

# — PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

May 2, 2005

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## Volunteers Turn Out All Over Pennsylvania to Make A Difference

Take a minute to look through the unusually large number of NewClips in this week's *Digest* to see how volunteers of all ages turned out for the Great PA Cleanup!, Earth Day activities and Envirothon events all across Pennsylvania.

People were out to make a difference, not just make a "statement," about making the environment better. They were making a positive difference with their own two hands in their own watersheds and communities.

Also check out the new section dedicated to the Growing Greener Bond Issue question on the May 17 election ballot.

And the new online [Voters' Guide to May 17 Growing Greener Bond Issue](#) posted by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

Oh yes, and the Senate and House are back in session this week with some interesting bills coming up on the agenda.

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

### Session Schedule

The House and Senate return to voting session May 2 through May 11 and then break for the May 17 election.

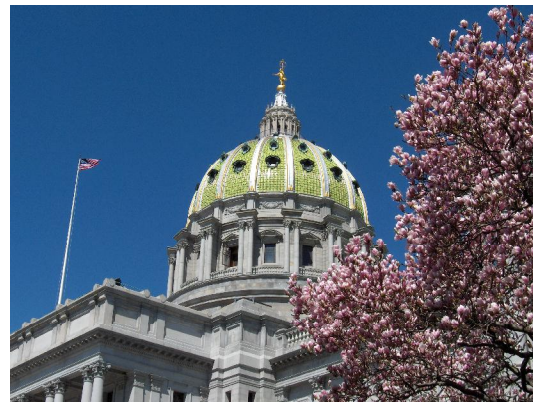
### Budget Clock Ticking

- 19 voting days are scheduled through the June 30 budget deadline in the House
- 20 voting days in the Senate

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Harrisburg is Growing Greener

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## On the Hill

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### On the Agenda in the Senate, House

The Senate and House return to session this week, here's what's on the agenda.

**In the Senate:** On the Senate Calendar for action this week is [Senate Bill 197](#) (Rafferty-R-Montgomery) authorizing DEP to take multiple violations into account when considering landfill permits and [Senate Bill 607](#) (Thompson-R-Chester) Capital Budget for 2005-06.

**In the House:** The House will continue work on the remaining pieces of the state budget for agencies like the PUC, Attorney General and retirements funds. The House is also expected to caucus on [House Bill 504](#) (Killion-R-Chester) providing for historic preservation tax credits.

Again, resolutions will take up much of the initial calendar activity-- [House Resolution 184](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) designating May 28 through June 5 PA Hiking Week and [House Resolution 245](#) (Petroni-D-Allegheny) urging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to study the effects of wet weather events in Chartiers Valley in Allegheny and Washington counties.

The House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee holds an informational meeting on the effects of mine subsidence and the Local Government Committee is meeting on [House Bill 88](#) (Steil-R-Bucks) authorizing certain municipalities to develop comprehensive watershed stormwater management plans; [House Bill 965](#) (Hickernel-R-Lancaster) amending the Main Street Program to encourage downtown redevelopment; [House Bill 1108](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing the Water and Wastewater System Connection Funding Program.

### Environmental Synopsis, Next Environmental Issues Forum May 9

The [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) published the April edition of its Environmental Synopsis this week highlighting the Great PA Cleanup! and efforts to cleanup State Parks and Forests, micro fuel cells, Canadian energy efficiency, electronic waste and a review of recent Committee activities.

The next scheduled Environmental Issues Forum sponsored by the Committee will be held on May 9 to discuss greenhouse gas action plans.

## Growing Greener Bond Question

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### Special Section: Growing Greener Bond Question on May 17 Ballot

On election day May 17, voters will be asked to vote on the Growing Greener Bond Issue question on the ballot. To promote discussion of this issue, *PA Environment Digest* will set aside this special area for the next three weeks to highlight comments on the issue by a variety of groups.



There are 15 days left before the election.

## NewsClips

[Op-Ed: It's time to act on area floods- vote for Growing Greener Plan](#)

[Monto Lends Support to Growing Greener Ballot Question](#)

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[Editorial: Bond Issue Could Benefit the Environment](#) – The Daily Review, Towanda

[Growing Greener Highlighted at Boat Launch Under Construction](#)

[Op-Ed: Land has Spoken – Support Land Preservation](#)

[Rendell urges support for bond issue](#)

## **On May 17 Voters Will Decide On Environmental Funding**

*By Rep. Art Hershey (R-Chester)*

When residents go to the polls on May 17 for the Municipal Primary Election, they will be faced with deciding on a ballot question that will impact Pennsylvania's environmental future.

