer poses a major threat to ash trees,” said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. “To best manage any effects of an infestation, we’re working to determine whether this is an isolated incident or a more widespread problem.”

State and federal officials are conducting intensive surveys for the insect near the detection site. The quarantine is designed to help slow the spread of the beetle.

Pennsylvania’s quarantine restricts the movement from the quarantine area of ash nursery stock, green lumber and any other ash material, including logs, stumps, roots and branches, and all wood chips. Due to the difficulty in distinguishing between species of hardwood firewood, all hardwood firewood—including ash, oak, maple and hickory—are considered quarantined.

Since many species of wood-boring insects, including the Emerald Ash Borer, can be spread through transport of infested firewood and logs, campers and homeowners are encouraged to: use only locally harvested firewood; burn all of it on-site; and not carry it to new locations.

Emerald Ash Borer is a wood-boring beetle native to China and eastern Asia. The pest likely arrived in North America hidden in wood packing materials commonly used to ship consumer and other goods. It was first detected in July 2002 in southeastern Michigan and neighboring Windsor, Ontario, Canada. The beetle has since been blamed for the death and decline of more than 20 million ash trees in Ohio, Indiana, Maryland, Virginia and Illinois.

Typically, Emerald Ash Borer will kill an ash tree within three years of the initial infestation. Adults are dark green, one-half inch in length and one-eighth inch wide, and fly only from early May until September. Larvae spend the rest of the year beneath the bark of ash trees, and when they emerge as adults, leave D-shaped holes in the bark about one-eighth inch wide.

People who suspect they have seen Emerald Ash Borer should call the Department of Agriculture’s toll-free pest hotline at 1-866-253-7189.

**NewsClip:** [Invasive Ash Borer Beetle Found in PA](#)  
[Ash Trees Get Good Going-Over in Search of Bad Bugs](#)

### **Guided Tours of Regal Fritillary Butterfly Habitat Slated at Fort Indiantown Gap**

The public will have an opportunity to see the only viable colony of [Regal Fritillary butterflies](#) in the Eastern U.S. during free, guided tours July 12, 16, 18, and 19 at Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville.

“Fort Indiantown Gap is one of the busiest National Guard Training centers in the country,” said Col. Robert Hodgson, commander of the Fort Indiantown Gap National Guard Training Site.

“And although the primary purpose of the installation is the training of soldiers for their combat mission, we also place a very high priority being environmentally friendly and conserving precious land and ecosystems for the future.



“Our annual Regal Fritillary butterfly walks allow visitors to experience this rare colony as well as the other many natural spectacles that abound on post.”

In addition to the Regal Fritillary, Fort Indiantown Gap provides habitat for 36 species of mammals, 122 breeding species of birds, 34 species of reptiles and amphibians, 25 species of fish, 792 species of plants, and many notable species of invertebrates including 83 species of butterflies and 237 species of moths. This includes excellent populations of deer, turkey, bear, bobcat, rabbit, squirrel, wild trout, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals and songbirds.

The installation covers more than 17,000 acres, including more than 3,000 acres of native grassland habitat – the largest in the commonwealth.

In order to facilitate wildlife photographers and provide for more comfortable weather, the walks on July 12 and 16 will be from 9 a.m. to noon and the walks on July 18 and 19 will be from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Tours will leave from the Fort Indiantown Gap Community Club, located at the intersection of Fisher and Clement avenues (Rt. 934) each day. A brief orientation meeting will be held at the club prior to each guided tour.

For more information call the DMVA Wildlife Office at 717-861-2449.

**Link:** [Fort Indiantown Gap Wins National Conservation Award](#)

### **Young Male Falcon Found Dead, Three Others Fledge Successfully**

One of the four young falcons that [fledged from the nest](#) at the Rachel Carson State Office Building in Harrisburg was found dead this week.

The green-banded falcon apparently flew in to a pedestrian bridge over Walnut Street Sunday. It was found by a security guard who took it to the Whitaker Center for safe keeping until it could be identified.



## PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

During the last several weeks, the falcons took flight from their nest on the 15th floor. During this time, the parent falcons teach the young how to fly and hunt. It is the most perilous time for the young falcons as they face the dangers of life in an urban setting such as power lines and traffic.

So far, 34 eggs have been produced at this nest site. Of those, 32 hatched. So far there have been 16 males and 15 females produced from the site (the sex of one nestling hatched in 2006, the runt of the clutch, could not be determined). Of these, 20 falcons have survived -- 10 males and 10 females.

**NewsClip:** [Falcon Born in Reading Found Dead](#)

**Link:** [Watch the Falcon Nest in Pittsburgh](#)

### **Game Commission Board Approves Acquisition of More Than 340 Acres**

The Board of Game Commissioners this week approved four options that could increase the State Game Lands system by more than 340 acres.

In Cool Spring Township, Mercer County, the Board approved providing \$43,000 toward the purchase of 195 acres adjoining SGL 294, which currently contains three separate tracts totaling 417 acres. The ultimate acquisition of the parcel is subject to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy securing the property from the current landowner through ongoing negotiations. Should the WPC be successful, the full 195 acres will be transferred to the Game Commission. The property, which will fill in gaps between the three tracts of SGL 294, is subject to the reservation of oil, gas and mineral rights.

The property is mostly wetlands, which the Game Commission considers critical and unique habitat. Of the 195 acres, nearly 130 acres are emergent, scrub-shrub and forested wetlands; 60 acres of forest are comprised of oak, maple, cherry and ash; and five acres are reverting farmland. Otter Creek and an unnamed tributary flow through this fairly flat property, and a railroad right-of-way just east of Route 19 is adjacent to the property. This property contains excellent waterfowl and other wildlife habitat associated with a wetland ecosystem.

In Burrell Township, Indiana County, the Board approved the purchase of a 16-acre interior holding of SGL 153, which currently contains 2,927 acres. The purchase price is \$43,773, and is to be paid from the Game Fund.

Reserved are all coal and all reasonable rights and easements necessary for the exploration for and removal of coal. Lumbering and coal removal operations currently are being conducted on the parcel as part of a post-mining reclamation and revegetation plan. The reclamation project is removing an abandoned high wall and mine spoils and will replant the area as forestland and wildlife habitat. All oil and gas on, in and under the property, together with all reasonable rights and easements necessary to access the oil and gas deposits are reserved for a period of 10 years from the date of the deed.

Acquisition of this parcel will allow the Game Commission to eliminate an interior holding, resulting in less boundary line maintenance and preventing anyone from developing the parcel and impacting SGL 153 with safety zone concerns.

In Plainfield and Bushkill townships, Northampton County, the Board approved the purchase of 110 acres of land adjoining SGL 168, which currently contains 5,893 acres. The purchase price is \$15,000, which is to be paid from the Game Fund. This acquisition is made possible through partnerships with Wildlands Conservancy and Northampton County

Board of Commissioners, including grants from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. A requirement of both funding sources is that any change of use from State Game Land or transfers of any parts of the property shall require their consent. The property is mostly forested and comprised of mixed hardwoods, such as oaks, birch, maples and black gum. An abandoned railroad grade passes through the property, running east and west.

Acquiring this property will provide hunters and trappers with access to a large portion of SGL 168, and straighten out boundary issues. The purchase agreement reserves a strip of land 30 feet wide crossing the property for a trail to link Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center with the Appalachian Trail. However, the Game Commission will retain the right to use the reserved strip of land for administrative access and access for hunters, trappers and anglers, provided any damage done, including damage by logging equipment, will be repaired by the Game Commission.

The Board approved a donation, from Boyd L. Sponaugle Jr., of 20 acres of land in Upper Tulpehocken Township, Berks County, adjoining SGL 110, which currently contains 10,145 acres. The tract is mostly rock talus slope with five acres of mixed oaks species in pole stage timber. This donation is made possible through the Wildlife for Everyone Endowment Foundation.

