

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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Over 130 Attend 2007 Abandoned Mine Reclamation Conference

by Andy McAllister
Watershed Coordinator
Western Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

The [2007 Pennsylvania AMR Conference](#) is now a memory. And a good one at that! Over 130 participants enjoyed the varied presentations and exhibits over the two day event and, as always, had a particularly good time reconnecting with other members of our "AMR family."

John Dawes, Chairman of the AML Campaign and Director of the [Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program](#) gave the keynote address with a recounting of the events and meetings that led up to the Congress passing the amended Title IV – Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund -- that will provide Pennsylvania with about \$1.4 billion for mine reclamation over the next 15 years.

Following his presentation, the AMR Conference Planning Committee bestowed upon John the first ever "Mayfly Award" in appreciation for all of his hard work as the chairman of the AML Campaign. The mayfly was selected as the symbol for this award because its presence in a stream signifies clean water.

The "SMCRA Title IV" track on Friday was very popular. One session of particular interest to the conferees attending this track was "Highlights of SMCRA Reauthorization." During that session Pam Milavec, Bruce Golden, and Andy McAllister took you through the past, present, and future of Title IV. Part of the Title IV track included a session by Mike Hewitt on how to use the RAMLIS mapping tool to better understand how to use GIS to find out where those priority sites are.

Another well-attended session was the Appalachian Region Reforestation Initiative presented by Patrick Angel of the Office of Surface Mining. ARRI is a great example of how thinking "outside the box" can result in higher-quality reclamation of our abandoned mine lands.

The SMCRA Title IV discussion panel later in the day, featured OSM's George Rieger as well as Sue Wilson and Dave Strong from DEP's Citizen's Advisory Council. The commentary from the audience will prove useful as the state continues to gather opinions for how Title IV funds should be used.



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For the "Road Blocks and Limiting Factors" track, the prevailing wage panel also on Friday drew many participants. Alfred Risoliti, Pete Getzie, and Bob Hedin provided good commentary and important aspects to consider when getting involved in reclamation projects.

During the Chapter 105 permitting discussion group, Rita Coleman, Troy Conrad, and Pam Milavec explained the DEP's efforts in trying to improve the permitting process for groups. Also as part of that track, Brent Means of OSM asked, "What defines success for a passive treatment system?" His thought provoking presentation demonstrated that success is far more elusive than what might seem obvious. Afterward, while on the topic of treatment systems, the Operation, Maintenance and Replacement (O, M &R) panel presented some potential solutions to the complex issue of O,M,&R.

The "Technologies and Materials" track was new for this year and many of the conferees attended presentations by Warren Cohn of ACF Environmental, Joe Schueck of Agri-Drain, Mike Kaufman of Chemstream, and Tom Kerr of HDR Engineering. This new track provided participants a chance to see how private firms can assist with reclamation efforts.

Friday night was a wonderful chance for all of us to enjoy each other's company at the "Picnic By The Pool" and [The Down To Earth Band](#) was a perfect fit for entertaining this down to earth crowd.

Attendees on Saturday got an opportunity to attend several concurrent sessions: Tom Clark of the Susquehanna River Basin Commisison, touched on the modeling efforts to strategize AMD remediation in the West Branch of the Susquehanna while Tim Kania of the DEP clarified the remining incentives in Pennsylvania as they relate to abandoned mine reclamation.

For those interested in how to improve their grant applications, Malcolm Crittenden and Ron Horansky, both of the DEP, focused on techniques for better proposal writing while helping us understand how watersheds get prioritized. And finally, Hanna Wheeler of the [Eastern Coal Regional Roundtable](#) and Stefanie Chitester of the [Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team](#) explained how those two organizations are helping watershed groups work more effectively.

Special thanks to the 2007 AMR Conference Planning Committee for making this year's conference one to remember and a very special "Thank You" to the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program for providing funding.

Also, special thanks to the sponsors of the 2007 Conference: ACF Environmental, Agri-Drain, Chemstream, HDR Engineering, American Mushroom Institute

All of the powerpoint presentations plus photos from the Conference will be available on the [2007 Pennsylvania AMR Conference website](#) .

Make it a point to be a part of the 10th Pennsylvania AMR Conference in 2008!

For more information on abandoned mine reclamation, visit the websites of the [Western Coalition](#) for Abandoned Mine Reclamation and the [Eastern Coalition](#) for Abandoned Mine Reclamation.

Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to voting session September 17. The House released its fall schedule this week—

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September 10 (Non-voting), 17 (Non-voting), 24, 25, and 26

October 1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, and 31

November 13, 14, 19, 20, 27, and 28

December 3, 4, 5(Non-voting), 10, 11, and 12

The Senate released their fall schedule last week-

September 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26

October 1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30

November 13, 14, 15, 19, 20, 27, 28

December 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12

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- New Firewood Quarantine In Effect in PA Due to Emerald Ash Borer
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- Help Wanted -- PA Resources Council, Western PA Audubon

Spotlight

- How You Can Increase Your Watershed Group's Online Presence

Feature

- Plants Matter – Consider the Water Willow, *By Patrick McShea, Carnegie Museum of Natural History*

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On the Hill

Bills On the Governor's Desk

All the major bills on the Governor's desk have now been signed. Here's the rundown...

Budget Bills: The bills signed into law that implement the budget agreement include:

- [House Bill 1286](#) (Evans-D-Philadelphia) General Fund budget bill, now Act 8A;
- [House Bill 1287](#) (D.Evans-D-Philadelphia) making appropriations from the State Gaming Fund, now Act 9A;
- [House Bill 1590](#) (Markosek-D-Allegheny) transportation funding for transit systems, highways and bridges now Act 44;
- [House Bill 1295](#) (Hanna-D-Clinton) Fiscal Code changes, restoring the State System of Higher Education allocation from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund for fiscal year 2006-07 and including other budget implementing language for fiscal year 2007-08 now Act 42;
- [Senate Bill 798](#) (Armstrong-R-Lancaster) Capital Budget 2007-08 Itemization Act now Act 43.
- [House Bill 842](#) (Prime Sponsor Withdrew) budget-related changes to the Education Code now Act 45;
- [House Bill 1631](#) (D.Evans-D-Philadelphia) capital projects to be funded from the State Gaming Fund – Pennsylvania Convention Center and the Penguins Arena is now Act 53; and
- [Senate Bill 97](#) (D.White-R-Indiana) Tax Code changes including increasing film production tax credit, Education Improvement Credit, creating the Resource Enhancement and Protection tax credit and making changes to the Neighborhood Tax credit is now Act 55.

REAP Farm Conservation Tax Credit: [Senate Bill 97](#) (D.White-R-Indiana), that includes the Resource Enhancement and Protection Act (REAP) that provides tax credits for installation of farm conservation practices, was signed by the Governor and is now Act 55.

On the Senate/House Agenda

The House has these committee meetings scheduled this week...

Local Government Committee hearing on [House Bill 904](#) (Freeman-D-Northampton) providing for a temporary moratorium on development in Easton and a second hearing on educational impacts fees – [House Bill 72](#) (Grucela-D-Northampton) in Mt. Bethel.

Gov. Rendell Signs \$10 Million REAP Conservation Tax Credit Into Law

Gov. Rendell this week signed legislation into law giving his approval to the [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act](#) (REAP) that gives farmers tax credits for installing conservation practices.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and more than 65 environmental, sportsmen, agricultural groups, and businesses throughout the Commonwealth joined together in applauding the passing of REAP.

