

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

August 6 & 13, 2007

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

***** Next PA Environment Digest Will Be Published August 20 *****

Chesapeake Bay Foundation to Feature New REAP Tax Credit at Ag Progress Days

[Penn State's Ag Progress Days](#) on August 14-16 will showcase programs related to crops, soils and natural resources and a special presentation on the newly enacted REAP Tax Credit Program that provides farmers with incentives to install farm conservation practices.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation will highlight a number of important conservation opportunities at their display area in the Conservation Tent.

The [Resource Enhancement and Protection Program \(REAP\)](#) was recently signed into law. This program will provide \$10 Million this year for agricultural BMPs in the form of transferable or sponsored tax credits. CBF will be providing information on the program and collecting names of interested parties for additional information when the program is available in mid-October.

The Federal Government is currently crafting the new Federal Farm Bill which will take effect this fall. CBF's booth will have information on the issues and how to contact your federal officials to weigh in on this critical issue.

CBF will also have information on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and Precision Dairy Feeding at our display. CREP offers landowners the opportunity to establish forest buffers along their streams, covering installation costs and providing an annual rental payment. Precision Dairy Feeding provides dairy producers with opportunities to improve the cost effectiveness of their feeding program, improve the nutritional health of the herd, and reduce their manure management costs.

Stop by the CBF display to learn more, get out of the hot sun and have some ice cold water!

For the second year, Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences will collaborate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service on a comprehensive area that includes multiple tents, displays and research plots.

The area will house exhibits and specialists from Penn State's Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, the NRCS, the USDA's Pasture Systems and Watershed Management



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Research Unit, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Game Commission and other agencies.

The key to the successful partnership, according to Douglas Beegle, professor of agronomy, is that everything is about Pennsylvania soils and crops.

"It is an outstanding showcase of the work of our crops and soils programs," Beegle says. "We will again have many of the features from last year: the corn maze, special plant and equipment exhibits, commodity groups and related associations in the tent, along with 'Ask the Specialists' and the hay competition."

Combining the conservation-related exhibits with the Crops and Soils Tent will highlight the interaction and scientific exchange between Penn State faculty and state experts in the same fields, says Beegle.

Among the special exhibits is a plot of Pennsylvania wildflowers, demonstrating ways that the flowers can be useful in conservation planning. A separate wildlife-food plot will address the growing demand for information on establishing and maintaining undeveloped tracts that can provide food and shelter for wildlife.

No-till equipment also will be on display in partnership with the Pennsylvania No-Till Alliance, whose members will be available to answer questions about no-till crop production techniques. The Pennsylvania Corn Growers Association, the Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council and the Pennsylvania Crop Management Association will also offer separate displays.

Beegle explains that Penn State Cooperative Extension specialists will be on hand to talk to agricultural producers about possible responses to a year of special problems, including drought conditions in areas of the state.

The common weeds exhibit and weed-identification display will offer fact sheets and examples of common weeds from around the state, with specialists on hand to help visitors formulate weed-management strategies. Teens can also get information on Penn State's academic degree opportunities in crop and soil sciences.

The ever-popular "A-Maze-N Corn" corn maze returns, as participants solve the two-acre puzzle by answering general questions about Pennsylvania agriculture. The region's finest hay also will be selected at the annual Ag Progress Days hay show. Visitors can submit entries to compete for prizes in 25 classes, with winning entries going to the Pennsylvania Farm Show in January.

Penn State's Ag Progress Days is held at the Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center at Rock Springs, nine miles southwest of State College on Route 45. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on August 14; 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on August 15; and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on August 16. Admission and parking are free.

For more information, visit the [Penn State's Ag Progress Days webpage](#).

Link: [Gov. Rendell Signs \\$10 Million REAP Conservation Tax Credit Into Law](#)

Video Blog Feature

Quecreek Mine Rescue Anniversary Renews Call for Mine Safety Legislation

[Gov. Mark Schweiker](#) called on the General Assembly to adopt legislation to update Pennsylvania's over 45-year old mine safety law as part of the 5th anniversary celebration of the Quecreek Mine Rescue in Somerset on July 28.

Gov. Schweiker lead state and federal rescue efforts for 77 hours, from July 24-28 in 2002, as the world's attention and prayers were with the nine miners trapped in the flooded Quecreek Mine.

The final report of the [Governor's Commission](#) investigating the Quecreek Mine Accident made a series of recommendations on changing administrative procedures, regulations and the deep mine safety law itself to help prevent mine accidents in the future.

Most of the administrative and regulatory changes have been made by the Department of Environmental Protection, but changes to the 1961 deep mine safety law have been stalled.

Sen. Kasunic (D-Somerset) introduced [Senate Bill 949](#) and Rep. Bastian introduced the companion bill-- [House Bill 2619](#)-- in 2005 to update the law. The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee [held two days of hearings](#) on the Senate Bill in January 2006.

No action has been taken on either bill and neither bill has been reintroduced yet this year because of continuing disagreements between DEP, the coal industry and mine workers.

The House this year did pass [House Bill 483](#) (Bastian) that would create the Mine Families First Program to ensure that families who have loved ones involved in a mine accident receive information first about rescue efforts before the media.

To watch the remarks of speakers at the anniversary, visit the **Video Blog**:

- [Gov. Mark Schweiker](#) urges passage of deep mine safety legislation;
- [Joe Scaffoni](#), DEP's Director of Deep Mine Safety;
- [Bill Arnold](#), President, [Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation](#);
- [Kevin Stricklin](#), U.S. Mine Safety & Health Administration;
- [Larry Neff](#), Pristine Resources-Beth Energy Drilling Services; and
- [Overview of the anniversary celebration](#) and the mine rescue site.

For more information, visit DEP's [Quecreek Mine Accident webpage](#).

NewsClips: [Quecreek Rescue Taught Some Valuable Lessons](#)
[Miners, Officials Visit Quecreek on 5th Anniversary](#)
[Quecreek Rescuers Reflect on Miracle](#)
[Quecreek Celebrates 9 for 9 Anniversary](#)
[5-Year Anniversary Marked for Quecreek Miners](#)
[Miners, Officials Visit Quecreek on 5 Anniversary of Rescue](#)
[Here All Lived: A Mine Miracle, Five Years Later](#)
[Quecreek: As It Happened](#)



Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to voting session September 17.

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- Green Building Alliance Offer Grants for Innovative Product Development
- Pittsburgh Green Building Alliance Sponsors Early Fall Educational Events
- Save the Date: PA Green Growth Forum-Green Building Products September 27-28
- Auditor General Wagner Calls on DCED to Improve Weatherization Assistance
- EPA Releases the Draft Report on the Environment: Highlights of National Trends

Spotlight

- Watershed Program Wins Governor's Environmental Excellence Award, Apply Now

Opinion

- Pennsylvania Has the Opportunity to be a Leader on Climate, *By Brian J. Hill, President & CEO, Pennsylvania Environmental Council*
- Invasive Pests Attack Species and Economy, *By Bill Kunze, Pennsylvania State Director The Nature Conservancy*

Feature

- Eagle Recovery Continues In Berks Thanks to Game Commission Employees
- Game Commission Elk Survival Study Begins Wrap-up Year

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

On the Hill

On the Senate/House Agenda

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

Local Government Committee holds a 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.

Governor Outlines Topics for Special Energy Session Starting September 17

Gov. Rendell this week formally notified Leadership in the Senate and House of the special energy session agreed to as part of the budget settlement and outlined what legislative topics will be the focus of the session.

Gov. Rendell said the session will consider “any and all legislation regarding funding for and the making of investments in clean and renewable energy, energy conservation, and economic development efforts relating thereto, and the establishment of requirements regarding the renewable energy content of liquid fuels.”

The Governor will start the session with an address to a joint session of the Senate and House at 11:00 a.m. on September 17.

Senate Hearings Set on Proposed Alternative Fuel Mandate in September

The Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee has scheduled two public hearings to discuss a proposed alternative fuel mandate for gasoline and diesel fuel sales within the Commonwealth. The hearings are scheduled for:

- September 19, at 9 a.m. in Hearing Room 1, Capitol North Office Building; and
- September 25, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 8 E-B, Capitol East Wing.

