

# — PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

July 25, 2005

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And, thanks to all our past contributors!

-- David E. Hess  
Editor

## Session Schedule

The Senate returns to session on September 19.  
The House returns on September 26.

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**Worms composting biosolids** – read  
*the Granville Township story in this  
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### On the Hill

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#### Portion of State Forest Named for the Late Rep. Russell P. Letterman

Rep. Camille "Bud" George, Democratic chairman of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, this week announced almost 5,000 acres of the Sproul State Forest in northwestern Clinton County will be named the "Russell P. Letterman Wild Area" in honor of the of the late state representative and sportsman.

Gov. Rendell signed into law Senate Bill 406 which included Rep. George's amendment to rename 4,959 acres now known as the Fish Dam Wild Area to the Russell P. Letterman Wild Area.

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"Russell Letterman was a friend to all Pennsylvania - especially its outdoor enthusiasts," said Rep. George (D-Clearfield), about his former colleague, who represented portions of Clinton, Centre, Lycoming and Clearfield counties in the 76th Legislative District. "Russ' heart was as big as the outdoors, and I could think of no more fitting tribute than to name a spot that he treasured and nurtured in his honor."

A native of Milesburg, Centre County, Rep. Letterman served 19 years in the General Assembly and served as chairman of the House Fish and Game Commission where he championed air and water conservation. He also served on the Conservation Committee, now the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, and worked to create the Wildlife Resources Conservation Fund.

A former professional baseball player with the St. Louis Browns organization, Rep. Letterman was also active with many outdoors organizations, including the Mosquito Creek Sportsmen's Club. He died at age 56 on February 8, 1990.

### In Other News

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#### Amount of Out-of State Waste Disposed in PA Decreases, In-State Up

The Department of Environmental Protection this week reported the total amount of waste disposed in Pennsylvania landfills dropped in 2004, decreasing from 25.39 million tons in 2003 to 25.18 million tons last year.

Out-of-state waste decreased by 446,465 tons to 10.1 million tons in 2004. Imports represent 40.2 percent of the waste stream to Pennsylvania landfills, down from 41.6 percent last year and 47.1 percent at its peak in 2001. The state received waste from 20 states, the District of Columbia, Canada and Puerto Rico.

While out-of-state waste dropped, waste generated in-state climbed for the second year in a row. The amount of waste that originated in Pennsylvania totaled 15 million tons last year, an increase of 236,308 tons from the 14.8 million tons landfilled in 2003.

#### Municipal Waste Disposed in PA (in millions of tons)

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
<b>PA</b>	15	14.8	14.1	14.2	14.3
<b>Out of State</b>	10.1	10.6	11.7	12.6	12.2
<b>Total</b>	25.1	25.4	25.8	26.8	26.5

Pennsylvania has 49 landfills and five waste recovery facilities that accept municipal waste from residences and commercial facilities and residual waste from factories, manufacturers, farms and mining operations.

The state remains the nation's largest waste importer. Pennsylvania's largest sources of out-of-state trash (in tons) in 2004 are as follows: New Jersey, 5.3 million; New York, 3.9 million; Connecticut, 392,956; West Virginia, 137,636; and Maryland, 134,438.

For more information, visit DEP's "[Municipal Waste Reporting Results](#)" webpage.

NewsClips: [PA Trash Imports Fall](#)  
[Editorial: King of the \(Garbage\) Heap](#)  
[Trash Imports Fall for Third Year in Row](#)

## State Reports First Positive Human Case of West Nile Virus

The departments of Agriculture, Health and Environmental Protection this week reported the first positive human case of West Nile Virus and the first positive mosquito pool for the 2005 season.

The individual, a 32 -year-old York County female, was hospitalized and is home recovering from the illness.

The mosquito pool was found in Warminster Township, Bucks County.

Last year, 15 cases of human West Nile virus were detected in Pennsylvania, resulting in two fatalities. In 2003, West Nile virus was detected in 237 Pennsylvanians and contributed to the deaths of eight people.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, all residents of areas where virus activity are at risk of getting West Nile encephalitis, however, people over 50 have the highest risk of severe disease.

There are things every individual can do around the home to help eliminate mosquito-breeding areas. Some of these tips include:

- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers that have collected on your property;
- Pay attention to discarded tires. Stagnant water in tires are where most mosquitoes breed;
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers left outdoors;
- Have clogged roof gutters cleaned every year, particularly if the leaves from surrounding trees have a tendency to plug up the drains. Roof gutters can produce millions of mosquitoes each season;
- Turn over plastic wading pools when not in use. Stagnant water in a wading pool becomes a place for mosquitoes to breed;
- Turn over wheelbarrows and don't let water stagnate in birdbaths. Both provide breeding habitats for domestic mosquitoes;
- Aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish. Water gardens can become major mosquito producers if they are allowed to stagnate. Clean and chlorinate swimming pools not in use. A swimming pool left untended by a family on vacation for a month can produce enough mosquitoes to result in neighborhood-wide complaints. Mosquitoes may even breed in the water that collects on pool covers; and
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.