REAP was included in [Senate Bill 97](#) (D.White-R-Indiana) that made several other changes to the Tax Code. The bill now becomes Act 55.

“We appreciate the steadfast commitment of REAP’s sponsors to seeing this legislation through, and for their dedication to improving water quality while helping farmers make ends meet,” said Matthew Ehrhart, Executive Director of CBF’s Pennsylvania office. “They clearly understand that a healthy environment and healthy farms go hand in hand, and that REAP will make significant strides toward meeting Pennsylvania’s obligations to reduce pollution going into our streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay.”

REAP is a bipartisan measure sponsored by Representatives Jerry Stern (R-Blair) and Peter Daley (D-Washington) and Senators Mike Waugh (R-York) and Michael O’Pake (D-Berks), along with 79 other co-sponsors.

REAP provides transferable state tax credits to Pennsylvania farmers who proactively plan and implement highly effective conservation practices to reduce runoff. Businesses that sponsor such conservation projects will also be eligible for corresponding tax credits. REAP will improve water quality and strengthen our agricultural communities and the economy statewide.

The bill provides personal and business state tax credits ranging from 25 to 75 percent of the cost to install best management practices like barnyard improvements, riparian buffers, stream fencing and other practices. The development of manure management plans on farmlands, and forested buffers on non-farm lands, would also be eligible for credit.

Each farmer enrolled in the program is eligible for up to \$150,000 in tax credits which can be extended over a period of 15 years. There is no limit on amount of tax credits a business sponsoring projects on farms can be awarded.

The REAP Program will take effect on October 23 (90 days from the day Gov. Rendell signed the bill into law) and will be administered by the [State Conservation Commission](#).

The Commission will develop the necessary tax credit application and set a deadline for applying for the credits this fiscal year, hopefully approvals will come in time for the spring construction season.



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The law lays out a two-step application process for the tax credit— 1) a determination by the Commission the project is eligible so farmers know they will receive the tax credit before they begin work, and 2) the Department of Revenue formally issues the tax credit when the project is certified as complete to the Commission.

Applications for the REAP tax credit will be on a first-come, first-served basis, so potential applicants are encouraged to start to put together the plans and information they need now in order to apply by the deadline to be set by the Commission. The Commission will have 90 days to review the application to determine whether they are eligible for the tax credit.

Projects eligible for the tax credit include:

75 Percent Tax Credit

- Development of a voluntary or mandatory nutrient management plan;
- Development of an agricultural erosion and sediment control plan or conservation plan;
- Design and implementation of best management practices necessary to abate stormwater runoff, loss of sediment, loss of nutrients and runoff of other pollutants from an animal concentration area;
- Design and implementation of best management practices necessary to restrict livestock access to streams if there is established and maintained a riparian forest buffer with a minimum width of 50 feet; or
- Establishment of a riparian forest buffer with a minimum width of 50 feet;

50 Percent Tax Credit

- Design and implementation of agricultural best management practices or the installation and use of equipment, provided that the best management practice or equipment is necessary to reduce existing sediment and nutrient pollution to surface waters for agricultural operation. Best management practices or equipment will be identified by the State Conservation Commission and may include manure storage systems, alternative uses for manure, filter strips, grassed waterways, management intensive grazing systems and no-till planting equipment; or
- Design and implementation of best management practices necessary to exclude livestock access to streams through fencing, stabilized crossings and improved water systems, if there is established and maintained a vegetated riparian or riparian forest buffer with a minimum width of 35 feet.

25 Percent Tax Credit

- After July 1, 2008 - remediation of legacy sediment if the legacy sediment is exposed and discharging or threatens to discharge into surface waters and the project meets the standards established by the Commission.

To learn more as details develop, visit the [State Conservation Commission](#) webpage and [CBF's REAP webpage](#).

Joint Committee Environmental Synopsis Newsletter Now Online

The July issue of the [Environmental Synopsis](#) newsletter published by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) is now available online. It includes the roster of committee members for the new legislative session.

This issue includes articles on: energy savings from mass transit, future of corn planting and ethanol, oil addition, water project funding and more.

The chair of the Joint Committee is Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) and the vice-chairman is Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne).

Other News

PA Conservationists Recognized By State Conservation Commission

The [State Conservation Commission](#) recently recognized four individuals and three districts for their conservation efforts in the Commonwealth.

“Conserving Pennsylvania’s natural resources is a top priority for the commonwealth,” said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. “With the leadership and guidance of those who support our programs, we are able to implement conservation practices that will protect Pennsylvania for future generations.”

William Lange of Clarks Summit was awarded the State Conservation Commission’s 2007 Distinguished Service Award.

Each year, the award is given to an individual who demonstrates service and leadership to the commission and/or conservation districts. Lange dedicated 38 years to promoting responsible stewardship in Lackawanna County and by serving as a member of the commission, the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts and the National Association of Conservation Districts.

Two recipients earned the Conservation Leadership Awards – **Ron Rohall**, [Westmoreland Conservation District](#), and **John Dawes**, [Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program](#) – for their efforts in promoting the reauthorization of the Pennsylvania Abandoned Mine Lands Campaign Fund.

As a result of their efforts, the Commonwealth will receive about \$1.4 billion over the next 15 years for abandoned mine reclamation. Rohall, who lives in Rector, is a director for the Westmoreland Conservation District and chairs the Ohio Water Resources Regional Committee. Dawes, who lives in Alexandria, is the administrator of the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program and recently received the 2007 Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence.

Ron Rohall was also recognized with the Ann Rudd Saxman Conservation District Director Excellence Award.

Thomas Dakin of West Chester University is the recipient of this year's Auxiliary Scholarship that provides a scholarship annually to a college student from Pennsylvania majoring in agriculture, environmental studies or conservation.

Dakin, a junior at West Chester University, is majoring in environmental health.

“The PACD Auxiliary is very pleased to award Thomas Dakin the PACD 2007 Auxiliary Scholarship of \$500, towards his senior year at West Chester University,” PACD Auxiliary President Sharon Sweitzer said. “His studies in environmental health and advanced level courses, such as wastewater process and design, environmental site

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assessments, industrial waste management, and air pollution control to name a few, convinced us this young man has a bright future ahead in protecting the environment.”

Other awards by the Commission included the District Director Attendance Award which recognizes the efforts of Pennsylvania’s 66 conservation districts working at the local level. Nearly 500 directors volunteer their time to help plan, direct and assist with programs to protect their county’s resources. Topping the list with the highest rate of director attendance is Columbia County, followed by Potter and Lawrence counties.

The departments of Agriculture and Environmental Protection oversee the [State Conservation Commission](#), an 11-member panel that provides oversight and support of the state’s 66 county conservation districts.

The commission also enforces the Nutrient Management Act program and supports the local administration of the state [Dirt and Gravel Roads Maintenance Program](#), and several leadership development and public outreach and education programs.

For more information on county conservation districts, visit the [PACD website](#).

PA Student Places 2nd in Rachel Carson “A Sense of Wonder” Competition

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had its non-profit partners announced the winners of this year’s Rachel Carson “[A Sense of Wonder](#)” Essay, Photography and Poetry Competition. One of the winners included a 17-year old student and his mother from Pennsylvania for a poetry entry.