The alternative fuels mandate proposed by Gov. Rendell are included in [House Bill 1202](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) which passed the House 138-60, and in [Senate Bill 789](#) (Dinniman-D-Chester), both of which are now in the Senate Committee for consideration.

Agendas for the hearings, as well as witness testimony and hearing transcripts, will be available on the [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee's website](#).

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

House Environmental Committee Sets Hearing on Drilling for Coal Bed Methane

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee has scheduled a public hearing on [House Bill 1735](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) related to the rights of surface property owners related to drilling for coal bed methane.

The hearing will be held at the Living-Learning Center at the University of Pittsburgh in Johnstown.

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

NewsClips: [Court Says Gas Wells Regulated by State](#)
[PA Landowners Come Up Short as Companies Tap Gas in Coal Beds](#)

Other News

EPA Recognizes Erie's Edward Kissell for Environmental Volunteerism

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen L. Johnson presented Erie resident Edward Kissell with the President's Volunteer Service Award this week for his outstanding work to improve public health and create a healthier environment.

Kissell received the award for dedicating himself to several environmental efforts including improving the water quality of Lake Erie and Presque Isle Bay, preserving native fish species and encouraging environmental education.

"Today we recognize Edward Kissell for answering President Bush's call to serve a cause greater than himself," said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. "Dedicated volunteers like Mr. Kissell inspire others to join in delivering America a brighter, healthier future."

One of Kissell's more unique accomplishments involved starting up a program at the Erie County Library where people can check out a fishing rod and tackle just like a book. He serves as president of the environmental group [Save Our Native Species \(SONS\)](#), and is an advocate and public watchdog for free public access to the entire Pennsylvania shore of Lake Erie.

He also initiated an effort to place 100 fish habitat structures in Presque Isle Bay and partnered with the Fish and Boat Commission to sponsor the Fish for Free Days where children and adults are taught how to fish. Currently chairman of the Erie County Coastal Zone Management Steering Committee, Kissell is also a member of the Erie County Environmental Coalition, and serves on various Erie County watershed committees.

More information, visit the [President's Volunteer Service Award webpage](#).

Links: [Video Blog: A Visit to the Tom Ridge Environmental Center](#)

EPA Lauds Infrastructure Success at Erie Drinking Water Facility

U.S. Environmental Protection Administrator Administrator Stephen L. Johnson joined federal, state and local officials this week to mark the completion of major improvements to the Sigsbee Pump Station – a key facility supplying drinking water to the city of Erie and surrounding communities.

The administrator's visit is one of the first stops on a national tour to highlight the importance of water infrastructure.

"Our nation's aging water infrastructure cannot remain, 'Out of sight, out of mind,'" said Johnson. "Thanks to the efforts of partners like Erie Water Works, EPA continues to provide Americans with clean, safe drinking water."

The Erie Water Works has spent more than \$1.6 million to upgrade the pump station that was originally built in 1927. It was financed with a \$1.6 million low-interest loan issued by Pennsylvania through grant funds provided by EPA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program.

The loan program is managed by the [Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority](#) in conjunction with the Department of Environmental Protection.

The existing pumps at the Sigsbee pump station were last upgraded in the 1950's and were inadequate to serve the current and future needs of an expanding service area. The facility supplies most of the finished water to reservoirs and tanks which serve the City of Erie and outlying communities.

Improvements included installing a new pump and upgrading two other pumps and their associated piping, valves and other equipment.

Renovations were also made to the electrical, ventilation and mechanical systems. The authority also installed a backup power supply and an improved security system. The project benefits include improved reliability, enhanced security and energy savings.

First PA Private Water Well Symposium Set for October 2

The [Penn State Master Well Owner Network](#) is hosting the first [Pennsylvania Private Water Well Symposium](#) at the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel in State College, Pa on October 2.

The Pennsylvania Private Water Well Symposium will present the latest research findings related to private water systems, facilitate networking among professionals in the field, and integrate research and educational efforts to promote better management of private water systems throughout Pennsylvania.

A special session will focus on new information pertaining to the Master Well Owner Network.

Conference topics include: ground water quality related to private wells, ground water supply, ground water protection and regulatory issues related to private water wells.

Who should attend? University researchers and educators, extension professionals, Master Well Owner volunteers, and persons involved in ground-water development, management, and regulation in Pennsylvania.

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

Local Source Water Protection To Get Boost From New Program

The Department of Environmental Protection, in cooperation with Spotts, Stevens and McCoy Inc., has established the [Source Water Protection](#) Technical Assistance Program to enhance development of voluntary local source water protection programs.

The program was developed to more efficiently provide technical assistance and accelerate adoption of local voluntary source water protection programs throughout the commonwealth. Source water protection programs support sustainable infrastructure,

reduce or maintain operation and maintenance costs, improve public health protection through improved raw water quality and reduced risks at the source.

The intention of the Source Water Protection Technical Assistance Program is to provide a contractor to assist community water systems interested in developing local source water protection programs. The assistance provided will address all minimum elements of a source water protection program such as, education, delineation, contingency planning, protection of new source sites, and source water area management including ordinance development.

Spotts, Stevens and McCoy Inc. will begin assisting community water systems in developing source water protection programs immediately. The Source Water Protection Technical Assistance Program replaces the previous Source Water Protection Grant Program.

For more information as it becomes available, visit the [DEP Source Water Protection webpage](#).

Conservation Districts/State Conservation Commission Conference “Electric”

The county conservation district community and its partners met in Scranton from July 15-18 for the 60th annual [Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc.](#) / State Conservation Commission Conference under the theme of “Conservation is Electric.”

At the PACD annual meeting several policy positions were adopted including:

- PACD supporting the inclusion of “Environmental Education” in state and federal legislative acts;
- PACD supporting an amendment to [Senate Bill 1020](#) to include the practice of engineering in the scope of activities performed by conservation districts;
- PACD supporting legislation to institute a flood control revolving loan program; and
- PACD pursuing a surcharge on all bought and sold fertilizer in PA to supplement conservation district operations that should be an addition to current state and county funding levels for conservation district activities.

PACD delegates also elected new officers including President Larry Kehl (Berks), 1st Vice President Dr. Irvil Kear (Schuylkill), 2nd Vice-President Mary Ann Warren (Susquehanna), Secretary Andrew Gilchrist (Montgomery), and Treasurer Patricia Powley (Dauphin).

A number of educational opportunities were presented during the convention including an opening session where Bradford County Conservation District Manager Mike Lovegreen and Roger Spotts, Environmental Education Coordinator at Monroe County Conservation District presented “Promoting District Programs.”

The session promoted total community integration, and making community participation in district activities a priority. Additional educational opportunities included sessions and tours on topics such as acid mine drainage, renewable energy, and farm bill proposals.

Larry Kehl, President of PACD stated, “It is a real honor to be elected as President of PACD. Conservation districts are an integral part of most communities whether they are located in rural, suburban, or urban communities. I hope to continue promoting the great work accomplished by districts across the Commonwealth.”

Susan Marquart, Executive Director stated, “Our convention gave participants the opportunity to further education themselves on conservation issues, share ideas and solutions, and create sound conservation policies.”

Brenda Shambaugh, Government Relations/Policy specialist concluded, “The policy items our delegates passed will be forwarded to our elected leaders in Harrisburg and Washington, D.C. so they understand the thoughts and concerns of conservation districts in Pennsylvania and the entire northeast.”

For more information on conservation districts, visit the [Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc.](#) and [State Conservation Commission](#) websites.

Small Business Centers Launch New PA Manure Trader Website

What can you do with 4.4 million tons of manure? Plenty, according to the Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers who created the [Pennsylvania Manure Trader](#) website.

Responding to recent concerns prompted by new regulations for manure, the State Conservation Commission tapped the SBDC for a solution to repurpose the tons of animal waste produced annually.

Pennsylvania Act 38 and resulting regulations dictate that excess manure can no longer be used where it is produced, creating a serious problem affecting many of the 55,000 farms in Pennsylvania, according to the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission.