Mosquitoes can breed in any puddle that lasts for more than four days.

For standing water that can't be eliminated, homeowners can buy Bti products at lawn and garden, outdoor supply, home improvement and other stores. This naturally occurring bacteria kills mosquito larvae but is safe for people, pets, aquatic life and plants.

In addition, here are some simple precautions to prevent mosquito bites, particularly for those individuals who are most at risk:

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- Make sure screens fit tightly over doors and windows to keep mosquitoes out of homes.
- Consider wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants and socks when outdoors, particularly when mosquitoes are most active at dawn and dusk, or in areas known for having large numbers of mosquitoes.
- When possible, reduce outdoor exposure at dawn and dusk during peak mosquito periods, usually April through October.
- Use insect repellents according to the manufacturer's instructions. An effective repellent will contain DEET. Consult with a pediatrician or family physician if you have questions about the use of repellent on children, as repellent is not recommended for children under the age of two months.

For more information, go to the [West Nile Virus website](#).

**NewsClips:** [First West Nile Case Found](#)

[Test Results Show First Human Case of West Nile](#)

### Source Water Protection Workshops to be Held July 26, 27 & 28

Learn what you can do to protect your drinking water in [a series of three workshops](#) around the state sponsored by the League of Women Voters [Water Resources Education Network](#).

The free workshops are designed to help drinking water suppliers, municipal officials, watershed groups, planners, and residents find out how to safeguard their sources of drinking water. The workshops will be held--

- July 26 - Penn State Cooperative Extension, Bloomsburg, Columbia County
- July 27 - Lehighon Recreation Center, Lehighon, Carbon County
- July 28 - East Nottingham Township, Oxford, Chester County

Organizations that attend will receive a free Source Water Protection Toolkit developed by WREN.

Protection of existing sources of water is the most cost-effective way to protect public health and control treatment costs, and recommended as an integral part of the multiple barrier approach to protecting public health.

Registration is required for the workshop. Go to the [workshop webpage](#) to register online or call Julie Kollar, WREN, 267-468-0555 or send email to: [juliek@voicenet.com](mailto:juliek@voicenet.com).



**Attachment:** [Workshop Announcement Flyer - PDF](#)

### EPA Sponsoring Watershed Funding Workshop on August 3

EPA's Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds Sustainable Finance Team is sponsoring a half-day [Watershed Funding Workshop](#) on August 3 from 12:30 to 4:30 pm for Washington, D.C. area watershed organizations.

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There will be a demonstration of three watershed funding tools, including Plan2Fund, the [Directory of Watershed Resources](#), and the Catalog of Federal Funding Sources.

Plan2Fund is a watershed planning tool that aids organizations in identifying necessary funding for their watershed program plan. The Directory of Watershed Resources and the Catalog of Federal Funding for Watershed Protection are searchable online databases designed to help organizations learn about funding opportunities available for watershed projects.

There will also be a panel of funding professionals speaking about corporate, private, federal, and foundation funding options.

To register contact Karen Fligger at [fligger.karen@epa.gov](mailto:fligger.karen@epa.gov) or call 202-566-1284. *(contributed by [Watershed Alliance of York](#))*

### **Natural Stream Channel Design Guidelines Available from Keystone Stream Team**

Pennsylvania's Keystone Stream Team has developed and published [Natural Stream Channel Design Guidelines](#).

The guidelines are intended as a resource tool for watershed groups developing and implementing stream restoration projects.

To download your copy, go to the [Keystone Stream Team website](#).  
*(contributed by [Watershed Alliance of York](#))*

### **Comments Invited on South Fork Beech Creek TMDL**

The Department of Environmental Protection is inviting comments on the proposed Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plan for the South Fork Beech Creek Watershed in Centre County.

A public meeting to answer questions and hear comments on the proposal is set for September 19 at the Three Points Sportsman's Club, Clarence,

For more information John Mital, Moshannon District Mining Office, 814-342-8200 or send email to: [jmital@state.pa.us](mailto:jmital@state.pa.us).

A copy of the proposed TMDL is available on DEP's [TMDL webpage](#).