The Pennsylvania entry was from Woody S. and his mother Vivienne who wrote a poem entitled, “[The Wonder of Bees](#).” (*EPA did not include their last names in the announcement.*)

The contest’s intergenerational approach reflects Rachael Carson’s efforts through her writings to have adults share with children a sense of wonder about nature and help them discover its joys. There were over 150 entries and more than 1,000 votes were cast. Finalists in each category were selected by an intergenerational team of judges. The public selected the winners by voting for their favorite photos, poems and essays on the Aging Initiative website.

The contest was sponsored by the U.S. EPA Aging Initiative, Generations United and the Rachel Carson Council Inc.

Born on May 27, 1907, Carson is considered the founder of the contemporary environmental movement through her landmark book, *Silent Spring*. Its publication is credited with causing a reversal in the nation’s pesticide policy.

The competition winners and the winning entries [are available online](#).

Photo Tour: Six Mile Run Watershed Committee, Broad Top Township

Recently officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Environmental Protection toured mine drainage treatment and other projects in the Six Mile Run Watershed in Broad Top Township, Bedford County to learn how small communities can have a big impact on water quality problems.

Broad Top Township has used their own equipment to construct a total of over 28 passive mine drainage treatment systems in Six Mile Run, Sandy Run and Longs Run Watersheds.

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For more details on what Broad Top and its partners have accomplished, take the [photo tour of the treatment systems online](#).

Learn About the Delaware Estuary at Coast Day Event September 15

The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, along with several partners, will host its annual [Southeastern Pennsylvania Coast Day](#) celebration from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. September 15, at Penn's Landing on the Delaware River in Philadelphia.

Coast Day is a free event open to the public that serves to educate visitors about their environmentally sensitive coastline and celebrate this natural resource and its recreational opportunities.

Visitors can tour the many interactive displays and participate in the hands-on activities at this family-oriented festival. Music, prizes and freshly roasted Delaware Bay oysters will be available free. Participants can also tour the nearby Independence Seaport Museum or take a free shuttle available to the Fairmont Water Works Interpretive Center.

Sponsors for this year's event include the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Philadelphia Water Department, Pennsylvania Coastal Resources Management Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For more information, visit the [Southeastern Pennsylvania Coast Day webpage](#) or to become an exhibitor at this event contact Dee Ross at 800-445-4935, extension 106 or send email to: Dross@DelawareEstuary.org.

Penn State Launches Water-Testing Program for PA Residents

To help ensure an abundant supply of safe water for people, crops and livestock, Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences has launched a water-testing program, which will be administered by the college's [Agricultural Analytical Services Lab](#).

"About 3.5 million rural Pennsylvanians rely on more than one million private wells for their drinking water, and about 20,000 new wells are drilled each year," says Bryan Swistock, water resources senior extension associate. "We hope by encouraging people to get their water tested, we can help them to improve their water quality and to safeguard their health."

Swistock points out that private water supplies in Pennsylvania are not regulated by the state or federal government, and well owners are responsible for maintaining the quality of their own water. "However, about half of the state's wells that have been tested fail to meet at least one drinking-water standard," he says.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has established primary and secondary drinking-water standards. Primary standards apply to contaminants -- such as coliform bacteria, nitrate and lead -- that cause health problems. Secondary standards address iron, manganese, chloride and other pollutants that cause aesthetic problems, such as stains, odors or off-tastes. Penn State's program will provide well owners with reports detailing how their water-test results compare to these EPA standards.

Similar testing will be done for water used for livestock consumption. "When dairy and livestock producers are trying to diagnose performance problems with their animals, water is one nutrient that often is overlooked," says Virginia Ishler, nutrient-management specialist in dairy and animal science.

"It's not uncommon for aesthetic problems, such as odors and tastes, to cause water intake in cattle to drop, which in turn can reduce milk production," Ishler says. "Less frequently, bacterial contamination can adversely affect animal health. Offering this testing program will give us a chance to help producers diagnose and correct problems that might be limiting productivity and profitability."

Two testing programs for irrigation water -- for greenhouses/nurseries and for turf - will be offered. The greenhouse/nursery testing protocols will focus primarily on nutrient content, according to Rob Berghage, associate professor of horticulture.

"Water quality and fertility are critical to greenhouse and nursery operators," he says. "Managing nutrient content is especially important for growers using recirculating systems. Too much or too little nutrients can harm plant health."

Berghage explains that contamination issues also can be a concern, particularly in "beneficial re-use" systems where water is being recycled from sewage or industrial plants. In addition, he says, knowing what's in irrigation water can help growers manage nutrients and chemicals in run-off, minimizing their environmental impact and helping to enhance water quality in streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

To submit a water sample for testing, customers first must obtain a free water-test kit from Penn State's Ag Analytical Services Lab or from a participating county office of Penn State Cooperative Extension.

The kit includes shipping materials, instructions on how to take a sample and a submission form. Residents will choose from a range of testing options available for each water type (drinking, irrigation or livestock) and will send the kit, with the appropriate fee, to the lab. Test results and relevant fact sheets or recommendations typically will be returned in two to three weeks.

For more information, contact your county Penn State [Cooperative Extension office](#) or the [Ag Analytical Services Lab](#) at 814-863-0841 or send email to: aaaslab@psu.edu .

NewsClip: [Penn State Launches Water-Testing Program](#)

PECO Awards \$116,000 in 'Green Region' Grants to 17 Southeast Municipalities

PECO awarded grants to 17 municipalities with projects focusing on open space conservation and parks and recreational resources as part of the [PECO Green Region Program](#).

The projects identified are from across the Philadelphia region and will receive more than \$116,000 in Green Region grants this summer. Since the programs inception in 2005, PECO has provided more than \$340,000 for qualifying projects.

In partnership with the Natural Lands Trust, the region's largest land conservation program, PECO awarded grants to the following municipalities:

- Bucks County: Upper Makefield, \$10,000;
- Chester County: East Brandywine \$5,000; East Vincent, \$1,063; North Coventry, \$10,000; Schuylkill, \$5,000;
- Delaware County: City of Chester, \$10,000; Glenolden, \$5,000; Media, \$10,000; Tincum, \$5,000;



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- Montgomery County: \$5,000; Franconia, \$5,000, Limerick, \$7,500; Lower Pottsgrove, \$7,500; Lower Providence, \$7,500; Marlborough, \$7,500; Towamencin, \$7,500; and
- City of Philadelphia \$10,000.

Municipalities may apply for a Green Region grant of up to \$10,000 per project. A committee, which includes representatives from PECO, Exelon, county agencies and conservation organizations, reviews applications and issues the grants. The grant program is administered by Natural Lands Trust.

"PECO is proud to support programs that focus on bettering the environment," said Denis O'Brien, PECO president. "It is gratifying to know that the funds we are providing are going to projects that will not only help improve environmental conditions in the surrounding region, but in many cases will provide better access to recreation and environmental amenities."

For more information, visit the [PECO Green Region Program webpage](#).

U.S. House Passes Farm Bill That Improves Water Quality, Helps Family Farms

The 2007 Farm Bill passed by the House today will provide unprecedented conservation funding targeted to restoring healthy streams and clean water and help family farms, according to the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#) and the [Pennsylvania Farm Bureau](#).

"CBF applauds the leadership of Rep. Tim Holden and a bipartisan group of the region's congressmen and women who understand that thriving, well-managed farms are vital to the long-term health of our waterways," said CBF President William C. Baker. "The battle now moves to the Senate, where Senators Bob Casey and Arlen Specter hold key positions. With their leadership, we hope to see a Senate bill that is even stronger."