With only 24 percent of the state's eligible cropland currently utilized for manure application, the commission needed to facilitate distribution of manure to the remaining available cropland and to find alternative uses for the additional tons of manure produced annually.

A committee tasked with furthering these alternatives discovered a model solution in the SBDC's [Pennsylvania Material Trader](#), a website promoting the exchange of waste materials.

The Commission worked with the Pennsylvania SBDC, partnering with its Environmental Management Assistance Program, to replicate the functionality of the Material Trader site.

The result: [Pennsylvania Manure Trader](#).

Like the Material Trader website, Manure Trader is designed to turn one individual's trash into another's treasure. Despite its classification as "waste," manure actually has a number of uses.

Manure Trader creates opportunities for traditional farmer-to-farmer exchanges for crop fertilization as well as opportunities to encourage innovative manure uses as varied as soil reclamation, algae production, and even building materials. Manure listings may also serve to further alternative energy research: manure-to-ethanol, anaerobic digestion, and co-firing are a few of the processes currently being considered.

Visitors to the site can browse available and wanted listings or log in to create a confidential listing. Manure Trader allows users to sort listings by type, price, quantity, and date listed. Registered users can sign up to be alerted when new listings in a desired category are posted. The site also includes broker and hauler directories.

"The Commission is devoted to assisting the Pennsylvania agricultural community in finding alternatives to on-site land application of manure," said Karl Brown, Executive

Secretary of the State Conservation Commission. "The Manure Trader website will give our farmers quick access to needed manure and will help facilitate the movement of manure throughout the state."

Pennsylvania SBDC State Director Gregory L. Higgins, Jr. Higgins praised the collaborative effort with the Commission saying, "This is another example of the SBDCs reaching out to the small business community to provide the help and services they need to maintain their successful businesses. We are pleased to be able to assist Pennsylvania's farmers and believe that Manure Trader will provide new opportunities, particularly through the expanding alternative energy market, that will ultimately help farmers be protective of the environment while turning their waste manure into a potential revenue stream."

The Pennsylvania Manure Trader is a free service designed to help farmers comply with manure disposal regulations and assist others in exploring manure's many uses.

For more information, visit the [Pennsylvania Manure Trader](#).

Hard Work, Local Involvement Improves Vintondale Flood Protection

After what was deemed an exceptional turnaround, the South Branch Blacklick Creek Flood Protection Project in Vintondale, Cambria County, now boasts the highest rating in the federal levee rating system after a joint inspection by the state Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"Borough officials and the local community recognize the importance of ensuring their levee is appropriately operated and maintained," Deputy Secretary for Water Management Cathy Curran Myers said. "Their efforts will go a long way in reducing risk and increasing public safety for the residents of Vintondale."

Since 2003, the project had been rated as unacceptable due to overgrown vegetation, improper maintenance and a leakage path that resulted after a sewer main was installed through the levee. Because of these deficiencies, the Vintondale project was highlighted on the U.S. Army Corps' February list of unacceptably maintained levees.

In May 2006, DEP met with borough officials and emphasized the need to address these concerns and work to remove vegetation soon began.

In November 2006, DEP directed the local sewer authority to correct the encroachment through the levee. The gravel backfill was removed and replaced with impermeable fill to eliminate the potential flow path through the levee and reestablish its integrity.

On June 12, DEP and the Army Corps conducted a joint inspection of the Vintondale flood protection project. Inspectors viewed the work of the Borough of Vintondale staff, volunteers and work release prisoners to cut and remove vegetation along the levee and overhaul the sluice and flap gates, which allow the levee to shut properly during a high water event.

With the vegetation under control, the sluice and flap gates maintained and the levee encroachment corrected, the engineering corps and state now deem the project acceptable. With the acceptable rating, the project is once again eligible for federal and state flood assistance programs.

For more information, visit DEP's [Flood Protection webpage](#).

Gov. Rendell Announces PA Wilds Conference for September 13-14



To increase public knowledge of the 12-county region and highlight current progress and future plans, Gov. Rendell this week announced a [Pennsylvania Wilds Conference](#) will be held September 13-14 in Williamsport.

“Our efforts to bring more people to the [Pennsylvania Wilds](#) so they can enjoy great outdoor experiences are really paying

off, with increased hotel occupancy in the region; the start up of new businesses; and the revitalization of communities,” Gov. Rendell said. “This conference is the first large-scale gathering of elected officials, planners, downtown managers, business owners, recreation providers and conservation organizations in the 12-county region to celebrate successes and look to the future of the initiative.

“We want continue to explore how to make the Pennsylvania Wilds a top destination; take advantage of the effort as an economic development tool; and remain sensitive to protecting the region’s rich and diverse natural assets,” the Governor added.

The Pennsylvania Wilds Conference, which will be held at the historic Genetti Hotel in Williamsport, will use presentations, discussions and panels to showcase the successes of the initiative to date; educate partners and stakeholders about available tools, resources, and best practices; and foster a heightened regional identity and vision.

General sessions will be offered over the two days, as well as three specific tracks: Recreation and Stewardship, Community Planning and Rural Issues, and Business and Economic Development.

Nationally recognized speakers, Ed McMahon of the Urban Land Institute and Ted Eubanks of Fermata, Inc., will provide powerful insight and thoughtful discussion concerning the 12-county region.

In addition, leaders from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Department of Community and Economic Development will offer expertise relating to recreation, natural resources protection, planning, business development, technical assistance, and tourism. DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis and DCED Secretary Dennis Yablonsky are scheduled speakers.

The Pennsylvania Wilds initiative is a program designed to encourage the growth of tourism and related businesses in northcentral Pennsylvania. Its goal is to enhance the visitor experiences in this region, while protecting and conserving the land’s treasured natural resources.

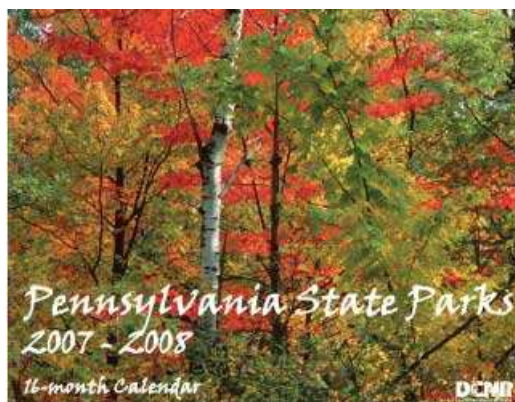
The Pennsylvania Wilds covers Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Lycoming, McKean, Potter, Tioga and Warren counties. It includes 29 state parks and 1.5 million acres of state forest and game lands, the Allegheny National Forest, Pine Creek Gorge, the largest elk herd in the northeast United States and the darkest nighttime skies at Cherry Springs State Park.

The conference, which costs \$75 to attend, is being coordinated by the [Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society](#). For more information, contact PRPS at 814-234-4272 or visit the [Pennsylvania Wilds Conference webpage](#).

**NewsClip: [Wind Farms Outlawed From the PA Wilds, DCNR](#)
The Beauty of Pennsylvania's State Parks Captured in New Calendar**

Beautiful photography of Pennsylvania's State Parks is featured [in a new calendar](#) being offered for sale by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

"The calendar serves as a daily reminder of the striking natural beauty found within our state park system," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "It also provides the added value of tips and facts that make it easy for people to get outside to discover what the state parks have to offer.



"When someone buys a calendar, they'll have the added value of supporting our state park system," Secretary DiBerardinis added.

The full 16-month calendar, beginning with September, features scenic images of Pennsylvania's state parks, notes holidays and significant environmental observances, highlights state park information and activities, and includes valuable outdoor recreational facts, tips and guidelines.

Each month depicts a state park seasonal scene captured by several of the commonwealth's finest photographers.

The calendar is \$8.95, tax included, and can be ordered by calling 1-888-PA-PARKS. There is a shipping charge.