"The Game Commission's ability to purchase and preserve lands for wildlife and for public hunting and trapping has always been limited by rising property values and the availability of funds," said Carl G. Roe, agency executive director. "The agency's last license fee increase was in 1999. Since that time, we have made considerable cuts in the agency's budget to keep pace with inflation and to offset reduced revenues. Consequently, for the foreseeable future, it seems likely that most of this agency's land acquisitions will be tempered by the availability of escrowed funds, assistance from conservation partners and property donations. We'd like to do more, but it's a financial impossibility."

In addition to relying on the agency's land purchase escrow funds, Roe noted that the agency has maximized land acquisition efforts by working closely with conservation partners, such as land conservancies.

"Conservation-minded individuals and organizations are helping the Game Commission leave a legacy for all Pennsylvanians to admire," Roe said.

Visit the [Game Commission website](#) for more information on its activities.

## PA CleanWays Announces Illegal Dumping Surveys in 11 New Counties



[PA CleanWays, Inc.](#) has announced it will conduct illegal dumpsite surveys in 11 counties in the fall with funding provided by the Department of Environmental Protection and the Richard King Mellon Foundation.

The counties include: Bedford, Berks, Crawford, Fulton, Lackawanna, Lawrence, McKean, Montgomery, Schuylkill, Somerset, and Venango.

PA CleanWays has surveyed 15 counties since 2005, locating over 1,700 dumpsites with a total estimated tonnage of 7,800 tons. PA CleanWays hopes to finish dumpsite surveys in every county in the Commonwealth by 2012.

The illegal dump surveys are designed to educate state, county, and local officials about the problem of illegal dumping and provide valuable data about the dumpsites and

the community in which they reside to address the problem through cleanups, municipal waste collections, and recycling programs.

“Locating dumpsites and assessing how big of a problem illegal dumping is in Pennsylvania is a vital step to addressing the solution,” says Shannon Reiter, President of PA CleanWays. “Once the sites are identified, assessed, and mapped, we can use the surveys to prioritize sites for cleanup and abatement, document problem materials within each dumpsite, develop plans for proper disposal, and provide a benchmark to measure cleanup progress.”

For more information on illegal dumping, visit the [PA CleanWays website](#)..

### **Breneisen Named Recycling Markets Program Manager**

The [Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center](#) announced this week that Timothy J. Breneisen will join the RMC Team effective July 16 as the Recycling Program Manager.

Tim has 29 years experience in the environmental profession including 18 years as the Recycling Coordinator for the Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority. He has been involved with development and direction of over 40 municipal curbside recycling programs, marketing approximately 9,000 tons of recyclable materials annually.

Tim is also a past president, vice-president, and secretary of the Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania and is active on several state committees, including the award winning Certified Recycling Professional Program Committee.

The Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center is a non-profit organization charged with reducing barriers to development of markets for recyclable materials in the Commonwealth.

For more information, visit the [Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center website](#) or call 717.948.6660.

## **Feature**

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### **Bald Eagles Heighten Their Presence in Pennsylvania**

Pennsylvanians have a greater chance of seeing a [bald eagle](#) today than anytime in probably the past 150 years, according to the Game Commission.

The bald eagle, our nation's symbol of strength and freedom since the days of Benjamin Franklin, has exceeded the wildest dreams of state and national wildlife managers by colonizing most of the Northeast's major rivers and impoundments with nests and their majestic presence.



*Game Commission Photo*

"As we prepare to celebrate America's historic Declaration of Independence this Fourth of July, it is pleasing to know that bald eagles have at least 120 nests within the state's borders," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director. "Their comeback is truly one of the most phenomenal in the annals of America's wildlife conservation."

## PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

As recently as 1983, there were only three eagles nests remaining in Pennsylvania. That year, the Game Commission began a seven-year bald eagle reintroduction program in which the agency sent employees to Saskatchewan to obtain eaglets from wilderness nests. Financial assistance for this effort was provided by the Richard King Mellon Foundation of Pittsburgh and the federal Endangered Species Fund. In all, 88 Canadian bald eagles were released from sites located at Dauphin County's Haldeman Island and Pike County's Shohola Falls.