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau also praised the U.S. House of Representatives for passing a comprehensive 2007 Farm Bill that would benefit a wide variety of agriculture programs and provide a more equitable safety net for Pennsylvania farmers and praised the efforts of House Agriculture Committee Vice Chairman Tim Holden who the Farm Bureau said, "Helped defeat an amendment opposed by Farm Bureau that would have gutted the safety net for farmers in order to increase nutrition and conservation spending."

The House-passed bill includes \$212.5 million in conservation funding specifically dedicated to protecting Chesapeake Bay waterways over the next five years. The region's share of national conservation programs will also increase by an estimated \$290 million.

The increased commitment to helping clean up and restore the health of local rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay is long overdue. It is a huge step towards achieving the funding levels necessary to provide a healthy environment, and clean water today and for the generations to come.

The House passed bill also includes the continuation of the Milk Income Loss Contract Program, \$1.6 billion dollars of new funding for specialty crops (such as fruits and vegetables), and programs that bolster conservation, alternative energy and farmland preservation.

Now, it is the Senate's turn to increase federal funding levels for the Bay's rivers and streams when it takes up the legislation after its August recess.

For more information visit the Farm Bill webpages of the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#) and the [Pennsylvania Farm Bureau](#).

\$1 Million Invested to Preserve Montgomery County Farm

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week awarded a \$1 million grant to the [Natural Lands Trust](#) and [Whitemarsh Foundation](#) to help preserve nearly 100 acres of the Erdenheim Farm in Whitemarsh Township, Montgomery County.

The money will help Natural Lands Trust and the Whitemarsh Foundation pay for the acquisition of the 97-acre Angus Tract at the Erdenheim Farm in Whitemarsh Township, Montgomery County to protect it from development.

"The Erdenheim Farm is one of the few remaining, large, unfragmented, open space and agricultural landscapes in the heavily developed eastern portion part of Montgomery County," Gov. Rendell said. "We are making this investment because of its unusual importance as a scenic agricultural landmark and a symbol of our landscape heritage."

The [Community Conservation Partnerships Program](#) grants, administered through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, will be used to leverage local dollars to acquire the Angus Tract portion of the 450-acre farm, which contains long impressive views over gently rolling pastures and will provide for public trails that connect to nearby trail networks, including the Wissahickon Green Ribbon Trail.

Funding for the grant comes from the Keystone Fund, a DCNR fund account generated from a portion of the realty transfer tax.

"The Erdenheim Farm is an important part of a greenway that stretches from Fairmount Park in Philadelphia to Fort Washington State Park," DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis said during an event at the farm today. "We know that the natural, cultural and recreational attributes of a community contribute significantly to sustainability and residents' quality of life. This farm is an exceptional open space asset to the surrounding community and the region.

"There are many partners on this project, and we are happy to be able to help them meet the vision that they have for their community," Secretary DiBerardinis said.

"Erdenheim Farm is one of the region's signature landscapes," noted said Natural Lands Trust President Molly Morrison. "Today, DCNR brings us \$1 million closer to protecting a significant portion of the Farm and it joins a remarkable partnership of concerned organizations and public agencies that is committed to preserving this invaluable resource."

"The Whitemarsh Foundation would like to thank both the Natural Lands Trust and the state for playing such a critical role in helping us preserve the crown jewel of this area, Erdenheim Farm," said Whitemarsh Foundation Executive Director Kim Sheppard.

PA Land Trust Assn. Sponsors Conservation Easement Standards Course Sept. 6-7

The [PA Land Trust Association](#) is sponsoring a [Standards & Practice Course on Managing Conservations Easements in Perpetuity](#) in Valley Forge on September 6-7.

Have you ever had an easement violation - big or small? Have you ever received a request to amend an easement and weren't sure of the right course of action? Unsure about how to decline a request without alienating the landowner? Have you been confronted with a new landowner who is unaware of or reluctant to abide by the terms of the easement?

Participants in this workshop will learn how to:

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- manage change more effectively so your conservation easements will be here tomorrow;
- draft an enforcement policy to protect what you have worked so hard to protect;
- understand the range of options available to address enforcement and amendment options;
- understand the roles of board, staff, volunteers and legal counsel; and
- understand the costs of enforcement.

The course will be held at the National Christian Conference Center in Valley Forge.

For more information and to register, visit the [PLTA course webpage](#).

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Summit Set for September 12-13

[Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful](#) and its partners will hold its [2007 KPB Summit](#) on September 12-13 in Camp Hill, across the river from Harrisburg.

This year's Summit theme is "Cleanup and Pretty Up" and will feature workshops on community art and greening, tools and resources, the COALS Program, PA Roadside Aesthetics and much more.

To register or for more information, visit the [2007 KPB Summit webpage](#).

Clinton County CleanScapes Project Announces Another Summer Cleanup

The [Clinton County CleanScapes Project](#) has announced another Summer Cleanup/ PA Wilds Refuse Removal Beautification Event on August 18 on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River in Clinton County.

The starting location is the Whetham Cut just east of the PennDot Rest Stop, Rt. 120, Grugan Township, Clinton County. From the traffic light adjacent to Lock Haven University (Susquehanna Ave./Rt. 120 & W. Water St.) travel west on Rt. 120 for 14.7 miles and one-quarter mile before the PennDot Rest Stop, park on the large, open gravel pull-off (Whetham Cut). Roadway cleanup crew, launch site instructions, shuttling and parking will be discussed at this site.

Photographers are encouraged to volunteer! If the volunteer does not own a camera, volunteers will be provided film, a disk or disposable camera. The cost of film developing will be paid through CCC with the understanding that one copy of the photographs will become the property of CCC and will be used for educational purposes.

Refreshment Coordinators will deliver lunches and drinks to the cleanup site, bake, and/or set up the picnic style luncheon.

Rent a kayak (\$10.00) or bring a kayak/canoe to the 1st PennDot Rest Stop to Lazy Lane. Volunteers do not need expert kayaking experience, but they are required to know how to swim, wear appropriate foot gear, wear a pfd, and are willing to get wet!

Items to be removed from this scenic 3.5-mile section of undeveloped river include, but are not limited to, beverage containers, tires and miscellaneous flood related man-made debris. To rent a kayak w/PDF is \$10 per person and can be reserved by contacting Rock, River & Trail Outfitters at 570-748-1818 (limited supply-reserve early).

Pre-registration for the event is required by August 16. Gloves, bags and safety vests will be provided. Long pants, shirts and closed toed shoes are mandatory. Youth 17 and under must be accompanied by an adult.

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Project funded in part by: CCC Members, DCNR's Shikellamy State Park & Sprout State Forest, Williamsport-Lycoming Community Foundation, PA CleanWays, Clinton County Commissioners, Wayne Twp. Landfill, PENNDOT, Avery Dennison and Dominion.

Questions about driving directions and event registrations should be sent to CCC Project Director Elisabeth Lynch at 570-893-4123 or elynch@clintoncountypa.com.

For more information, visit the [Clinton County CleanScapes Project webpage](#).

Links: [Other Cleanscapes Cleanup Events](#)

Energy Fund Receives COSTAR Approval as LED Supplier, Installer, Financier

The [Sustainable Energy Fund](#) announced this week it has received approval from the Department of General Services for the state's COSTARS program as a qualified supplier.