The calendar also may be purchased at the following state parks: Canoe Creek, Colonel Denning, Cook Forest, Fort Washington, Gifford Pinchot, Greenwood Furnace, Hills Creek, Kettle Creek, Keystone, Lackawanna, Leonard Harrison, Little Pine, Linn Run, Lyman Run, Nockamixon, Oil Creek, Parker Dam, Pine Grove Furnace, Promised Land, Reeds Gap, Ricketts Glen, Sinnemahoning, Sizerville, Tobyhanna and Worlds End.

To look at the photographs in the calendar, go to the [State Parks Calendar webpage](#).

PA CleanWays, DCNR Partner in Swatara State Park Cleanup

[PA CleanWays](#), the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and many volunteers spent the last 12 months in a large-scale cleanup of [Swatara State Park](#) in Lebanon County.

"PA CleanWays applauds Gov. Rendell, Secretary DiBerardinis and DCNR for their strong commitment to restoring Pennsylvania's natural resources through cleanup and abatement activities in our state parks and forests," said Shannon Reiter, PA CleanWays president. "The cleanup at Swatara State Park is just one example of how cross-sector collaboration and community involvement can bring about tangible results for all of Pennsylvania."

"This project went far beyond the removal of a vacant home and cleanup of a mini-junkyard where 250 tons of tires and wheels, electrical transformers and other debris had

been discarded,” said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. “There also was the very real threat of contamination of concrete materials and soil from transformer oil containing PCBs.”

The 5.5-acre parcel of land off Old State Road was acquired by DCNR in 2006 and quickly targeted for a salvage yard cleanup that involved local volunteers, the Bureau of State Parks and PA CleanWays, a non-profit organization helping agencies and communities combat litter and dumping.

During a second-stage cleanup this summer, staff from the bureau, PA CleanWays, the Department of Environmental Protection, DCNR’s Bureau of Forestry and several private firms specializing in environmental cleanup and restoration work removed soil and a former residence from the site.

PA CleanWays hired Environmental Restoration Inc. to remove all municipal waste materials, including the former residence and other debris on the site, and to grade, seed and mulch the site.

Surface contouring and seeding is complete. The site will be left to return to a natural state with a riparian buffer at the southern entrance to the park.

State acquisition of lands that were to become Swatara State Park began in 1971 and ended in 1987. Totalling 3,520 acres, Swatara consists of rolling fields and woodlands situated along Interstate 81, between Second and Blue mountains. Among its main focal points is an 8-mile stretch of Swatara Creek that winds through the park.

A recreation area is planned for the future that will offer canoeing, fishing, hiking, picnicking, bicycling, swimming, camping and environmental education.

For more information on Swatara, Memorial Lake or Pennsylvania’s other 116 state parks, visit [DCNR’s State Parks webpage](#).

Clearwater Conservancy Endorses Allegheny National Forest Wilderness Plan

[ClearWater Conservancy](#) has endorsed a proposal for expansion of Congressionally designated wilderness in the [Allegheny National Forest](#).

ClearWater Conservancy’s board of directors voted to endorse the Allegheny National Forest wilderness proposal of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness July 12, joining a rapidly-growing, broad-based grassroots constituency seeking protection for some of Pennsylvania’s last parcels of remote, wild forestland.

FAW’s Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal for the Allegheny National Forest advocates eight areas totaling 54,460 acres be added to America’s National Wilderness Preservation System, which was established with the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964.

“We are pleased to be supporting this proposal for additional wilderness protection in the Allegheny National Forest,” said Jennifer Shuey, executive director of the ClearWater Conservancy. “Preserving our last remaining roadless and wild areas is preserving our heritage. We support conserving more wilderness in Pennsylvania’s only national forest for nature itself and for future generations of American citizens to enjoy.”

ClearWater Conservancy is a Centre County-based land trust and natural resource conservation organization formed in 1980. Their mission is to promote conservation and restoration of natural resources in central Pennsylvania through land conservation, water resource protection, and environmental outreach to the community.

“Friends of Allegheny Wilderness is honored to have the endorsement of such a committed organization as ClearWater Conservancy supporting our carefully developed

proposal for the Allegheny National Forest,” said John Bartlett, field representative for FAW. “We look forward to further expansion of our wilderness coalition in the coming months with like practical-minded groups.”

The [Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal](#) was published in 2003 to coincide with the revision of the ANF’s longterm management plan, or “Forest Plan.” Forest Plan revision lasted nearly four years, with the new plan being published by the Forest Service this past March.

Since its unveiling, the Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal has been endorsed by 24 separate local, regional, and national organizations representing more than 400,000 Americans.

Originally encompassing nine million acres around the country, today there are 107 million acres protected as part of the NWPS, but only two wilderness areas totaling 9,000 acres in the ANF – Pennsylvania’s sole national forest. This acreage equates to a scant two percent of the 513,200-acre forest. Nationally, 18 percent of national forest land is protected as wilderness.

“While we recognize and applaud the significance of continued timber production and other important uses of the Allegheny National Forest to the region’s economy and way of life, it must also be acknowledged that there is an acute shortage of protected wilderness here,” said Kirk Johnson, FAW’s executive director. “We are grateful to the ClearWater Conservancy for recognizing this unfortunate problem, and acting to help us rectify it.”

Wilderness designated under the Wilderness Act consists of significant parcels of federal public land set aside to be left in their natural condition on a permanent basis. Hunting, fishing, hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, and other forms of non-mechanized recreation are permitted within federal wilderness areas. New roads, motorized recreation, permanent developments, logging and other forms of commercial extraction are not permitted.

In addition to the ClearWater Conservancy, other organizations supporting FAW’s proposed wilderness areas include Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, Butler Outdoor Club, Campaign for America’s Wilderness, Finger Lakes Trail Conference, French Creek Valley Conservancy, Howard County Maryland Bird Club, Lake Erie Group Sierra Club, Pennsylvania Chapter Sierra Club, Pennsylvania Native Plant Society, Pennsylvania Republicans for Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania Trout Unlimited, The Wilderness Society, and many others.

For more information, visit the [Wilderness Proposal Friends of Allegheny Wilderness website](#), call 814-723-0620 or send email to: alleghenyfriends@earthlink.net.

PA Center for Environmental Ed August EE Connections Newsletter Now Online

The August issue of the [EE Connections newsletter](#) from the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education is now available online. The highlights from this month’s issue include--

General News: Richard Louv to Speak at Saint Vincent College, Buy Pennsylvania Fresh and Local, 6th Annual Ohio River Watershed Celebration, The Green Scene for Homeowners Series Continues, Center for Watershed Protection Releases Handbook, Women’s Health and the Environment Website Launched, Encyclopedia of Life, EPA

PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

Launches "Go Green!" Newsletter, SustainLane ,EPA Launches Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox

K-12: Energyteachers.org, Kids "Create Your Future!" Website Launched, The "Greenest" Building, New "Growing Food" Curriculum, Maggie's Earth Adventures

Higher Education: Robert Morris University Designs Windmills for the Future, Climate Quest Seeks Campus Hosts

Professional Development: Forest Teacher Workshop, Act 48 Opportunity at Jennings Environmental Education Center, Energy from Biomass and Waste Conference , Submit Proposals for Keystone Coldwater Conference, NAAEE Conference Registration Now Open, Astronomy from the Ground-Up – Online Workshop, Financing Renewable Energy on Campus – Web Conference

Grants/Awards: Ohio River Watershed Grants, Keystone Initiative Grants, Green Cleaning Award for Schools and Universities, President's and National Environmental Excellence Awards, Captain Planet Awards, Award for Student Entrepreneurship in Higher Education

Join the 11,300 people that receive EE Connections directly by email. To get your own copy, send an email to: info@pcee.org or visit the EE Connections [sign-up webpage](#).

U. of Pennsylvania, Other PA Companies Among Top Green Power Purchasers

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has recognized the University of Pennsylvania as one of the [Top 25 Green Power Purchasers](#) in the country.

EPA also recognized a special list of Green Power Partners who buy [100 percent of their electricity](#) from green sources, including: [Sun & Earth](#), [Meyer Associates](#), [Mantria Corporation](#), [SCA Americas](#), [The Philadelphia Print Shop, Ltd.](#), [The Barber Gale Group](#) and [Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future](#) from Pennsylvania.