### **Fish & Boat Commission Announces Boating Facilities Grants, Calls for Projects**

The Fish and Boat Commission this week awarded more than [\\$1.8 million in grants](#) to 22 municipalities to develop, improve or rehabilitate public recreational boat launches and encouraged eligible public entities to apply for a second round of funding through the Boating Facilities Grant Program.

The deadline for the next round of grants is October 1.

The PFBC initiated the Boating Facilities Grant Program earlier this year to help ensure Pennsylvania's recreational boaters are provided with the highest quality boating facilities on water bodies across the state.

The program is designed for public entities that have or will have the capability to provide boat access facilities that are open and available for general public use.

A complete list of grant recipients is available [in the awards announcement](#).



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To be eligible, projects must meet these criteria—

- occur on public lands owned in “fee simple” by the project sponsor or where ownership is less than fee simple interest, ownership rights must provide for permanent control of the property commensurate with the proposed development;
- include projects like boat ramps, courtesy floats, restrooms, access roads, parking areas, landscaping, transient tie-up floats, and signs;
- be from schools, non-profit organizations, not-for-profit organizations and service clubs are not eligible for direct funding but can apply through their local government for funding;
- grant funds are to be used only for major site improvements and not for any routine maintenance or operation activities;
- successful applicants must provide a 25 percent grant match and be willing to enter into a long-term agreement to keep the facility open to free public use for its useful life. The Commission will give priority-funding consideration to applicants that provide more than the required 25 percent match, thereby reducing the total amount of grant funds required to complete the project; and
- highest priority will be given to the rehabilitation of existing facilities, followed by expansion of existing facilities, then acquisition and development of new boating facilities.

The Boating Facility Grant Program funds come from boat registration fees, state fuel taxes collected on fuel used in motorboats, and taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel from the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program. No state general funds are used for any Commission programs.

For more information, visit the [Boating Facility Grant Program announcement](#) webpage.

### **Scholarships Available for 2005 National Conference on Urban Ecosystems**

The USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry program is offering scholarship funds to individuals from minority and underrepresented groups for registration to attend the [National Conference on Urban Ecosystems](#) on November 17-18 in Charlotte, N.C.

The deadline for applying is July 30.

The Forest Service will award three scholarships for each state.

For information and an application visit the [American Forests Conference website](#) or contact Iris Magaly Zayas, 404-347-1650 or by email to: [izayas@fs.fed.us](mailto:izayas@fs.fed.us) with questions.

### **New Environmental Research Fellowship Opportunities Available from EPA**

Approximately 100 new fellowships will be awarded for research in environmental fields of study through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's [Science to Achieve Results](#) (STAR) program.

Deadline for applications is October 18. Awards for this selection process will be made by May 30, 2006 for the fall term.

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The STAR program provides educational support for full-time masters and doctoral level students who plan to pursue environmental careers; with a focus on developing future leaders in environmental science, education, assessment, and restoration efforts.

More than 1,300 applicants compete each year for approximately 100 fellowships through a rigorous merit review process. EPA has awarded more than 1,000 fellowships to students in almost every state and the District of Columbia.

Examples of project areas undertaken by previous fellows include environmental engineering, environmental health sciences, toxicology, and the ecology of aquatic and terrestrial systems.

Fellows will receive up to \$37,000 per year, with masters degree candidates eligible for up to two years of support and doctoral candidates for a total of three years. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or be lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence.

More information is available at the [STAR fellowships webpage](#).

### **USDA Loan Funds for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Projects Available**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it has up to \$200 million in guaranteed loan funds available for investments in [renewable energy systems and energy efficient improvements](#) by agriculture producers and rural small businesses.

Deadline on availability is August 31.

Section 9006 of the 2002 Farm Bill established the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Loan and Grant Program to encourage agricultural producers and small rural businesses to create renewable and energy efficient systems.

The funds will be available to support a wide range of technologies encompassing biomass (including anaerobic digesters), geothermal, hydrogen, solar, and wind energy, as well as energy efficiency improvements.

The funds will be set aside through August 31 for renewable energy and energy efficiency guaranteed loans. Any funds not obligated under the guarantee loan program by August 31, will be reallocated to the competitive grant program as of that date.

More information on rural programs is available on the [Section 9006 Renewable Energy Systems webpage](#).

### **HBG Regional Economic Dev. Group Sponsors Renewable Energy Conference**

The Regional Economic Development District of Southcentral Pennsylvania is sponsoring a conference on August 23 and 24 in Harrisburg on “[Renewable Energy - a Pennsylvania Reality](#).”

The conference will include information on ethanol, biodiesel and energy derived from animal waste.