COSTARS is the Commonwealth's cooperative purchasing program designed to assist local governments and other non-profit agencies to reduce their cost of doing business.

As a qualified vendor in the COSTARS program, The Sustainable Energy Fund's products and services are now available to a list of 4550 local public procurement units throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. COSTARS members can now do business with the Sustainable Energy Fund for LED lights (light emitting diodes), installation and financing easily (no independent bidding required), efficiently, and cost effectively.

Local Government units and eligible non-profits can order LED's through the COSTAR program on the [Sustainable Energy Fund's website](#).

COSTAR members include any political subdivision or authority; tax exempt, non-profit educational or public health institution or organization including non-profit fire, rescue or ambulance companies, as well as any other entity such as council of government or an area government that expends public funds for the procurement of supplies and services.

According to Jennifer Hopkins, SEF President, "There are plenty of opportunities for governmental entities to install LED's which save energy and taxpayers' money. COSTARS membership will facilitate awareness and make it easier for government to embark on energy savings projects."

The SEF went through a governmental approval process with the Pennsylvania Department of General Services prior to being accepted as a qualified vendor. As an approved supplier, COSTAR members can come directly to the SEF for LED installation and financing while still satisfying local procurement policies for each local government unit.

The SEF provides a valuable product to municipalities, beginning with an energy audit which quantifies the savings associated with retrofitting traffic signals to LED's, ordering product and managing the installation, to financing 100 percent of the cost associated with the installation. The SEF will provide the upfront capital required for the LED installation project through a loan, and the municipalities are able to repay the loan through the energy savings incurred associated with the switch to LED lenses.

Although terms are customized for each municipality, typically the municipality can repay the loan within five years, and maintain the energy savings throughout the remaining life of the equipment. Installation of LED's can provide up to a 90 percent

savings on lighting electricity bills, increase signal life up to 10 times over incandescent bulbs, and reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions.

Because LED modules have a guaranteed life expectancy of at least five years, and often last as long as ten years – they also eliminate the need for manpower and related costs for manually changing light bulbs. LED’s produce light using a semiconductor or “chip”, and can provide an average of 100,000 hours of illumination as compared to only 8,000 hours for an incandescent light bulb.

“Becoming a COSTARS supplier was the natural next step for the SEF in assisting local government in implementing energy savings projects,” said Hopkins. “Projects like these illustrate how municipalities throughout the Commonwealth can make a significant difference in reducing energy consumption and lower costs - one LED at a time. The SEF is delighted to contribute to the growth of these technologies through investment in innovation. Now, as a COSTARS vendor, LED installation projects will be smart and easy for local government units, while meeting governmental procurement policies.”

For more information about this and other programs, visit the [Sustainable Energy Fund’s website](#)

PUC Starts Rulemaking on Changes to Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Law

The Public Utility Commission this week began the rulemaking process to revise its net metering and interconnection regulations to reflect the requirements of Act 35 of 2007 -- [House Bill 1203](#) (Hornaman-D-Erie) -- which recently amended a number of provisions of the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act.

The PUC approved a motion of Commissioner Kim Pizzigrilli, which noted that the Commission previously promulgated final regulations related to net metering and interconnection standards.

“The statutory amendments necessitate changes to the Commission’s regulations,” said Commissioner Pizzigrilli in her motion. “The Commission will begin the process of promptly revising its net metering and interconnection regulations to reflect the requirements of Act 35. However, because the Act takes effect immediately, its provisions will be given immediate effect while the rules are being revised.

“Electric distribution companies will be required to amend and file revised net metering tariffs with the Commission. They should also begin to apply the new compensation standard beginning with the first full billing period after the effective date of Act 35.”

The purpose of the Commission’s action is to initiate the rulemaking process and to ensure that parties are informed of the statutory changes. The following briefly describes some of the changes to definitions and the frequency of compensation for customer-generators:

- Revises the definition of “customer-generator” to increase the capacity limit on non-residential systems from one to three megawatts generally, and from two to five megawatts for those systems that operate in parallel with the grid during emergencies or that maintain critical infrastructure;
- Revises the definition of “net metering” to include a restriction on virtual meter aggregation; and

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- Revises the frequency of when customer-generators are to be compensated for excess generation to an annual basis at the full retail rate, as opposed to the current monthly standard.

Electric distribution companies are directed to work with Commission staff to revise their currently effective net metering tariffs to reflect the requirements of Act 35.

For more information, visit the PUC's [Alternative Energy webpage](#).

Hawk Mountain Hosts International Raptor Meeting September 12-16

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary will host the [Raptor Research Foundation and Hawk Migration Association of North America Joint Meeting](#) on September 12-16 near Fogelsville, Berks County.

This first-ever joint conference of raptor biologists, conservationists and hawk-watchers will include a special symposium on the current status of North American raptors, a symposium on the conservation concerns regarding the American kestrel, and other scientific and general interest talks focused on raptors and raptor biology.

A listing of presentations and the schedule is available on the [conference webpage](#).

Special sections on hawk migration and identification also are being planned. Be sure to check the [conference webpage](#) as the conference approaches for additional updates on events such as the silent auction, a raptor art show and field trips.

The conference dates are timed to enjoy the peak migration of broad-winged hawks, osprey, and other raptors through eastern Pennsylvania with daily counts frequently over 1,000 birds possible at several nearby lookouts.

The conference will be held at the Fogelsville Holiday Inn Conference Center just off I-78. Discount rates on conference hotel rooms expire on August 20.

Conference sponsors include: Pennsylvania Game Commission, Woodstream, Inc., PPL, Kutztown Publishing, Lehigh Valley Audubon Society, North Star Science and Technology, Muhlenberg College and others.

For more information, visit the [conference webpage](#) or send email to: Laurie Goodrich, goodrich@hawkmtn.org.

DCNR Renames Valley Forge Forest District in Honor of William Penn

To eliminate public confusion over the name of one of its 20 state forest districts, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week announced it has rename the Valley Forge State Forest District in honor of William Penn, the founder of the state and an early conservationist.

Effective immediately, the district – which encompasses eight counties and a section of one other in the southeastern section of the state – has become the William Penn State Forest District.

“This forest district often has been confused with Valley Forge National Historical Park,” said Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. “The name change should help eliminate this confusion while honoring our state’s founding father and one of its first conservationists.”

The district included Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Lehigh, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties, as well a section of Northampton County. It is representative of the geographic areas influenced by William Penn. Its woodlands were

governed by Penn's 1681 edict to colonists that, "in clearing ground, care be taken to leave one acre of trees for every five acres cleared ..."

The state forest district had been formerly headquartered at what had been a state park at Valley Forge until 1976, when the facility became a federal park. William Penn State Forest district now is based at French Creek State Park, near Elversen, Chester County.

It contains five separate state forest tracts totaling 901 acres: Goat Hill Serpentine Barrens Public Wild Plant Sanctuary, 602 acres in the southwest corner of Chester County; Little Tinicum Island, about 200 acres, in the Delaware River estuary, Delaware County; the David R. Johnson Natural Area, about 56 acres, in Bucks County; the Ruth Zimmerman Natural Area, about 33 acres in Berks County and the Cornwall Tower site, 10 acres, in Lancaster County.

For more information, visit [DCNR's State Forest webpage](#).

Hunters Can Apply for Antlerless Deer Licenses Starting August 6

The Game Commission this week announced hunters can begin applying for regular antlerless deer licenses beginning August 6 (resident hunters) and August 20 (non-resident).