The National Top 25 list of Green Power Partners accounts for more than 6 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year of green power purchasing, more than 60 percent of the total kWh in the Green Power Partnership; reducing greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of more than 700,000 vehicles.

At #20, the [University of Pennsylvania](#) purchases over 112,000,000 kWh of electricity from green power sources every year.

EPA's National Top 25 list ranks two of Pepsi's three independent bottlers at fourth and 13th. Kohl's Department Stores increased its green power purchases to raise its ranking to eighth nationally, and Mohawk Fine Papers places on the list at 22nd.

The Pepsi bottler purchase demonstrates that a group of companies, tied together by a supply chain, can help protect the environment by buying green power. The total aggregate purchase of the three independent bottlers is nearly 629 million kWh per year.

Two of the three bottlers rank on EPA's National Top 25 list, and all three found placement on EPA's 100 percent Green Power Purchaser list, while one bottler also ranks among the more than 45 Fortune 500 corporations participating in EPA's Fortune 500 challenge.

EPA's [Green Power Partnership](#), launched in 2001 and works with more than 750 partner organizations that voluntarily buy green power as a way to reduce the environmental impacts associated with conventional electricity use and to promote the development of new renewable generation resources nationwide.

Overall, EPA Green Power Partners are buying more than 10 billion kWh of green power annually, an increase of nearly 163 percent since January 2006. Green power is generated from eligible renewable resources such as solar, wind, geothermal, biomass and biogas, as well as low-impact hydropower.

For more information, visit EPA's [Green Power Partnership webpage](#).

Bioenergy: From Fields to Wheels Crossover Set for September 4-5

“[Bioenergy: From Fields to Wheels](#)” is the theme of this year's Crossover event at Penn State which brings together faculty in the life sciences and the physical sciences along with key stakeholders from industry and government in an effort to strengthen this important research bridge.

The event will be held September 4-5 in the HUB-Robeson Center on the Pennsylvania State University's University Park Campus.

The event will showcase bioenergy research, including all the steps in the process chain from photosynthesis to energy utilization, a concept call “Fields to Wheels.”

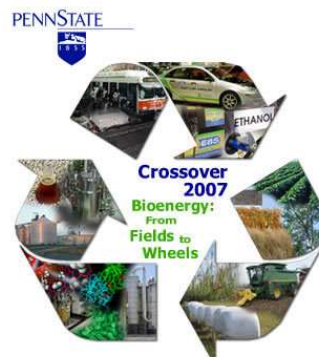
Crossover 2007 will highlight Penn State research activity through a series of research track presentations, live demonstrations, and an interactive poster session. In addition to these events a series of keynote addresses and panel discussions will be included, featuring collaborations with industry, other universities, and government agencies.

The need for integrated research is particularly important in the bioenergy field, where there are a near infinite variety of diverse feedstocks and process combinations, and many system feedback opportunities to increase efficiency and enhance product value.

To advance that integration Penn State is developing the Fields to Wheels Bioenergy Testbed, a flexible and adaptable system for research and technology transfer. Components of the testbed include: Plant Production, Plant Transformation, Materials Harvest and Transport, Materials Storage & Pretreatment, Saccharification and Fermentation, Separations Technologies, Combustion and Gasification, Chemical Catalysis, Byproduct Recovery and Utilization, Advanced Power Generation and Engine and Vehicle Testing

Wrapped around these technologies are the social, economic, and ethical frameworks needed for bioenergy programs to achieve its potential, including planning, business, and legal concerns.

For more information and to register, visit the “[Bioenergy: From Fields to Wheels](#)” [webpage](#).



Green Building Alliance Offers Grants for Innovative Product Development

The Pittsburgh Green Building Alliance will award Product Innovation Grants to projects that seek to develop and introduce green building products to the marketplace.

Initial proposal ideas are due by August 27.

Eligible projects may address key product development challenges, engineering or design challenges, show a significant degree of innovation, and/or identify a clear path to commercialization. Proposals must include collaboration between private sector companies and university researchers / teams.

Applicants may request up to \$100,000 in funding and Green Building Alliance will award up to \$750,000 in grants. Green Building Alliance's Product Innovation Grants are financed in part by a grant from the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority.

Direct questions to the Green Building Alliance's Research Manager at 412-431-0709 or research@gbapgh.org.

For full program details, the Request for Proposals, and information on Applicant Workshops, please visit the Green Building Alliance [Innovation Grant webpage](#).

Pittsburgh Green Building Alliance Sponsors Early Fall Educational Events

The [Pittsburgh Green Building Alliance](#) and its partners are sponsoring a series of educational workshops, breakfasts and other events this fall to promote awareness of green building techniques with homeowners, contractors and building owners.

Here's a quick rundown on some of the upcoming events;

August 25 - The Green Scene for Homeowners: Landscapes and Exteriors. The Green Building Alliance and Community Design Center of Pittsburgh have teamed up to offer this first-ever GBA series geared to the residential market. Homeowners will learn how to apply good design and green building principles to home renovation projects. This second program in the series features the principles of environmental site design and the importance of maintaining a good exterior to your home. The featured speaker will be Christine Mondor of Evolve EA. Cost: \$15 for GBA members; \$20 for nonmembers
Location: [Construction Junction](#), 214 N. Lexington St., Pittsburgh, PA 15208

September 15 - The Green Scene for Homeowners: Reducing Your Bill\$. The Green Building Alliance and Community Design Center of Pittsburgh have teamed up to offer this first-ever series geared to the residential market. This third program features representatives from Conservation Consultants, Inc., who will offer money-saving tips to reduce energy and water bills. Cost: \$15 for GBA members; \$20 for nonmembers
Location: [Construction Junction](#), 214 N. Lexington St., Pittsburgh, PA 15208

September 18 - Technical Workshop: LEED for General Contractors & Construction Managers. This daylong workshop created by the U.S. Green Building Council is geared to design, construction and operations professionals who want to build on their existing knowledge of LEED through in-depth instruction on the integrated design process. Faculty will share insights and lead individual and team exercises on the certification process, including conducting charrettes, estimating costs and preparing documentation. Attendees should have previously completed a Technical Review workshop or have equivalent knowledge of the LEED Rating System. Location: [DEP Cambria Office](#), 286 Industrial Park Road, Ebensburg, PA 15931

September 26 - Alliance Building Breakfast: LEED for Neighborhood Development.

In the fourth of five Alliance Building Breakfasts this year, GBA will introduce the long-awaited, newest LEED rating system: LEED for Neighborhood Development. Unlike other LEED products, LEED-ND takes a step back from individual buildings and assigns a system to rate master-planned neighborhoods.

LEED-ND integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building into the first national standard for neighborhood design. LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a development's location and design meet accepted high standards for environmentally responsible and sustainable development. LEED-ND is a collaboration between the U.S. Green Building Council, the Congress for the New Urbanism and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Location: [Children's Museum of Pittsburgh](#), Pittsburgh, PA.

A [registration form](#) for all these events is available online. For more information generally, visit the [Pittsburgh Green Building Alliance website](#).

Save the Date: PA Green Growth Forum-Green Building Products September 27-28

The Pennsylvania Green Growth Partnership is sponsoring a Green Growth Forum with the theme of "Focus on Manufacturing Green Building Products as a Stimulus for Economic Development" on September 27-28 in Hershey.

Watch the [PA Green Growth Partnership website](#) for more information on the agenda and registration.

Auditor General Wagner Calls on DCED to Improve Weatherization Assistance

Auditor General Jack Wagner this week said a [special performance audit](#) found that the Commonwealth's deficient administration of the federally funded Weatherization Assistance Program that reduces home energy costs failed to prioritize the needs of low-income Pennsylvanians, placing some of Pennsylvania's most vulnerable citizens at greater risk.

General Wagner said, because of poor administration, inadequate funding and insufficient manpower, it could take up to nine years to clear the statewide backlog of 9,249 applicants that were seeking weatherization assistance as of June 30, 2006, according to records supplied by the Department of Community and Economic Development, which oversees the program.