Featured speakers will include DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty, Bob Dinneen from the Renewable Fuels Association, representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Sen. Mike Waugh (R-York), Majority Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee, and Rep. Peter Daley (D-Washington), Minority Chair of the House Agriculture Committee.



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For a complete agenda, list of sponsoring organizations and exhibit information, go to the [Conference webpage](#).

### **Nominations Sought for EPA Clean Air Excellence Awards Program**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is accepting nominations for its sixth Clean Air Excellence Awards through August 31.

This awards program annually recognizes and honors both individuals and organizations that have undertaken the risks of innovation, served as pioneers in their fields and have helped to improve air quality. The program is open to both public and private entities in the United States.

EPA accepts entries in five award categories: Clean Air Technology, Community Development-Re-Development, Education/Outreach, Regulatory-Policy Innovations and Transportation Efficiency Innovations.

In addition, the program annually recognizes up to one person for outstanding individual achievement. Entries are judged using both general criteria specific to each category.

To download an application, visit the [Clean Air Excellence Awards webpage](#).

### **Brownfields, Environmental Cleanup Projects Funded by CFA**

The Commonwealth Financing Authority this week approved construction and planning grants totaling over \$20.8 million for 15 projects through the Business in Our Sites (BOS) program. Four of the projects funded were brownfield or environmental cleanup projects.

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh will receive a \$1,261,850 grant and a \$1,261,850 loan for the redevelopment of the former J. Allan Steel Site in Pittsburgh. BOS funds will be used for demolition, site preparation and environmental remediation of the site. The 3.9-acre site will be developed into the Pierpoint Professional Center, which will consist of up to 100,000-square-feet of river-front office and high-tech flex space. It is estimated that this project will bring 200 new jobs to the area.

Allegheny County: The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh will receive \$168,500 in planning grant funds to assist with the planning of the region's first Transit Oriented Development in Pittsburgh. The funds will be used to conduct market and traffic studies, economic impact analysis, property appraisals, environmental assessments and engineering designs. The development of the Eastside Transit Oriented Development will be primarily for commercial use, consisting of approximately 18,000-square-feet of office space geared toward new technology industries along with a national retailer and other retail mixes. It is anticipated that this project will bring 240 new jobs to the area.

The RIDC of Southwestern Pennsylvania will receive \$170,000 in planning grant funds to assist with the development of the Lawrenceville Technology Center. BOS planning grant funds will be utilized for the engineering, design, environmental assessment and market study. RIDC intends to develop the site, a former forging facility for Heppenstall Steel Company, into the Lawrenceville Technology Center to attract small- to mid-sized growing companies that will offer high paying employment

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opportunities. The development of this site is expected to generate approximately 200 new jobs.

The Redevelopment Authority of Washington County will receive \$130,485 in planning grant funds to support the redevelopment of the former Fort Pitt Bridgeworks site in Canonsburg. The BOS funds will be used to perform an environmental assessment, market study, general appraisals and some design work at the site to assist in preparation for new flex manufacturing space. The redevelopment of the site will include will include 81,000-square-feet of office space and 150,000-square-feet of warehouse/manufacturing space. It is anticipated that nearly 550 jobs will be located in the flex building.

For more information, go to the [Business in Our Sites](#) webpage or call 1-866-GO-NEWPA (1-866-466-3972).

**NewsClip:** [Business in Our Sites Projects Announced](#)

### **Partners Providing 'Better Models' Book to Inspire Ideas for Livable Communities**

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, in partnership with the Department of Community and Economic Development and The Conservation Fund, released a 134-page book "[Better Models for Communities in Pennsylvania](#)" this week intended as a tool for local governments to encourage development that makes their communities more attractive, livable and prosperous.

The book outlines six principles for better development:

- Conserve Pennsylvania's farmland, natural areas and scenic assets;
- Maintain a clear edge between town and countryside;
- Build and maintain livable and attractive communities;
- Preserve historic resources;
- Respect local community character in new construction; and
- Reduce the impact of the car and promote walkability.

"Better Models for Development in Pennsylvania" was written by Edward T. McMahon, a fellow at the Urban Land Institute and formerly with The Conservation Fund, and Shelley S. Mastran, a preservation planner.

Funds to write the book came from DCNR and The Conservation Fund.

DCNR is working with The Conservation Fund and Ed McMahon to develop statewide training and education around the content of the book.

To obtain a copy of the publication contact DCNR at 717-787-7672.

### **Southwestern PA is a Finalist in Rural Heritage Development Program**

Southwestern Pennsylvania was selected as one of four finalists for two demonstration grants for the [Rural Heritage Development Initiative Regions Program](#).