Hunters are provided with a regular antlerless deer license application when they purchase their general hunting license. Applications for unsold antlerless deer licenses can be found on pages 54 and 62 of the 2007-08 [Pennsylvania Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations](#), which is presented to each license buyer, along with harvest report cards, an antlerless deer license application and envelopes.

Antlerless deer licenses cost \$6 for residents and \$26 for nonresidents. Checks should be made payable to "County Treasurer," not the Game Commission. Also, applicants should not designate a specific county.

"Hunters should give serious thought to which WMU they will apply to during the regular antlerless deer license round, because some WMUs may run out of licenses earlier in the process than in previous years," said Game Commission Executive Director Carl G. Roe. "Hunters also may want to consider applying for [Deer Management Assistance Program \(DMAP\)](#) antlerless deer permits, which offer them additional opportunities to hunt on specific properties where landowners are trying to increase deer hunting pressure."

Roe also noted that hunters seeking to participate in the early archery antlerless deer seasons in WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D (Sept. 15-28) should write the words "Early Archery" in red ink above the white box in the lower left-hand corner of the front of the yellow envelope. The white box is where hunters are instructed to write in the number and letter of the WMU to which they are applying for an antlerless deer license.

"By writing these words on the front of the yellow envelopes, hunters will let county treasurers and their employees who issue the licenses know that these applications need to be expedited so hunters can receive their licenses prior to the start of the early antlerless deer archery seasons in WMU 2B, 5C and 5D," Roe said.

After August 6, the Game Commission will launch the "Doe License Update" page [on its website](#) to provide hunters with updates on the availability of antlerless deer licenses. Notices for WMUs that have sold out will be posted as soon as possible. Look in the "Quick Clicks" box in the upper right-hand corner of the agency's homepage and choose "Doe License Update." A link to the listing of participating DMAP public landowners will

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be posted in the "Quick Clicks" box, as well as those private landowners who asked to be included on the agency's website.

Roe emphasized that, as required by state law, county treasurers will continue to issue antlerless deer licenses. Except for "over-the-counter sales," county treasurers will receive a pre-determined number of applications from the Game Commission based on the county's geographic representation in the WMU.

The Game Commission will begin accepting resident and nonresident hunter applications through the mail for the first round of "unsold licenses" on August 27; the second round will be accepted through the mail beginning September 10.

Over-the-counter applications will not be accepted by county treasurers until November 5, except in Wildlife Management Units 2B, 5C and 5D, where county treasurers will begin accepting over-the-counter applications on September 17. There is no limit on the number of applications a hunter can submit during this period for WMUs 2B, 5C or 5D.

However, for all other WMUs, applying for and receiving more than one antlerless license at a time is against the law and, if convicted, violators could be sentenced to pay a fine.

While individuals are permitted to mail up to three antlerless deer license applications in one envelope, the applications must be for different individuals. Hunters may apply for only one license during the regular antlerless deer license round. During the first round of unsold licenses, hunters may apply for a second license. During the second round of unsold licenses, hunters may apply for a third license. The exception to this is when hunters are applying over the counter in WMUs 2B, 5C and 5D.

Applications that do not include return postage will be placed in a "dead letter" file maintained by the Game Commission's License Division in the Harrisburg headquarters. Applicants who believe that their antlerless license application may be in the dead letter file may contact the License Division at 717-787-2084 during business hours, 7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. This telephone service will be activated after Tuesday, September 4. An answering machine enables callers to leave messages so that Game Commission staff may return their calls.

County treasurers will mail regular and first round unsold antlerless licenses to successful applicants no later than Monday, September 17. County treasurers will mail second and subsequent rounds of unsold antlerless licenses to successful applicants no later than October 1.

Following is a listing of the antlerless deer license allocation by Wildlife Management Unit, with last year's allocation in parenthesis: WMU 1A, 42,000 (42,000); WMU 1B, 30,000 (30,000); WMU 2A, 60,000 (55,000); WMU 2B, 68,000 (68,000); WMU 2C, 49,000 (49,000); WMU 2D, 56,000 (56,000); WMU 2E, 21,000 (21,000); WMU 2F, 28,000 (28,000); WMU 2G, 26,000 (19,000); WMU 3A, 29,000 (29,000); WMU 3B, 43,000 (43,000); WMU 3C, 27,000 (27,000); WMU 3D, 38,000 (38,000); WMU 4A, 29,000 (29,000); WMU 4B, 23,000 (31,000); WMU 4C, 39,000 (39,000); WMU 4D, 40,000 (40,000); WMU 4E, 38,000 (38,000); WMU 5A, 22,000 (25,000); WMU 5B, 53,000 (53,000); WMU 5C, 84,000 (79,000); and WMU 5D, 20,000 (20,000).

For a description of each WMUs' boundaries, please refer to pages 42-45 of the 2007-08 Digest. For other deer-related information, refer to pages 50-59.

Visit the [Pennsylvania Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations webpage](#) for more details.

Game Commission Posts DMAP Information for Hunters

As hunters prepare for the upcoming antlerless deer license application period, those looking for new antlerless deer hunting opportunities are encouraged to review the list of [Deer Management Assistance Program \(DMAP\)](#) properties online.

"DMAP is a Game Commission program designed to help landowners manage deer numbers on their properties," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director. "Qualified landowners participating in DMAP receive a limited number of coupons - determined by acreage - that they will make available to hunters, who, in turn, may redeem them for a DMAP antlerless deer permit to hunt on the property for which they are issued. Hunters may use them during any established deer hunting season for 2007-08."

Roe noted that, because new properties continue to be entered into the DMAP database, the agency does not have final enrollment figures available at this time. The deadline for landowners to apply for DMAP was July 1.

Landowners are permitted to give up to two DMAP coupons per property to a licensed hunter, who then must use the coupon to apply for DMAP permits. This will enable hunters to possess up to two DMAP permits for a specific DMAP area. Landowners may not charge or accept any contribution from a hunter for a DMAP coupon.

Eligible landowners include those owning: public lands; private lands where no fee is charged for hunting; and hunting clubs established prior to January 1, 2000, that are owned in fee title and have provided a club charter and list of current members to the agency.

"Hunters may obtain up to two DMAP coupons per area, and DMAP permits do not impact a hunter's eligibility to apply for and receive antlerless deer licenses issued for Wildlife Management Units," Roe said. "DMAP permit allotments are not part of the annual general antlerless deer license allocations for WMUs."

Resident hunters must mail DMAP coupons in a regular envelope, along with a check for \$10 made payable to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, to the address listed on the coupon to receive their DMAP antlerless deer permit. Nonresidents must include a check for \$35 made payable to the Pennsylvania Game Commission. The permit can be used to harvest one antlerless deer on the specific DMAP area. Maps for the properties are to be provided to hunters by the landowners.

Hunters may not use DMAP permits to harvest an antlered deer.

All public landowners enrolled in DMAP will be posted on the website, as well as those private landowners who have requested to appear on the website. Those private landowners not appearing on the website generally have a limited number of coupons available and already have identified a sufficient number of hunters to receive their allotted coupons.

The website provides an alphabetical listing of DMAP properties for each county in which DMAP properties are located. Each listing will provide the following information: landowner type (either public or private); contact information, including name, address, telephone number and e-mail address (when available); DMAP property number; total number of acres for the property; total number of coupons issued for the property; and total number coupons that remain available for hunters.