"The Weatherization Assistance Program is a vital link in the safety net that helps keep thousands of vulnerable Pennsylvanians warm during the winter," General Wagner said. "As auditor general, I want to make sure that the program is administered professionally and efficiently, so that Pennsylvanians who truly need assistance receive all of the protection to which they are entitled."

General Wagner's weatherization audit covered the period July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2006. It contained 10 findings and made 24 recommendations to DCED. These include:

- Monitor local agencies and develop prioritizing procedures to ensure that at-risk and needy Pennsylvanians are first in line to receive weatherization services. DCED should consider waiting lists when allocating grant monies to local agencies and consider requesting additional LIHEAP funds from the Department of Public Welfare;
- Minimize potential for fraud and abuse by creating a system to ensure re-weatherization services are not provided to ineligible dwellings;
- Strengthen oversight and verification by developing written policies and procedures for local agencies; and
- Ensure the program's effectiveness by calculating energy and monetary savings. Develop a statewide database to assess local agencies and improve performance of the program.

The Weatherization Assistance Program helps low-income families increase the energy efficiency of their homes. DCED provides funds to local public and private non-profit agencies, which, in turn hire subcontractors to repair homes. DCED disbursed \$35 million during the 2005-06 heating season, with about \$20 million of the funds coming from the Department of Public Welfare's LIHEAP grant from the federal government.

While the weatherization program helped 25,099 Pennsylvanians living in 10,368 homes during the 2005-06 heating season, auditors found that, based on existing repair rates, applicant backlogs ranged from an estimated two months to as long as nine years in Fayette County.

In addition to the weatherization program, DCED coordinates with the DPW's LIHEAP personnel to help low-income citizens in crisis situations, such as having a broken furnace. DCED's grant agreement with local agencies requires them to take action to remedy a crisis situation within 48 hours of notification.

Local agencies must set aside 30 percent of their LIHEAP funding for crisis services, but may use a greater percentage if it is economically feasible. Crisis funds remaining at the end of March are to be used for standard weatherization services. More than \$9 million of LIHEAP funding was used to provide crisis services at 4,773 homes statewide for 11,519 residents as of June 30, 2006.

The audit found that DCED was not adequately monitoring the Weatherization Assistance Program. Among the control weaknesses Wagner cited was the failure to develop a priority list of the neediest applicants; failure to make sure local agencies responded to crises within the federally mandated period of 48 hours; and failure to conduct follow-up inspections to make sure that repairs were delivering their promised energy savings.

"DCED has been very responsive in addressing our findings and recommendations," General Wagner said. "I would hope that these corrective measures are in place prior to the start of the home heating season."

A [complete copy of the audit](#) is available online.

For more information, visit the [Pennsylvania Weatherization Assistance Programs](#) webpage.

EPA Releases the Draft Report on the Environment: Highlights of National Trends

The draft 2007 Report on the [Environment: Highlights of National Trends](#) was released this week for public comment and independent review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

First issued in 2003, the ROE is a plain, easy-to-understand guide that provides the average citizen a resource to follow national trends in the condition of the air, water, and land in the United States.

The ROE is also part of EPA's commitment to be transparent to citizens, and to encourage citizen participation. Through the ROE, the public will have a complete picture of where the most environmental progress has been made, and where America needs to do better.

Written for a general audience, the ROE HD features a subset of the findings from the more comprehensive report, EPA's 2007 Report on the Environment: Science Report which was released in draft for public comment and review in May 2007.

The final 2007 ROE report will consist of both the science and highlights documents.

The information will also be available on an interactive, searchable [website called the "e-ROE."](#)

Spotlight

Watershed Program Wins Governor's Environmental Excellence Award, Apply Now



The Department of Environmental Protection this week honored the Green Woods Charter School for its demonstrated commitment to

environmental education as a [Governor's Environmental Excellence Award](#) winner, and encouraged others to apply for the award.

"Green Woods has designed a standards-based curriculum around an outdoor learning laboratory that offers students a rare opportunity to learn firsthand that the things they do -- and don't do -- can make a difference in the health of the environment," said DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty. "The fourth graders' experience during the 'Watershed Year' provides the foundation for a lifetime appreciation of the environment."

Located on a 340-acre property owned by the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education, Green Woods Charter School provides children in grades K through 8 with the opportunity to be active, knowledgeable and conscientious young investigators by fostering a keen understanding of the interrelatedness and interdependence of local and global environments.

As part of that investigation, the innovative fourth-grade curriculum provides an in-depth study of the social, historical and environmental aspects of the local watershed. The year culminates in a hands-on project -- most recently, the restoration of a small stream that flows through the school's property, Smith's Run, and is a Schuylkill River tributary.

Students worked throughout the year to restore 100 linear feet of eroded stream banks along Smith's Run. The project helped them understand why restoration was important.

The Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence honors Pennsylvania businesses and organizations that undertake projects that tackle environmental problems, help build new businesses, enhance the bottom line and engage residents in a renewed commitment to investing in communities.

"From innovations in clean energy to educating our youth on environmental matters, each of this year's winners is making an invaluable contribution that will protect public health and safety, stimulate economic growth and improve the health of Pennsylvania's environment," said Secretary McGinty.

The Green Wood Charter School was one of 12 winners of the 2007 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence to receive a commemorative plaque and an outdoor flag to acknowledge their commitment to environmental quality. Each recipient will be presented with these exclusive awards during events at the winner's location.

Applications are now available for the 2008 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. The award is open to any Pennsylvania business, government agency, educational institution, nonprofit organization, individual or farm that has created or helped to develop a project that promotes environmental stewardship and economic development in the state.

The deadline to submit nominations is October 15.

To download an application, visit the [Governor's Environmental Excellence Award webpage](#).

Link: [Nominations Invited for Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards](#)

Opinion

Pennsylvania Has the Opportunity to be a Leader on Climate

By

Brian J. Hill

President & CEO

Pennsylvania Environmental Council

As we continue through the summer, the temperature outside is not the only thing heating up. The debate continues in the Pennsylvania General Assembly and Congress over legislation to promote renewable energy generation, increase biofuel production, provide energy efficiency incentives for our homes and workplaces, and, on the whole, address climate change by reducing our increasing levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

This last point is especially relevant to Pennsylvania, which generates approximately 1 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. In 2000, Pennsylvania generated 305 million metric tons of greenhouse gases. Unless we take action now, our emissions will rise to 383 million metric tons by 2025. That puts our state alongside the top 25 emitting nations in the world.

Climate change will affect virtually every facet of our life: the crops we raise, the severity of storms and droughts we get, the kinds of forests and wildlife we see, the cars we drive, and how we develop our land. Because our state is a major contributor to the problem, we must take responsibility for finding solutions.

Two years ago, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council convened a group of stakeholders representing business, capital investment, agriculture, energy generation and environmental interests to develop a "[climate change roadmap](#)" for our state. Released this



month, the roadmap shows solutions and opportunities for Pennsylvania that can make it a national leader in addressing climate change.

The roadmap sets a goal for Pennsylvania of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2025, from 2000 levels. To achieve that goal, the roadmap makes 38 specific recommendations on reducing greenhouse gas emissions in several sectors.

The recommendations include common-sense steps such as increasing the use of renewable sources of energy, increasing transportation and building energy efficiencies, and taking advantage of natural assets to offset greenhouse gas emissions by increasing reforestation and using our native geology to sequester carbon dioxide emitted by our coal-fired power plants and other sources.

In addition, the roadmap presents energy efficiency recommendations that would put energy use more directly in the hands of consumers.

Thomas Edison once noted, "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work." Clearly, addressing climate change will require hard work, but it also presents opportunities. Many of the recommendations in the climate roadmap present economic opportunities for Pennsylvania and our citizens because they would create industries, business and jobs.

Recent polls in Pennsylvania and across the country demonstrate that a majority of people support policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy.

Sen. Ted Erickson (R-Delaware) and Rep. Greg Vitali (D-Delaware) have introduced bipartisan legislation that would create a climate change action plan for Pennsylvania. In the near future, Gov. Ed Rendell will present his strategy for taking steps to address climate change, some of which are included in his "energy independence" initiative and under consideration in the General Assembly. A special legislative session on energy will be held in September.