"You can't help but feel a sense of satisfaction whenever fieldwork and cooperation blossom into something as important and priceless as the return of the bald eagle," emphasized Roe. "These birds are a symbol of American freedom and epitomize our ruggedness and resolve as a people.

"The bald eagle's comeback should put a smile on the face of every Pennsylvanian, because so many of us care about them. It's obvious in the way people respond to news about the eagle's return, and from their excitement when they see one. Eagles matter. A lot!"

The Game Commission, partnering with other states and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, helped to bring bald eagles back from the brink of extinction. The effort dovetailed with important gains made in improving water quality and other environmental reforms, which led to increases in the quality and quantity of freshwater fish, a staple in the eagle's diet. Pennsylvania's eagle resurgence also was likely stimulated by young eagles dispersing from the Chesapeake Bay, which now has hundreds of nesting pairs, and neighboring states that reintroduced eagles, too.

The Game Commission and USFWS currently classify the bald eagle as a threatened species. On October 4, 2005, the Board of Game Commissioners moved the bald eagle from the state's endangered species list to its current place on the threatened species list.

In 1995, the USFWS moved the bald eagle from the federal endangered species to its threatened species list. Now, the USFWS is considering the bald eagle's removal from the threatened list, and could make a final determination on its status this week. If the bald eagle is officially de-listed, eagles still will receive federal protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Currently, there are about 9,800 breeding pairs of bald eagles in the lower 48 states. As recently as 1963, the number of breeding pairs was 417. Vermont was the last contiguous state to host nesting eagles. In 2006, a Green Mountain State nest produced eaglets for the first time since reintroduction began.

Despite Pennsylvania's notable gains in eagle nests, Doug Gross, Game Commission ornithologist, pointed out that nasty winter and early spring storms played havoc with several eagle nests this year.

"Several nests were damaged and a few were blown down," Gross said. "Pairs were not seen around some nests after these storms. We do believe that some re-nested at other - yet unknown - locations. Eagle can have multiple nests in a territory and may use different nests in different years.

"The Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day storms were pretty damaging to eagle nests, as was the cold - and occasionally freezing - weather that followed in April. Young, less experienced eagles are more inclined to leave their nests and allow their eggs to become chilled. Eagles being flushed from nests by intruders also can influence nest failure in cold weather.

## PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

"In 2006, Pennsylvania eagles sustained an 80 percent nest success rate," Gross said. "We may not do quite as well this year, but I anticipate that we'll have at least a 70 percent success rate, which will continue to fuel eagle expansion. It's important to point out, too, that some of our eagles come from other states enjoying similar success. So, even if reproduction is off some here, it may not be in Maryland or New York, and consequently Pennsylvania will feed off of the success of neighboring states."

One of the more memorable bald eagle stories from Pennsylvania this spring concerns three eaglets that fell from a nest along Lancaster County's Conestoga River during a strong wind storm. Half the nest blew away in the storm and the eaglets eventually fell with it.

While one eaglet died in the fall and another was killed by a predator, a landowner and his daughters rescued the surviving eaglet, which sustained fractured ulna bones in both wings. The bird was taken to Tri-State Bird Rescue in Newark, Del., where, after several weeks of specialized care, the bird had recovered sufficiently enough to be returned to a wild nest.

Steve Bernardi, Game Commission Land Management Group Supervisor from Snyder and Perry counties, was called in to place the eaglet in a Berks County nest that contained one eaglet, hatched within a week of the rescued bird. After he reached the nest - about 100 feet up in a huge pine tree - Bernardi waited for the young eagle to be delivered.

"We swaddled the bird in a large oval basket like a baby, squeezed the basket and bird into a duffle bag and hoisted the eaglet to the top of the tree," explained Lancaster County Wildlife Conservation Officer Linda Swank, who helped manage the eaglet's return to the wild, from the day it was rescued until it was placed in the nest. "Steve Bernardi, while hanging onto the side of the tree, had to undo the wrappings. When he went to put the eaglet in the nest, the tricky part was to grab the eaglet the right way, as their talons are very sharp by this age. A short time later, an adult female was seen feeding both eaglets."