The application for the project was submitted jointly by [Preservation Pennsylvania](#), the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) and the [Community Foundation for the Alleghenies](#).

Under the Rural Heritage Program, the selected regions will receive assistant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the National Trust to carry out an initiative to promote heritage-based economic development.

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The initial three-year program will focus on: rural tourism opportunities, the retention and use of rural historic structures, the revitalization of historic rural downtown areas and the creation of preservation-based planning and development tools.

Selected areas will have available a shared field representative who will live in the region and be trained in preservation-based rural economic development and work with a broad-based regional steering committee that represents key rural development stakeholders that will be formed.

For more information contact Anna Breinich, Director of Community Planning at PEC at 717-230-8044 x12 or send email to: [abreinich@pecpa.org](mailto:abreinich@pecpa.org).

### Somerset County Recognizes Flight 93 Memorial Design Project

The Somerset County Planning Commission recognized the Flight 93 Memorial Design and Development Concepts Project with one of two special land development and planning awards this week.

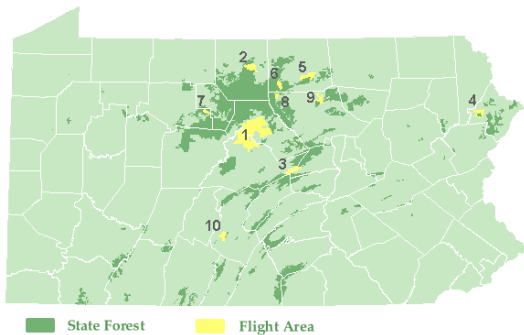
The Flight 93 project was undertaken jointly by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and the Ball State University Landscape Architecture Department to layout design concepts for the proposed national memorial.

A series of public meetings were held on the concepts over several days to gather ideas from the public.

For more information contact Anna Breinich, Director of Community Planning at PEC at 717-230-8044 x12 or send email to: [abreinich@pecpa.org](mailto:abreinich@pecpa.org).



### Final Aerial Deer Survey Results Help DCNR Chart Forest Regeneration Efforts



The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week announced it has completed the analysis of an [aerial white-tailed deer survey](#) of state forestlands that should prove an important tool in ensuring future forest regeneration and healthy habitat for deer and other wildlife.

Vision Air Research Inc., an Idaho-based independent wildlife research firm, was contracted to target 10 sections of state forest land totaling 207,527 acres in the aerial count. Flying when able, February 13 through April 11, researchers supplied Bureau of Forestry officials with final films and data showing deer numbers in sections of eight of the state's 20 forest districts.

Surveyed deer densities ranged from a high of 23.69 deer per-square-mile in the Promised Land area of Delaware State Forest, Pike County, to a low of 8.63 deer per-square-mile in the southern section of Sproul State Forest, Clinton and Centre counties.

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The second highest whitetail concentration was 20.29 deer per-square-mile in the Denton Hill area of Susquehannock State Forest, in Potter County; followed by 18.21, McIntyre Wild Area, Tiadaghton State Forest, Lycoming County; 14.89, Paddy Mountain area, Bald Eagle State Forest, Union, Centre counties; 13.97, Algerine Wild Area, Tiadaghton State Forest, Lycoming County; 12.20, Hicks Run area, Elk State Forest, Elk County; 11.20, Trough Creek area, Rothrock State Forest, Huntingdon County; 10.91, Arnot area, Tioga State Forest; Tioga County; and 9.64, Cedar Run area, Tioga State Forest, Tioga County.

The results also will enable better utilization of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Deer Management Assistance Program that enables hunters to kill more than one deer in designated areas when properly licensed.

DCNR has been asked by the PGC to add several State Game lands to the flight contract and survey those areas this fall, just prior to deer rifle season. Also, DCNR plans to continue the use of FLIR technology on state forestland, especially where the commission is conducting research, and the bureau is evaluating browsing impact and habitat recovery indicators in response to deer population levels.

The complete study, visit the [Aerial Survey webpage](#) on DCNR's website.

**NewsClips:** [Aerial Survey Finds Disparity in Deer Concentrations](#)

### **Fish & Boat Commission Elects New Officers**

Commissioners Richard Czop and Howard "Gary" Pflugfelder, Jr. were elected President and Vice President, respectively, of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission at the board's July 19 meeting.

Commission President Czop was appointed to the board on June 28, 2002 from the Eighth District of Pennsylvania. His district includes Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia and Schuylkill counties.