The time to act is now. We hope the General Assembly and the governor will use the stakeholder-driven recommendations of the "climate change roadmap" for Pennsylvania as the foundation for a climate change strategy that not only addresses this critical issue, but one that unlocks the economic opportunities as well.

Link: [PA Environmental Council Unveils Stakeholder-Drive Climate Change Roadmap](#)

The **Pennsylvania Environmental Council** promotes the protection and restoration of the natural and built environments through innovation, collaboration, education and advocacy with the private sector, government, individuals and communities as partners to improve the quality of life for all Pennsylvanians.

The Council was founded in 1970 and serves the entire state through offices in Meadville, Wilkes-Barre, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia. For more information visit www.pecpa.org or call 717-230-8044.

Opinion

Invasive Pests Attack Species and Economy

**By
Bill Kunze**

**Pennsylvania State Director
The Nature Conservancy**

The ash tree, a stately specimen that gives our neighborhoods shade and whose wood provides the summertime cracks of baseball bats, is suddenly threatened by a beetle that is no larger than the face of a penny. A thumbnail-sized mussel now endangers the plentiful game fish and other aquatic life of the Susquehanna River.

This summer's discoveries in Pennsylvania of the emerald ash borer and the zebra mussel (animals native to Europe and Asia) remind us of the growing threat posed by invasive species -- nonnative plants, animals, and microorganisms that spread rapidly and aggressively when introduced to areas beyond their normal ranges.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture recently announced that the emerald ash borer has been found in the state for the first time and immediately placed a quarantine on wood products (including nursery stock and firewood) from four counties in western Pennsylvania. The discovery of the beetle came within days of confirmation that zebra mussels are living in a Tioga County lake. This is the first time these troublesome shellfish have been found in Pennsylvania's portion of the Susquehanna River watershed.

Each of these discoveries, taken alone, is cause for grave concern. The emerald ash borer has been blamed for killing more than 20 million ash trees in the Midwest. Its larvae attack 12 species of ash trees, including white ash, a commercial timber species valued for furniture and flooring, and green ash, a common tree along city and suburban streets.

Zebra mussels already cause problems in western Pennsylvania, where industries and municipalities must pay to clear clogged water-intake valves. They also have a dramatic impact on ecosystems by consuming plankton that provide the base of the food chain for many native fish.

But serious as they are, these two pests are just part of a broader onslaught of invasive species that are spreading around the world at an accelerating rate, taking advantage of dramatic increases in global trade and travel. Invasive species have contributed directly to the decline of 42 percent of threatened and endangered species in the United States. More than 400 nonnative insects and microorganisms are permanently established in North American woodlands. More than 170 nonnative aquatic species have been introduced to the Great Lakes, most of them since the St. Lawrence Seaway opened in 1959.

The annual cost to the United States economy is estimated at \$120 billion a year. Even Pennsylvania's state tree, the hemlock, is under attack from one of these invaders. Throughout the mid-Atlantic, an invasive insect called the hemlock woolly adelgid is devastating these trees.

We can and should do more to stop these pests from entering the country and to rid our lands and waters of those that are here.

Congress is considering legislation to prevent infestations of aquatic nuisances such as the zebra mussels, which likely were introduced to this country when oceangoing ships released infested ballast water into the lower Great Lakes.

Now being considered by the House of Representatives, this legislation addresses the need for early detection of and response to nonnative species and establishes an important national goal: an end to all invasive species introduction through ballast water by 2015. Congress should further strengthen this legislation by adding provisions to review

intentional imports of aquatic species and prevent those imports if those species, such as the snakehead fish and several species of Asian carp, would be invasive here.

To fight invaders that are killing our trees, Congress should increase funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Emerging Plant Pest program. Equally important, the USDA should move forward aggressively to revise regulations that are supposed to protect our trees from these invaders -- regulations that were proposed for revision in 2004 but have languished since.

In Pennsylvania, the Governor's Invasive Species Council was created in 2004 to develop and implement a comprehensive invasive-species management plan for the state. One of the priority objectives identified by the council is to work with the governor, the Legislature and other key partners to establish permanent money for invasive species management.

Individuals and businesses can also help stop the introduction and expansion of these species by more carefully managing their activities that help the pests spread. For example, the emerald ash borer likely arrived in the United States inside the wood-packing crates that accompany most shipped cargo. By switching to plastic pallets or by treating the wood pallets to kill potential invaders, we can reduce this threat. Boaters could help by washing their boats and trailers when moving from one body of water to another. Firewood should be purchased and used locally, not moved from place to place.

But individual action alone will not stop this costly trend. Our greatest opportunity to reduce the harm wrought by invasive species is to prevent them. Congress must give agencies the authority and resources to act to stop the introduction of invasive species into the United States.

For more information, visit [The Nature Conservancy in Pennsylvania webpage](#).

Link: [The Nature Conservancy – Celebrating 50 Years in Pennsylvania](#)

Feature

Eagle Recovery Continues In Berks Thanks to Game Commission Employees

Thanks to Game Commission employees' efforts, a rescued eaglet has spread its wings and flown from its adopted nest in Berks County.

"The story began this spring, when a strong windstorm damaged an eagle's nest along Lancaster County's Conestoga River," said Doug Killough, Game Commission Southeast Region director. "Half the nest blew away, and the three eaglets that were in it eventually fell to the ground.

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



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

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

Berks County WCO Bob Prall has been working with Chip Hummel, of Auburn, who assists in monitoring the nest.

"On June 28, both eaglets were observed well off the nest and exercising their wings," WCO Prall said. "On July 3, Chip and I visited the nest and only one eaglet was present. It, too, was well off the nest exercising its wings."

"On July 5, Chip visited the nest and both eaglets were gone. He observed one of them in a tree at the reservoir. As of now, it appears both eaglets have successfully fledged and moved on."

In late June, just before the nation's Fourth of July celebrations, Game Commission officials announced that bald eagles have at least 120 nests within the state's borders, marking one of the most phenomenal comebacks in the annals of America's wildlife conservation.

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

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

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

The Game Commission, partnering with other states and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, helped to bring bald eagles back from the brink of extinction. The effort dovetailed with important gains made in improving water quality and other environmental reforms, which led to increases in the quality and quantity of freshwater fish, a staple in the eagle's diet.

Pennsylvania's eagle resurgence also was likely stimulated by young eagles dispersing from the Chesapeake Bay, which now has hundreds of nesting pairs, and neighboring states that reintroduced eagles, too.

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

In 1995, the USFWS moved the bald eagle from the federal endangered species to its threatened species list. On August 8, the bald eagle will be delisted -- no longer considered endangered or threatened -- by the USFWS from the federal endangered species list. Eagles still will receive federal protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

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

To learn more about bald eagles and other threatened and endangered species, visit the Game Commission's [Bald Eagle webpage](#).

You can also send emails to Game Commission biologists with your questions to: pgccomments@state.pa.us. Use the words "Eagle Nest Information" in the subject field.

Feature

Game Commission Elk Survival Study Begins Wrap-up Year

One of the ways Game Commission biologists currently are accomplishing [elk population](#) management goals is through a multi-year elk calf study, which is providing more details and insight into elk calf movements, dispersal, habitat usage and survival.



The study's findings are expected to improve the management and understanding of Pennsylvania's elk herd, which is America's oldest reintroduced, free-ranging elk population east of the Mississippi River.

"We have completed putting collars on elk calves and are beginning the third year of data collection," said Jon DeBerti, Game Commission elk biologist. "This year, 29 calves were captured and 28 were fitted with radio collars. These collars contain a mortality function to help determine where and when elk calves die. Of the 29 calves, 14 were males and 15 were females. The average weight was just over 43 pounds, and the average age was 3 days."

Of the 29 calves captured this year, three have died. The Penn State University Animal Diagnostics Laboratory examined the animals, but no clear cause of death could be determined.

"The annual survival rate from the 37 previously captured calves - 22 in 2005 and 15 in 2006 - was 89 percent. The four deaths documented during the first two years of the study were determined to be illegal harvest, legal harvest, pneumonia and one unknown. With this high survival rate, we believe our 2007 fall elk population estimate will be more than 700 animals."