Currently, the Game Commission is aware of bald eagle nests in 40 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. It's also entirely likely to see an eagle - mature or immature - in any county. The agency confirmed 143 eaglets fledging from instate nests in 2006.

"Right now, eagles seem to be filling in the corners of the Commonwealth," Gross said. "There are 22 new nesting territories, and those nests included first-timers in Bucks, Elk, Fayette, Jefferson, Philadelphia and Wyoming counties. We also have a nest on Presque Isle, a historic nesting ground, which breaks a long drought of eagle occupation there. New nests also were found in Crawford, Dauphin, Erie, Huntingdon, Lancaster, Pike, Westmoreland and York counties."

The new nest in Philadelphia County on the Delaware River shoreline sparked quite a bit of attention, but eventually failed. Built in a tree under the approach of aircraft to the Philadelphia International Airport and along the busy Delaware River boat lanes, the nest wasn't exactly nestled in habitat eagles use typically. It is believed the nest had one egg, and that egg may have hatched. But the nest failed and a predator - possibly a red-tailed hawk, Cooper's hawk, gulls, crows or a raccoon - is believed to have intervened. It is not clear whether the eagles will return to this specific nest site, but adult eagles have been seen in the general area.

"Philadelphia County Wildlife Conservation Officer Jerry Czech approached the nest after it went several days without a visitation from the nesting pair," said Doug

Killough, agency Southeast Region Director. "All he found was a few small pieces of eggshell. It is hoped that the nest will be used again next year."

The return of the bald eagle in both Pennsylvania and the contiguous United States is directly related to reintroductions and nest site protection. But, the species future hinged on the banning of DDT and other organochlorine pesticides. Eagles, as well as ospreys, peregrine falcons and a multitude of songbirds, were rendered reproductively incapable by DDT and the like, because the birds were bio-accumulating the contaminants the pesticides contained through prey consumption. DDT - banned nationally in 1972 - rendered the shells of birds' eggs so brittle, they broke when sat upon.

Rachel Carson wrote in *Silent Spring*, "The history of life on earth has been a history of interaction between living things and their surroundings." She referred to the interdependencies - that often aren't easy to identify or interpret - of organisms on each other and the environment. When America was sprayed and dusted repeatedly and for decades with DDT, the environment was slowly loaded with toxins that eventually devastated the very existence of eagles and many other creatures that had thrived for centuries. Without emergency and sustained special assistance from wildlife conservation agencies, bald eagles would have perished.

The state's largest concentrations of bald eagles - both currently and historically - are found in three geographic areas: the expansive wetlands of Crawford, Mercer and Erie counties; along the lower Susquehanna River in Chester, Lancaster and York counties; and the Poconos and Upper Delaware River region.

The Game Commission is always interested in reports from the public about new nests and news about bald eagle nests.

"The increased use of rivers and lakes at this time of year by the boating public has yielded new nests to our inventory in recent years," Gross said. "If you encounter a nest, give the birds some elbow room, take some notes and drop us an email about the specifics. Remember, we cannot protect a nest unless we know about it."

To learn more, visit the [bald eagle webpage](#) or send questions to Game Commission biologists via: [pgccomments@state.pa.us](mailto:pgccomments@state.pa.us) .

**NewsClips:** [Not Such a Rare Bird Anymore](#)  
[Bald Eagles Make Resurgence](#)  
[Bald Eagles Are Flying High Again](#)  
[Common Birds in Decline](#)  
[Editorial: Treasured Natural Resources are Disappearing](#)

## Quick Clips

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

[Editorial: McCullough – A Humble Environmental Giant](#)

[PA Highway Adoption Program Biggest in Nation](#)

[Kids Get Close to Nature](#)

[Neville Island Summer Program Aims to Develop Young Naturalists](#)

[Palmer Nature Reserve Plans Event](#)

[Falcon Dies After Flying Into Bridge](#)

[States In Hunt for More Wildlife, Fish Wardens](#)

## PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

[Ex-EPA Chief Predicts US Will Curb Climate Change Emissions](#)  
[Landowner Protection Bill Heads to Rendell](#)  
[Wholesale Electric Prices in Spotlight](#)  
[Heating Aid Problem Found in Audit](#)  
[Higher Gas Price Hasn't Fueled More Carpooling](#)  
[PPL Site Aims to Educate on Energy Usage](#)  
[Lancaster Career & Technology Center Explores Earth-Friendly Construction](#)  
[Clarion Pool Now Heated Thanks to Innovative System](#)  
[Plextronics Awarded Solar America Initiative Funding](#)  
[Op-Ed: State Doesn't Need New Taxes, Mandates on Energy](#)  
[Suburban Sprawl Reaching New Heights](#)  
[York County to Borrow \\$7 Million to Save Farmland](#)  
[Editorial: Farmland Precious in Franklin County](#)  
[Drillers Want Access to Allegheny National Forest](#)  
[Little Bug, Big Worries in Cranberry](#)  
[Second Chance for Rare Fisher Breed](#)  
[Falcon Born in Reading Found Dead](#)  
[Common Birds in Decline](#)  
[Editorial: Treasured Natural Resources are Disappearing](#)  
[Not Such a Rare Bird Anymore](#)  
[Bald Eagles Make Resurgence](#)  
[Bald Eagles Are Flying High Again](#)

### **Watershed NewsClips**

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

[Storm Like Agnes Will Happen Again](#)  
[River Towns Want Better Flood Warnings](#)  
[Pike County to Get Online Well Watching](#)  
[USDA Praises Manure to Energy Project in Recent PA Visit](#)

### **Regulations**

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The Governor's Office published its semi-annual [Regulatory Agenda](#) that provides notice of what new and proposed regulations state agencies are pursuing for the remainder of this year. The regulations are listed agency by agency.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – June 30, 2007](#)

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 is [extending the deadline](#) to submit CAIR permit applications and [published draft guidance](#) on stream well and raw water diversions and the special projects funding manual for the Chesapeake Bay Program.

DEP ID: 385-2100-001. Stream Well and Raw Water Diversion Permitting Procedures. This guidance describes the procedures Department staff will follow to permit a well or surface water source which discharges directly into a waterway or reservoir for the purpose of providing a continuous or supplemental source of water supply. Comments due July 30.

DEP ID: 361-5500-001. Administrative Manual for the Special Projects Funding Program of the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Program. This manual provides guidance to Conservation District staff on the administrative processes involved with the Special Projects Funding Program of the Chesapeake Bay Program, including the development, implementation and funding of special projects. Comments due July 30.

[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](#)

- **July 7** – [Oil Spills and Wildlife Training Session](#). New Bolton Center. Kennett Square.
- **July 12** – DEP [Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board](#) meeting will be held in a new location – 16th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building, Harrisburg. 10:00.
- **July 17** – Premier of John James Audubon: Drawn From Nature Documentary and unveiling of planned improvements at the Audubon Hawk Watch At Waggoner’s Gap in honor of Cliff Jones. Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts, Harrisburg. 6:00. Contact: 717-213-6880
- **July 18** – Harrisburg Capital Regional Water Board Planning Commission meeting. Juniata Room, Susquehanna River Basin Commission Building, 1721 N. Front St., Harrisburg. 10:00. and Capital Regional Water Planning Directors meeting. 1:00 same location. Contact: Cindy Rock, 717-633-7959 or send email to: [pweameetings@comcast.net](mailto:pweameetings@comcast.net) .
- **September 27** – **RESCHEDULED**. DEP [Low-Level Waste Advisory Committee](#) meeting has been rescheduled to November 1, Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **October 23** – DEP [Nonpoint Source Liaison Workshop](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building, Harrisburg. 10:00. Contact: Steven Lathrop, 717-772-5618 or send email to: [slathrop@state.pa.us](mailto:slathrop@state.pa.us) .



[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#) (courtesy [PA Organization 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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[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

[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@CrisciAssociates.com](mailto:DHess@CrisciAssociates.com) or go to [www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com](http://www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com) .

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