Czop, who has been a fishing and boating enthusiast for most of his life, has previously served on the Boating Advisory Board of the Fish and Boat Commission. He also served on the Upper Providence Township Planning Commission for 16 years. Czop is chairman of the Board of Directors for Czop/Specter Inc., an engineering and land-surveying firm.

Commissioner Vice President Pflugfelder has served on the Commission since 1990. Pflugfelder is from the Sixth Commissioner District, comprised of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York counties.

Over the years, Pflugfelder has devoted himself to many aquatic-related organizations including the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Harrisburg River Rescue, Inc., Keystone Aquatic Club and the International Marina Institute. He also served as Director for the Pennsylvania Marine Trade Association and was owner and president of the Harrisburg Seaplane Base, Inc. for twenty-three years.

The newly-elected officers will serve a one-year term.

### **SRBC Seeks Contractor to Assess Deer Creek Watershed**

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission is [seeking a qualified contractor](#) to conduct a study of Deer Creek Watershed in southern Pennsylvania and northern Maryland. The

study will include an assessment, evaluation of the anticipated water demand projected 10-to-25 years into the future, and help develop a list of stakeholders.

Written technical and cost proposals are due to SRBC by August 12.

Findings from this interstate watershed study will be used by SRBC to guide regulatory and planning decisions affecting the Deer Creek Watershed, in cooperation with the State of Maryland and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The contractor will be expected to focus their review on the following tasks:

- Inventory and assess key water resources of the Deer Creek Watershed;
- Establish a sustainable yield from the watershed;
- Describe and inventory current water uses;
- Project demands for different use sectors; and
- Evaluate potential issues and problems related to future water availability.

For more information, see the [request for proposal](#) at the SRBC website.

## Taking Positive Action

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### Worms Help Granville Twp. Turn Biosolids into Exceptional Quality Compost



Granville Township in Mifflin County may only serve 5,000 people and local businesses, but it's the first wastewater system in the United States to use vermiculture – worms – to turn its Exceptional Quality biosolids into a compost product it can sell.

“In 2000 we received a letter from the Mifflin County Solid Waste Authority saying they were going to close their landfill,” said Larry Craig, Sewer and Water Manager for [Granville Township](#).

“We looked at lots of options for handling our biosolids, but every one we looked at had high energy costs or odor problems.”

Then two things happened.

“I read an article in [Biocycle Magazine](#) about vermicomposting and a friend of mine came back from a conference in Texas where she heard about an Australian company that had a process for using vermiculture to compost biosolids,” said Craig. “We immediately contacted the company and looked into it.”

Granville Township worked with [Vermitech](#), the Australian company, and the Department of Environmental Protection to first do a pilot composting project to make sure the process worked with its biosolids. The project also allowed DEP to preview the composting process.

“Vermitech already had a similar operation up and running in Australia that was operating since 1997 processing about 200 tons of biosolids a week,” said Craig. “So we knew they had a track record.”

Craig also began to educate local officials and residents about vermiculture.

“I went out to schools, Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, Garden Clubs, to anyone who would listen about the process,” said Craig. “The schools were especially important because we thought working with children in grades 7 to 12 would help get information home to their parents.”



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Thanks to a \$680,000 loan provided by the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority and a \$478,000 grant from DEP's Growing Greener Program, Granville was able to construct the full size biosolids vermicomposting facility.

Granville Township's two wastewater treatment plants produce about 70 dry tons of biosolids a year from its residential and industrial customers. Biosolids from the facility already met the stringent metals criteria to be Exceptional Quality, but they had to assure the new process met the pathogen destruction requirements as well.

The shakedown phase of the new vermicomposting facility began in June of 2004 with the installation of four composting beds putting about 2,000 pounds of worms per bed. The beds are four feet deep and 100 feet long.

The beds were filled with 12-14 wet tons of biosolids and run through the process feeding new material on top and taking finished product from the bottom of the beds. The worms primarily live in the top one foot of the bed.

The Township tested the finished product over the last year and found that it met each of the Exceptional Quality criteria and DEP approved the facility and the compost for distribution.

"We just sold the first 16 tons of product to several customers-- a golf course, vineyard, a sod company and a tree farmer as a soil amendment," said Craig. "We also plan to make it available to the public in 50 pound bags."

"It works, ask my wife," explained Craig. "She used the compost on her rose bushes and had the nicest, biggest roses she's ever seen."

As a soil amendment, there are no formal restrictions on its use, however, the Township does not recommend using it in gardens for root crops yet until they have more of a track record of testing the compost.

The numbers tell part of the story of why this approach is attractive.

The Township hopes to produce about 150 tons of product a year and generate \$20-25,000 from selling the compost to offset the debt service for the loan and operating costs.