Voters will be asked to decide whether the Commonwealth should borrow \$625 million to fund environmental initiatives under the state's Growing Greener program.

This is an important issue that has been heavily debated in the state Legislature over the past year.

The governor first developed a plan called Growing Greener II, which would have increased taxes on Pennsylvania residents to reach the state's environmental funding goals.

Republicans, also recognizing the need for a long-term commitment to the state's environmental initiatives, developed a plan known as Green PA. This plan would fund the state's primary environmental programs without any new or increased taxes.

Both plans originally targeted borrowing of up to \$800 million.

However, on April 13 a compromise was reached with the House, Senate, and the governor's office to reduce borrowing to \$625 million. The governor signed the legislation immediately into law so that it could be included on the ballot in time for the Primary Election.

The intent behind the measure is to fund environmental initiatives without any new or increased taxes or fees for residents or businesses. It will be up to you, the voters, to decide the fate of this environmental program.

The ballot question voters will see when they go to the polls states: "Do you favor authorizing the Commonwealth to borrow up to \$625,000,000, for the maintenance and protection of the environment, open space and farmland preservation, watershed protection, abandoned mine reclamation, acid mine drainage remediation and other environmental initiatives?"

The legislation also waives certain election requirements so counties can get the question on the ballot by the May 17 Primary Election and extends the collection of absentee military and overseas votes until May 31.

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If voters approve the borrowing, legislators and the governor will work out how much the Commonwealth can borrow each year and specifically how the additional funds can be used.

As chairman of the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee and former chairman of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, the issue of environmental conservation and preservation is important to me and the rich agricultural area I represent.

I encourage all registered voters to go to the polls on May 17 and cast a vote on this important issue.

### **The Rivers Can't Vote, But You Can!**

By [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#)

The General Assembly has passed legislation that will put a question on the May 17 primary ballot asking Pennsylvanians to authorize a state bond to be used to fund environmental restoration and conservation projects.

The [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#) wishes to thank the members of the House and Senate and the Governor's office for coming together to find common ground on this critical environmental issue.

"This funding provides new opportunities to resolve critical environmental and water quality needs in the Commonwealth," says Matt Ehrhart, Pennsylvania Executive Director for CBF. "To adequately address these, we need to upgrade waste water treatment facilities and secure funding for farming practices that improve water quality."

The recent American Rivers' nomination of the Susquehanna as the nation's most endangered river serves to highlight that though much has been done and public interest on this issue has increased, there is monumental challenge still ahead to secure the health of our watersheds.

CBF urges all Pennsylvanians to get out and vote on May 17 to make sure that this key ballot issue is approved. If approved, the Growing Greener bond will provide necessary funding for the conservation and restoration of Pennsylvania's waterways, protection of open space and farmland, clean up of land and water polluted by mining, and other important environmental initiatives.

### **Birds and Wildlife Can't Vote, But You Can**

By *Timothy D. Schaeffer, Ph.D., Executive Director, [Audubon Pennsylvania](#)*

Each May, Pennsylvania hosts the greatest number of bird species that pass through the Commonwealth all year. This awe-inspiring annual event of bird migration from Central and South America through Pennsylvania reminds us of the global significance of Pennsylvania's habitat. With its numerous mountain ridges, wetlands, and grasslands, millions of birds find temporary habitat within the borders of the Commonwealth.

Throughout Pennsylvania, Audubon members and other partners are diligently counting as many bird species as possible as part of our annual Birdathon during peak migration and nesting time. The counting helps monitor the population trends for Pennsylvania's native and migratory bird species.

On May 17, we will be counting more than birds - we will be counting votes.

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The following Growing Greener Bond Question will appear on the May 17 primary election ballot: “Do you favor authorizing the Commonwealth to borrow up to \$625 million for the maintenance and protection of the environment, open space and farmland preservation, watershed protection, abandoned mine remediation, and other environmental initiatives?”

Please vote YES.

Every registered voter may vote YES on May 17. Often times, only Democrats and Republicans vote in primary elections. You may vote for the Growing Greener Bond Question regardless of your party affiliation.

This effort builds on the highly successful Growing Greener program initiated by Governor Tom Ridge. The question before the voters represents a bipartisan effort by Republican and Democratic legislators and Governor Ed Rendell. Officials from both parties worked diligently to come up with the \$625 million compromise and are actively promoting the initiative in their districts as we approach the primary election.

This is a unique opportunity to secure \$625 million to help restore and conserve the habitats upon which our birds and other wildlife rely and to invest in the land and water that make Pennsylvania such a special place to live, work, and play. A few elements of the program show how it will benefit our land, water, and wildlife.