Hunters without access to the Internet can send a stamped, self-addressed envelope, along with a letter indicating the county or counties of interest, to the appropriate Game Commission Region Office.

For more information, visit the [Deer Management Assistance Program \(DMAP\) webpage](#).

New Firewood Quarantine In Effect in PA Due to Emerald Ash Borer

To prevent the spread of exotic invasive pests like the Asian Longhorned Beetle, [Emerald Ash Borer](#), Sirex Wood Wasp and Bark Beetles, Pennsylvania has banned the importation of out-of-state firewood, the Department of Agriculture announced this week.

“Invasive pests can have a detrimental effect on Pennsylvania’s hardwoods and nursery industries,” said Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff. “Because one of the easiest ways for these pests to spread is by people unintentionally moving infested products, we have decided to reduce the opportunity for accidental spread by limiting the transfer of certain wood products.”

Exotic pests can be transported long distance via human activity, including the movement of infested firewood. To minimize the spread of the pests, the movement of all firewood types and species into Pennsylvania is prohibited. Firewood includes all wood processed or unprocessed, coniferous or hardwood, meant for use in a campfire or other outdoor or indoor fire.

Kiln-dried, packaged firewood clearly marked with the producer’s name and address and labeled as “kiln dried” and/or “USDA Certified” are exempt from the quarantine.

The new quarantine is in addition to the existing four-county quarantine in western Pennsylvania – Allegheny, Beaver, Butler and Lawrence counties – that was issued following the recent detection of Emerald Ash Borer. The Emerald Ash Borer 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, due to the difficulty in distinguishing between species of hardwood firewood, all hardwood wood chips and firewood.

Currently, there are no simple ways to get rid of the Emerald Ash Borer other than removing and destroying infested trees. There is no effective insecticidal spray program, preventative treatments or natural enemies to suppress populations of the insects.

For more information about the quarantine, call 717-772-5205 or visit the [Emerald Ash Borer webpage](#) or call 717-772-5229.

NewsClip: [To Battle Bug, Out-of-State Firewood Barred](#)

Invitation to List Your Business in Penn State’s PA Green Business Guide

The Penn State Center for Sustainability, partnering with the Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program is creating an online [Guide to "Green" Pennsylvania Businesses and Industries](#).

The Green Guide will help students and faculty, Penn State purchasing, and the general public identify and locate environmentally responsible products and services in Pennsylvania. "Greening" Your Home, Office, Business or Lifestyle will be easier with this convenient, searchable online database. Website visitors will be able to search by category, keyword, business name or zip code.

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This inclusive guide is meant to serve as an outreach educational resource for the public, as well as a tool to support the growth of sustainable technologies, products and services here in Pennsylvania.

[Register Your Green Pennsylvania Business](#) free of charge for a one-page on-line form for consideration.

The Guide will include business which have these green characteristics:

- Significantly reduce or eliminate fossil fuels and/or environmental toxins -Maximize the use of renewable resources;
- Make a significant contribution to the sustainable manufacturing, packaging, delivery and/or marketing of products;
- Have a high recycled, recyclable content -Are compostable and biodegradable and/or avoid "down-cycling," retaining a useful end-product (technical nutrient);
- Use or create renewable energy and conservation technologies, green-design building materials, design and/or construction services;
- Are highly energy-efficient;
- Contain Certified Organic, regionally grown and produced food or food products;
- Forest Stewardship Council Certified Products; or
- Promote or support green purchasing, sustainability education and/or training

For more information, visit the [Guide to "Green" Pennsylvania Businesses and Industries](#).

Help Wanted -- PA Resources Council, Western PA Audubon

The [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) is seeking a full/part-time Environmental Education Coordinator to lead PRC's team of environmental educators at its Newtown Square, Delaware County facility.

Responsibilities include development, marketing, scheduling and implementation of classroom and field trip programs, teacher training and community outreach.

Qualifications: B.S./B.A. in Education, Environmental Science, Ecology or related program required. Advanced degree or graduate course work in related programs preferred.

Competitive salary, according to experience; benefits package. Send resumes to PRC, 3606 Providence Road, Newtown Square, PA 19073 or vanclief@prc.org.

The [Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania](#) is seeking a seasonal environmental educator for its Camp Allegheny Program in Stoystown, Pa. [Click here to learn more](#).

Spotlight

How You Can Increase Your Watershed Group's Online Presence

One of the easiest ways to increase your organization's visibility is to do so online. Why? read on...

More than 90 percent of reporters are using the web to research their stories. The general public gets in its share of usage as well – 87 percent of teens are going online and

more than 147 million adults engage in online activities, according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project

To learn more, [read this special feature](#) of the PA Organization for Watersheds and River's *Watershed Weekly*. POWR gives you easy-to-follow tips that focus on building your online visibility and are from one of Green Media Toolshed's monthly skill-building training sessions.

Feature

Plants Matter – Consider the Water Willow

By Patrick McShea

Carnegie Museum of Natural History

Plants matter. In addition to their life sustaining roles in supplying us with oxygen, food, fiber, and wood, plant variety and abundance also provide the structure, color, texture, and, during some seasons, even the scent for many landscapes.

Consider, as specific local examples of pleasant plant-tailored environments, the scent of backyard lilacs on a damp May evening, the deep shade beneath a mature elm on an August afternoon, or the crimson and gold spectacle of a hillside of oaks and tulip poplars on a clear October morning.

The ability of plants to shape environments is not restricted to land. Along Pittsburgh's rivers a low sprawling sandbar shrub commonly referred to as "Water Willow" can be described without exaggeration as botanical force in the ongoing reclamation of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio.

In recent years this species, which is known to the scientific world as *Justicia americana*, has made unacknowledged appearances in some of the artfully composed photographs that serve to notify the world of Pittsburgh's changing riverscapes. Whenever the subject for one of these visual documents is an angler casting from a bass boat toward a luxuriant shoreline weed bed, you can assume the plant that is both sheltering any potential finned quarry and helping to frame the shot is water willow.

Lavender and white blossoms that resemble miniature orchids crown the tops of the shrub for a few days each summer. Although these blooms attract a myriad of butterflies and bees, the plant's extensive root system makes a more critical year-round contribution to sustaining the biodiversity of our river system. Web-like networks of water willow roots collect and bind channel edge sediments, creating a stable substrate of sand and gravel that supports freshwater mussels, the larval stages of mayflies and other aquatic insects, and indirectly, a long list of creatures that feed upon them.

Immersion in the intricacies of river food chains is not a requirement for appreciating water willow, however, because at this time of the year the unheralded plant makes a small aesthetic contribution that can be admired from afar. Find a vantage point along a bike trail or bridge sidewalk where one of our rivers' flanking slopes appears to be



cloaked by leafy vegetation without interruption from water to hilltop. Here *Justicia americana* forms the damp hem of the living green garment.