"We were paying \$75-80 a ton to dispose of our biosolids at the landfill—about \$30,000 a year," said Craig. "With the income we hope to realize, the costs we're avoiding by not landfilling the biosolids and the lower operating costs, we're actually paying a little less to vermicompost our biosolids."

"But the real benefits to this option are that it's natural and no chemicals or mechanical equipment are used in processing," said Craig. "We're not taking away from the environment, we're actually putting something valuable back."

For more information, contact Larry Craig, Sewer and Water Manager for Granville Township, by email to [lcraig@granville-twp.org](mailto:lcraig@granville-twp.org) or call 717-242-1838.

**Attachment:** [Granville Township Vermicomposting Facility Photos - PDF](#)

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



## Environmental History

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### **Quecreek Mine Rescue Anniversary Focuses on Preserving History**

This year’s anniversary of the [Quecreek Mine Rescue](#) highlights the effort to preserve the Sipesville Fire Hall where family and friends gathered to await the fate of the nine miners trapped when the Quecreek Mine flooded in 2002.

The Quecreek Mine was the focus of world attention from July 24 - 28, 2002 when miners cut through into an abandoned, water-filled mine flooding the mine with over 50

million gallons of water. Nine miners scrambled to safety, but nine were trapped in a pocket of air in the mine. They were rescued as a result of the combined efforts of state and federal mine rescue agencies and hundreds of volunteers and workers.

“The Sipesville Fire Hall was the emotional center of the rescue, where the family and friends of the miners came together to support each other during the difficult highs and lows of the rescue operation,” said Bill Arnold of the Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation. “With the construction of a new fire hall, the Quecreek Foundation and the Sipesville Fire Company are cooperating on a joint project to move the old fire hall to the mine rescue site.”

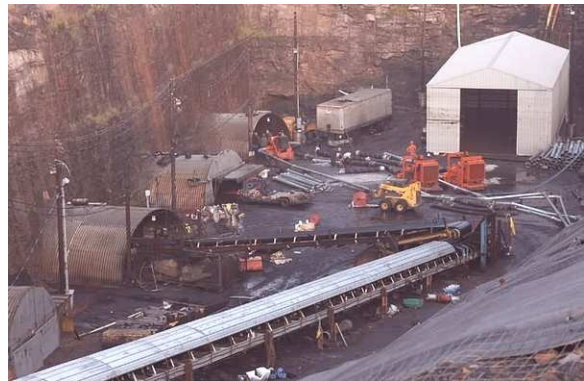
As part of this year’s celebration, a special charity auction will take place to raise the approximately \$20,000 it will cost to move the old fire hall to its new location on the rescue site and to help fund the Sipesville Fire Company.

“The auction is a wonderful community effort with dozens of businesses and individuals donating items to raise the funds needed to save this important piece of history that means so much to the families of the miners,” said Arnold.

The third anniversary celebration for the Quecreek Mine Rescue will begin at 9:30



**Drilling the Rescue Shafts**



**Pumping Water from the Mine**



**Successful Rescue!**

## PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

a.m. on July 23 at the mine rescue site at 151 Haupt Road in Somerset. Several of the rescued miners will attend the event, along with local, state and other officials and volunteers involved in the rescue.

State Representative Bob Bastian (R-Somerset) will present a resolution adopted by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives commemorating the rescue.

The charity auction to raise funding to move the Sipesville Fire Hall will begin at 10:00 a.m. at the rescue site.

The yellow rescue capsule used to rescue the miners will also be on display. The capsule was donated to the Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation this year by the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration. Also on display is one of the bits that drilled the rescue shaft and over 200 other items related to the rescue.

“Public interest in the Quecreek Mine Rescue has increased dramatically over the last year,” said Arnold. “So far this year visits to the rescue site are running 20 percent more than last year, which we thought was great.”

The Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation is a non-profit charitable organization that relies on support from the public to educate the public about the rescue and to maintain and operate the mine rescue visitor area.

Contact the Foundation by writing 151 Haupt Road, Somerset, PA 15501, by calling 814-445-4876 or online at [www.QuecreekRescue.org](http://www.QuecreekRescue.org) .

**Photo Features:** [See Photos of the Mine Rescue](#)  
[“Nine for Nine” Commemorative Booklet](#)

**NewsClips:** [Three Years Later, Quecreek Rescue Site Still Popular](#)  
[Mine Rescue Memorial In the Works](#)  
[Where are the Rescued Miners Now?](#)  
[Site of Worst Anthracite Mine Disaster All But Forgotten Till Now](#)

### PA’s Environmental Heritage

To learn more about Pennsylvania rich environmental heritage, visit the [Pennsylvania Environmental Heritage webpage](#) on DEP’s website and the [Pennsylvanians and the Environment](#) section of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission website.