During the 1990s, Pennsylvania ranked 48th in population growth, yet only four other states lost more open land to development - that is land that is lost to birds, other wildlife, and our children forever. The rate of land development in Pennsylvania outpaces the rate of land conservation by an average ratio of nearly three acres to one, despite the fact that our population growth is slowing. Sprawling development is draining the lifeblood of our older communities, destroying our rural economies, and fundamentally changing the landscapes that have historically defined Pennsylvania.

For example, we are losing 110,000 acres of farmland per year, about the size of Delaware County. Over a million acres of Pennsylvania farmland habitat has been lost since 1960, and the rate at which farmland is being lost is accelerating. Only 1 acre is being saved for every 5 that are being developed. At the same time, farmers are waiting to enroll in the farmland preservation program, yet they are unable to do so because of inadequate resources.

If you are like me, you grew up hunting small game on farms and also enjoy watching birds that live in and around agricultural lands. With each passing day, we lose more and more farmland habitat and another piece of our outdoor heritage. This is occurring at the same time that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service reports that nearly 90% of our grassland birds are in steep decline.

The Growing Greener Bond Question is will also improve water quality in a number of ways, including cleaning up our abandoned mine legacy.

At least 44 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties are scarred by mine lands that were abandoned without adequate reclamation before the federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 - which, by the way, is set to expire this September without Congressional action. Abandoned mine drainage (AMD) is responsible for more than one third of our state’s officially impaired waterways, rendering more than 4,000 miles of stream unfit for drinking, fishing, or swimming. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has estimated that we lose up to \$70 million a year in potential fishing and boating revenues as a result of AMD.

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Birds, fish, and other wildlife can't vote, but you can. Please vote YES on May 17. See you at the polls. [Audubon Pennsylvania](#)

### Answers to Your Questions on Growing Greener Bond, Spread the Word Toolkit

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council has created an online [Voters' Guide to May 17 Growing Greener Bond Issue](#) to help answer questions about the bond issue. The site features a "Spread-the-Word" toolkit with emails, letters, flyers and articles individuals and groups can use to let others know the bond issue is on the ballot.

The Guide includes a frequently asked questions and answers piece, editorials and articles about the bond issue and bipartisan endorsements.

Go to the [Voters' Guide to May 17 Growing Greener Bond Issue](#) for more information.

Click here for a one-page [Growing Greener Flyer](#) for meetings

Only 15 days left before the election.

## Other News

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### Finalists Announced for Western PA Environmental Awards

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council announced the finalists this week for the Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards Program and the awards dinner which will be held on May 26 in Pittsburgh.

Michael DiBerardinis, Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, will be the keynote speaker for the event.

The Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Dominion, will celebrate the achievements of 16 organizations, businesses, schools, individuals, governments, and community groups that have made significant environmental contributions in the western Pennsylvania region. The finalists in each category include (in alphabetical order)—

#### Community

- Neighborhood Watch #13 - Snoops Association – Community Garden Project (Erie, Erie County)
- PA CleanWays Westmoreland County (Greensburg, Westmoreland County)
- Southwestern Pennsylvania Household Hazardous Waste Task Force
- Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program (Alexandria, Huntingdon County)

#### Government

- Cranberry Township's Collection Connection (Butler County)
- PA Department of Environmental Protection - Herron Avenue Project (Pittsburgh, Allegheny County)
- Dennis Tubbs – (PA Fish & Boat Commission) (Southwestern Pennsylvania)

#### Green Design

- AMD & ART (Vintondale, Cambria County)



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- Amerikohl Mining, Inc. – AMD Restoration Project (Ernest, Indiana County)
- An Ecological and Physical Investigation of Pittsburgh Hillside (Pittsburgh, Allegheny County)

### Higher Education

- Arts & Environment Initiative, Center for Economic and Environmental Development, Allegheny College (Meadville, Crawford County)
- Enviro Education – Online Education Resource (Allison Park, Allegheny County)
- Jan & Lowell Steinbrenner – Steinbrenner Institute for Environmental Education & Research (Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County)

### Primary & Secondary Education

- Millbrook Marsh Nature Center (State College, Centre County)
- SCUBA Do's Project (Erie, Erie County)
- Shaver's Creek Environmental Center/Juniata Valley School District - Shaver's Creek Watershed Study (Petersburg, Huntingdon County)

Five award winners will be announced at the dinner, each receiving a cash prize of \$1,000 to be donated to local nonprofit environmental organizations of their choice.

For more information, please visit the [Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards webpage](#).

### Cove Area Digester Project Receives State Planning Funds

The Cove Area Digester Project in Bedford and Blair counties received a \$99,500 planning grant for the preparation of a business plan from the Commonwealth Financing Authority.