The Game Commission last performed elk calf survival field studies in the mid-1990s. During the four-year study, which started in 1993, 30 calves were monitored; 71 percent of the collared calves survived their first year. Pennsylvania's elk population has doubled in size over the past decade and now numbers 600 to 650, excluding whatever calf recruitment occurred this year.

"We had planned to follow these collared elk throughout their lives to get better information on the survival of calves and yearlings and, ultimately, to improve our elk population modeling, which is used to determine herd growth," said Tony Ross, Game Commission Northcentral Region Wildlife Management supervisor. "However, the collars fell off earlier than expected, mostly during the following August. Consequently, we are planning to conduct a future study focusing on yearling survival. For instance, brain-worm appears to be most prevalent in yearlings, and it is possible there's more brain-worm mortality than we've been able to ascertain. Time and telemetry will tell."

The wild elk inhabiting Pennsylvania today are descendents of 24 released in Cameron County in 1915, and 10 released in Elk County between 1924 and 1926. A total of 177 elk - mostly from Yellowstone National Park - were released in 10 counties from 1913 to 1926, and served as a breeding base for what was hoped would develop into a population that could sustain hunting. But things didn't work out.

Although hunting seasons were provided from 1923 to 1931, and some bull elk were taken by hunters, the animals quickly disappeared from almost everywhere but Elk and Cameron counties, which was, coincidentally, where the state's last elk holed up before the species became extirpated in Pennsylvania around the time of the Civil War.

Elk were found throughout Pennsylvania prior to its colonization. Their numbers declined as civilization advanced, mostly as a result of deforestation and unregulated and commercial hunting. Elk were scarce in most areas by the beginning of the 1800s. They were protected in the Commonwealth from 1932 until the state held its first modern elk hunt in 2001.

For more information about the ongoing elk study, look for a copy of the upcoming November 2007 issue of [Pennsylvania Game News](#) at your local newsstand, or order a subscription by calling 1-888-888-1019 (toll-free).

To see more information on elk in Pennsylvania, including a copy of the Game Commission's elk management plan and video clips of elk, visit the [Pennsylvania Elk webpage](#).

Quick Clips

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

[Clearfield County Man State's First 2007 Case of West Nile Virus](#)

["A Forester's Legacy" Honors Lykens Native](#)

[Op-Ed: State Has Opportunity to Be Leader on Climate – Brian Hill](#)

[She's Taking Small Steps to Fight Global Warming](#)

[Op-Ed: Invasive pests Attack Species and Economy](#)

[Engaged Learning Builds Outdoor Leaders](#)

[Ned Smith Center's Bridge Eases Access to Trails](#)

[Rare Butterfly Species Thriving at Lebanon County Military Post](#)
[Editorial: Trail Work Puts Area on Path to Something Better](#)
[Powdermill Nature Reserve Nearing Completion of \\$5 Million Expansion](#)
[Aviary Gets Gift for Theater, Education Center](#)
[Outlook Poor for Hawk Found on I-95](#)
[In Battle With Deer, Man Now Faces Charges](#)
[Penn State Adds Energy Engineering Major](#)
[Court Says Gas Wells Regulated by State](#)
[PA Landowners Come Up Short as Companies Tap Gas in Coal Beds](#)
[IUP Chemist Grows Idea of Biodegradable Plastics](#)
[PA Home Efficiency Program Has Big Backlog](#)
[Go Green at Home, Save Green in Your Wallet](#)
[LED Traffic Signals Cast Rosy Glow](#)
[How Much Power Does Grid's Monitor Have?](#)
[Keeping Electricity Use and Supply in Balance](#)
[Deregulation Rules Won't Change, PPL Says](#)
[PPL Considers 2 Plant Additions](#)
[Electricity Price Increases Will Hurt People](#)
[DEP Sets Hearing on Wind Power Proposal in Somerset](#)
[Wind Power – Legislators – Theory Good, But check the Down Side](#)
[Wind Farms Outlawed From the PA Wilds, DCNR](#)
[Tioga Wind Farm Increases to 98 Turbines](#)
[Solar Helps Keep Energy Costs Low](#)
[Editorial: The Ethanol Ruse, Corny Energy](#)
[13 Farms Preserved in Carbon County](#)
[Carbon Land Preservation Program Gets a Boost](#)
[Lawmaker Proposes Grants for Historic Barns on Private Property](#)
[Bill Limiting Development Gains Support](#)
[Region Reaps Benefits of Trend Toward Ecotourism](#)
[Editorial: Legislature Holds On to Luxury of Walking Around Money](#)
[Editorial: Rendell, Legislators Must Find Funding for Hazardous Sites Cleanup](#)
[Cleanup of Several Local Pollution Sites Endangered](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Award Honors Farmer for Efforts to Keep Water Clean](#)
[No Drought, But Farmers Taking a Hit](#)
[Drought Reaching Record Proportions in Franklin County](#)
[Trout Streams Land Partners](#)
[Stream Part of Protection Effort](#)
[Laural Run Creek Repairs Get Underway](#)
[Stoneycreek Becoming State's First Whitewater Park](#)
[Memories Get in Way of Removal of Old Dams](#)
[Ohio River Islands Erosion Threatens Bird, Fish Habitats](#)
[Conemaugh Conservancy Receives \\$225,000 Grant](#)

[Preserving Our Susquehanna River](#)
[Colder Lehigh River Anglers Eyeing Study Funded to Improve Trout Fishery](#)
[Hampton Teen Readies for Fly Fishing World Championship](#)
[Chloramines and Drinking Water in PA](#)

Regulations

The Fish and Boat Commission [published notice](#) of an addition to the List of Class A Wild Trout Waters.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – August 4, 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 final policy on incidental coal extraction and a draft policy for comment for the Land Recycling Program.

Final: DEP ID: 563-2000-003. Incidental Coal Extraction for Government-Financed Construction Projects or Government-Financed Reclamation Projects. The regulations at 25 Pa. Code § 86.6 (relating to extraction of coal incidental to government-financed construction or government-financed reclamation projects) allow for an exemption from the permitting requirement for the extraction of coal incidental to government-financed construction projects and government-financed reclamation projects under certain circumstances.

Draft: DEP ID: 253-0300-100. Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program Technical Guidance Manual--Section IV General Guidance. The substantive revisions proposed to Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program Technical Guidance Manual--Section IV General Guidance include the addition of several regulated substances to the "short list" in Table IV-9 for several petroleum products and mineral insulating oils containing PCBs. Comments due: September 4.

[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](#)

- **August 7 – CANCELLED.** DEP [Great Lakes Regional Water Resources Committee meeting cancelled](#).
- **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 16 – CANCELLED.** [DEP Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board](#) meeting. Next scheduled meeting November 15.
- **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*)
- **August 30** – House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee public hearing on [House Bill 1735](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) related to the rights of surface property rights owners related to drilling for coal bed methane. Living-Learning Center, University of Pittsburgh, Johnstown. 1:00.
- **September 5 – NEW.** DEP [Chesapeake Bay Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **September 19** – Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee public hearing on proposed alternative fuels mandate included in [House Bill 1202](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) and [Senate Bill 789](#) (Dinniman-D-Chester). Hearing Room 1, Capitol North Office Building. 9:00.
- **September 25** – Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee public hearing on proposed alternative fuels mandate included in [House Bill 1202](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) and [Senate Bill 789](#) (Dinniman-D-Chester). Room 8 E-B, Capitol East Wing. 9:30.
- **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 10-11 --** [DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting on on October 10 from 7-9 p.m. and October 11 from 9:30 to 12 p.m. at the Best Western Inn.
- **October 16 – CANCELLED-RESCHEDULED.** [DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting on October 16 was cancelled in favor of a regional meeting in Bedford on October 10 from 7-9 p.m. and October 11 from 9:30 to 12 p.m. at the Best Western Inn.
- **October 25 – NEW LOCATION.** [DEP Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board](#) meeting. DEP Cambria District Mining Office, Ebensburg.

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- **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.
- **November 1** –DEP [Low-Level Waste Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **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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