The Pennsylvania Environmental Professionals Association also has an [environmental heritage project](#) designed to promote Pennsylvania’s environmental history. Last year the Senate passed Senate Resolution 324 encouraging PHMC to create a Pennsylvania Conservation Heritage Program.

### Quick Clips

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[Survey Finds Varied Environmental Concerns Among Southeast Residents](#)  
[Lehigh County Wants Localities to Help Pay for Open Space](#)  
[First Brownfield Cleanup Signed Under EPA-DEP Agreement](#)  
[Allentown Hopes to Use Growing Greener Funds for Brownfields](#)  
[Local Officials Appeal for Help to Control Growth](#)  
[Venango Trail Gets National Status](#)

[Bats Have a Ball Eating Mosquitoes](#)  
[Eco-Camps Educate Children on Environment](#)  
[New School to be Green](#)  
[For Asian Nail Salons, EPA's Lessons Translate](#)  
[Arts and Science Remake Steel City](#)  
[Landfill Develops New Energy Source](#)  
[Wind Power May Breeze Into Berlin](#)  
[To Preserve Open Space, Preserve Tax Breaks](#)  
[Bushkill to Ask Voters to Approve Tax Increase for Open Space](#)  
[Editorial: King of the \(Garbage\) Heap](#)  
[Volunteers Have Tons of Fun Picking Up Trash](#)  
[Study Says Ethanol Not Worth the Energy](#)  
[Editorial: Costs of Used Vegetable Oil Priceless](#)  
[Recycling Quadruples in Carbon Program](#)  
[Dental Assn., DEP Partner to Reduce Mercury Discharges](#)  
[Op-Ed: When Roadside Trash is Also Treasure](#)  
[Plans for Restoring Palmerton Area Unveiled](#)  
[Eagles No Longer Endangered in Pennsylvania](#)  
[State Educates Children on Dangers of Mining Sites](#)

## **Watershed NewsClips**

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[Op-Ed: PA Government Must Sow Seeds of Environmentalism](#)  
[2005 Allegheny River Sojourn](#)  
[Harrisburg Students Paint the Susquehanna River](#)  
[From Hot Water to Highwalls – Reclaiming Abandoned Mines](#)  
[PA's Coal History Leaves Legacy of Abandoned Mines](#)  
[PPL Explains Summit Reclamation Project](#)  
[Reclamation Projects Range from Simple to Costly](#)  
[Editorial: State Could Get the Shaft on Reclamation](#)  
[Coal Burning Plant Will Generate Jobs](#)  
[Update on Glenburn Pond Project Given to Teachers](#)  
[The Importance of Lake Monitoring](#)  
[More Stream Signs to be Installed](#)  
[For Sake of Safety and Wildlife, Dams Come Down](#)  
[Erie Lauded as Model in Great Lakes Cleanup Effort](#)  
[Penn State Erie Creates Consortium on Environmental Research at Presque Isle](#)  
[New Conservation District Boss Will Stress Cooperation](#)  
[Musicians Promote River Ecology](#)  
[River Witnesses: Student Examines Susquehanna](#)  
[Pain of 1977 Still Fresh for Some](#)  
[Stricter Rules In Store for Towanda Wastewater Plant](#)

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## **Regulations**

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The Department of Agriculture published a correction to its proposed [changes to the CHEMSWEEP Program](#) regulations.

### **[Pennsylvania Bulletin – July 23, 2005](#)**

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

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

## **Technical Guidance & Permits**

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The Department of Environmental Protection published [draft technical guidance on community water system design](#).

[DEP ID: 383-2125-108](#). Public Water Supply Manual--Part II Community System Design Standards. This document has been revised to incorporate updates in the National design standards and because of new technology. Comments due August 22.

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

## **Calendar of Upcoming Events**

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Upcoming conferences, meetings, workshops, plus links to other online calendars. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

- **July 25** – (**CANCELLED**) DEP [Certification Program Advisory Committee meeting](#).
- **July 27** – DCNR [Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council](#) meeting.
- **July 29** – [State Planning Board](#) meeting.
- **August 9** – Senate & House Game and Fisheries Committees hearing on the financial condition of the Pennsylvania Game Commission.
- **August 11** – Independent Regulatory Review Commission to consider final Environmental Quality Board regulation on bond adjustment and bituminous mine subsidence control standards. (*Look under [April 2005 EOB agenda](#) for a copy.*)

### **[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](#)

## **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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