Patrick McShea works for the Division of Education at Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Send email to: mcsheap@carnegiemn.org

Other Stories by Patrick McShea—

[The Spotted Sandpiper](#)

[Wood Ducks Spring Spectacle Almost Passes Unnoticed](#)

[Ospreys Call Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Home](#)

Quick Clips

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

[Quecreek Rescue Anniversary: It Was Five Long Days](#)

[Remembering the Quecreek Mine Rescue Five Years Later](#)

[Anniversary of Quecreek Mine Rescue Celebrated](#)

[Fifth Anniversary of Quecreek Mine Rescue Marked](#)

[Celebration to Mark Mine Rescue Anniversary](#)

[Quecreek Rescue Still Inspires Wonder](#)

[Editorial: Mine Safety Effort Began After Quecreek in 2002](#)

[Editorial: Quecreek Mine Rescue Still a Miracle](#)

- [To Eliminate Mosquitoes, Dump It, Drain It, Treat It](#)

[Farm Bureau to Bring Mobile Agricultural Science Lab to Armstrong Festival](#)

[Environmental Center Helps School Nurture Love of Nature](#)

[Students Learn About Environmental Protection During Summer Camp](#)

[Teens Want Norco to Keep It Clean](#)

[States Should Take the Lead on Climate Change](#)

[Local Initiatives Can Lower Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#)

[Global Warming is Hot-Button Topic Among PA Sportsmen](#)

[Our Fastest Growing Towns](#)

[A Victory for Green in Montco on Open Space Preservation](#)

[Chester County Awards \\$290,000 Open Space Grant](#)

[More Than 97,000 Houses Nationwide Were Built Green](#)

[Lehigh Country Club Gets Audubon Certification](#)

[Dentist Saves Money From Pollution Prevention Efforts](#)

[PPL Residential Electric Rates to Jump 29%](#)

[PPL Awards Contracts for One-Sixth of Electricity Purchases](#)

[Auction Pushes Up 2010 PPL Electric Rates](#)

[Enabling Utilities to Favor Conserving](#)

[Seminar to Focus on Rising Electric Rates](#)

[Indiana Commissioners Reduce Energy Use](#)

[Editorial: It Makes No Economic Sense to Resist Use of Conservation](#)

[Editorial: A Better Energy Plan](#)

[Sojourn on the Susquehanna](#)

[Harnessing Wind Power is Not a Breeze](#)

[Man Says Personal Windmill Saves Energy](#)

[Winds of Change: Project Promotes Community Power Generation](#)

[Contest Drives People to Ride-Share](#)

[8.4 Tons of Household Hazardous Waste Collected in York County](#)

[Many Tapped Oil and Gas Sites in Allegheny National Forest](#)

[States Seek to Curb Deer-Related Crashes](#)

[Lycoming Audubon Chapter Striving to Retore Purple Martin Population](#)

[Allegheny National Forest Faces Problems With Non-Native Plants](#)

[Geologists Might Help Oversee Regional Development](#)

[Editorial: Don't Abandon Toxic Cleanups](#)

[Editorial: Increase Tipping Fees](#)

[Editorial: Reconsider Fee for Sites Cleanup](#)

[Work on Contaminated Site Slows Over Money](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

- [How to Increase Your Watershed Group's Online Presence](#)

[Ethanol's Threat to Chesapeake Bay](#)

[Editorial: Here's How to Help Farmers, the Environment – Farm Bill](#)

[U.S. House Begins Debating Farm Bill Amendment](#)

[Two Earth-Friendly Parking Lots Ready to Open](#)

[Op-Ed: In Spring Creek Canyon, Penn State Ignores Its Obligation](#)

[Dedicated Funding Sought to Fight Floods, Pennypack Watershed](#)

[Youth Aid in Flood Cleanup](#)

[Students Use Technology to Determine Stream Quality](#)

[Grant to Help Clean Antrim Waterways](#)

[Area Creek Made Deeper to Improve Fish Habitat](#)

[Branch Creek Gets an "A"](#)

[Bradford County Opening Purse for More Stream Stabilization Money](#)

[Jefferson Countywide Watershed Plan Eyed](#)

[Western PA Conservancy Completes Natural Heritage Review in Mifflin](#)

[Op-Ed: Roadside Springs – Threat or Menace?](#)

[Johnstown Residents Commemorate Events of 1977 Flood](#)

[Editorial: Report on Delaware Flooding Is Guide to Prevention, Preparedness](#)

[Warriors Path Boasts Wilds, Wetland, River](#)

[PA Environmental Council Will Receive Water Source Grant](#)

[Delaware Canal – Rising from the Flood](#)

[Marietta River Trail Designated a Natural Area](#)

[Carnivorous Plants Can Be Found in Wetlands](#)

[More Charges Filed in McKean County Fish Kill](#)

[Fish & Boat Commission Reorganizes Staff](#)

Regulations

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [approved the upgrade](#) in air quality status for Cumberland, Perry and other counties.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – July 28, 2007](#)

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

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

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection [published notice of](#) a proposed 2008 Environmental Education Grants Manual and a procedure for evaluating wastewater discharges to intermittent streams for comment.

DEP ID: 012-5500-001. 2008 Environmental Education Grants Program Manual and Forms. The 2008 Environmental Education Grants Program Manual and Forms is a guide for organizations interested in applying for the Department's Environmental Education (EE) Grants Program. Comments due: August 27.

DEP ID: 391-2000-014. Policy and Procedure for Evaluating Wastewater Discharges to Intermittent and Ephemeral Streams, Drainage Channels and Swales and Storm Sewers. This document provides guidance on the Department's process for evaluating and permitting wastewater discharges to intermittent and ephemeral streams, drainage channels and swales and storm sewers. Comments due: August 27.

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

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

Calendar of Upcoming Events

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

- [Air & Waste Management Assn. Workshop on New Source Review Compliance](#)
- **August 1** – House Local Government Committee hearing on [House Bill 904](#) (Freeman-D-Northampton) providing for a temporary moratorium on development. Lafayette College, Oechsle Hall Auditorium, High Street, Easton. 1:00.

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- **August 2** – House Local Government Committee public hearing on educational impacts fees – [House Bill 72](#) (Grucela-D-Northampton). Township Municipal Building, Mt. Bethel. 10:00.
- **August 2** – **RESCHEDULED**. August 2 DEP Delaware Regional Water Resources Committee has been rescheduled for August 29.
- **August 14** - The Delaware River Basin Commission will [hold a public hearing](#) on the proposed Flexible Flow Management Program for New York City Reservoirs. Trenton, NJ.
- **August 29** – House Intergovernmental Affairs Committee hearing on [House Bill 1304](#) (Fairchild-R-Union) establishing a PA Geospatial Coordinating Council. Room 140. 12:00.
- **August 29** – DEP [Delaware Regional Water Resources Committee](#) meeting. Lake Wallenpaupack Environmental Learning Center, Route 6. (*Notice*)
- **September 5** – **NEW**. DEP [Chesapeake Bay Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **September 6** – **RESCHEDULED**. Chesapeake Bay Advisory Committee meeting rescheduled to September 5.
- **September 27** – **RESCHEDULED**. DEP [Low-Level Waste Advisory Committee](#) meeting has been rescheduled to November 1, Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **October 13** – Schuylkill River Festival. Pottstown. Contact: Carolyn Brunschwyler, Montgomery County Community College, 610-718-1847, or send email to: cbrunsch@mc3.edu
- **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 .
- **October 27** – [Global Warming: Rising to the Challenge by Acting Locally](#). Gwynedd Mercy College, Gwynedd Valley, Montgomery County. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **February 22-23** – 2008 [Keystone Coldwater Conference](#). State College.

[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

[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

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

PA Environment Digest is edited by David E. Hess, former Secretary Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and is published as a service to the clients of Crisci Associates and the public. Crisci Associates is a Harrisburg-based government and public affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Crisci Associates call 717-234-1716.

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