These counties are home to over 25,000 head of dairy animals located in the middle of the Clover Creek Watershed. The proposed facility, in Martinsburg, would treat, process and dewater manure to produce a viable beneficial use product that could be purchased for bedding and potting soil. This digester is viewed locally as imperative to the agricultural future of the Cove because many farms have no outlet to dispose of manure.

**NewsClip:** [The New Math: Cows + Manure = Gas + Electricity](#)

### Healthy Lawn Care, Landscaping Education Campaign Launched

Region 3, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, launched its new "Healthy Yards, Healthy Lawns, Healthy Environment" (H3) lawn care campaign at Temple University's yearly "EarthFest 2005" to raise awareness of the issue and provide information and resources to educate the public.

The campaign is designed to educate homeowners in responsible lawn care and landscaping practices. Lawn care products may contain large amounts of nutrients, such as nitrogen, phosphorous, and pesticides that can wash into lakes and streams and cause blooms to smother aquatic life.

For more information, visit the [EPA Beneficial Landscaping webpage](#).



## **Erie-Allegheny Earth Force Holds Annual Youth Summit**

The [Lake Erie-Allegheny Earth Force](#) will hold its annual Youth Summit on May 4 at Presque Isle State Park in Erie.

Approximately 750 students will participate in workshops, field trips and activities with the help of community partners including: S.O.N.S. of Lake Erie, PA Sea Grant Program, Presque Isle Audubon Society, NW PA Duck Hunters Association, North East Fishing and Hunting Association, Lake Erie Ultimate Angler, Millcreek Firefighters, Gander Mountain, PA Fish and Boat Commission, Game Commission, and the naturalists from Presque Isle State Park.

This year participants are scheduled to be involved from these schools and organizations: Blessed Sacrament School, Edison Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, Hermitage Middle School, Holy Family School, J.S. Wilson Middle School, John Horan Garden Apartments, Klein Elementary, Neighborhood Art House, Saint Boniface School, Strong Vincent High School, North East Middle School, North East High School, Villa Maria Elementary, JR PLEWA (Junior PA Lake Erie Watershed Association), Girl Scout Troop 636 and Wattsburg Area Middle School.

The Youth Summit is a culmination of the school year in which Earth Force students worked on youth driven projects exploring innovative ways of environmental problem solving to improve the quality of life in western Pennsylvania.

At the summit, the students will celebrate their success, share what they have learned in addressing local environmental issues and make plans to continue their work in the next school year.

Earth Force students use the 6 step Earth Force process for their projects.

“We tell them to look around their community and learn about what environmental issues are there, and they choose one they feel passionate about and that is of real concern to the community,” said Earth Force Education Director Margarita Dangel, OSB. “Then they do a lot of research and talk to people in the community about what is being done on this issue or what needs to be done. They create a project plan, a task and a time line. They actually get an opportunity to write grants. They have to tell us what they want and why they need the money, and then they get to put their projects into action.”

For more information contact: Susan A. Smith 814-899-2572 or by email to: [susanasmith@adelphia.net](mailto:susanasmith@adelphia.net)

## **2005 Pennsylvania Envirothon Coming up May 23-24**

The 22nd [Pennsylvania State Envirothon](#) will take place at the Bloomsburg University, Columbia County, on May 23 and [PPL Montour Preserve](#), Montour County, May 24.

Approximately 320 high school students will compete in the areas of aquatic ecology, forestry, soil / land use, wildlife, and current environmental issues. The environmental issue for this year's event is Managing Cultural Landscapes.

County conservation districts from 66 counties are expected to sponsor teams to this year's competition. The county representatives will qualify for the statewide event by winning county Envirothon events involving over 15,000 youth from over 700 high schools across the Commonwealth.

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On May 23, on the Bloomsburg University campus, teams will have the opportunity to participate in an Oral Presentation Component event. The oral component tests a team's ability to consider an environmental issue, discuss its likely ramifications and effects, develop possible solutions, and present their findings to a panel of judges and then answer questions during a 20 minute session. Awards will be given to the top ten oral component teams.

On May 24, teams will gather at the PPL Montour Preserve to compete in the traditional station testing, at which time the five-member team will travel to the five testing stations and one non-testing station.

Teams will have a 35-minute time period to answer questions developed by environmental professionals relating to each of their respective topics - aquatic ecology, forestry, soil / land use, wildlife, and the current environmental issue. The topic of the non-testing education station is Crime Scene Investigation of a wildlife game violation, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

The Pennsylvania Envirothon along with its partners - the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Fish and Boat Commission, Game Commission, DCNR Bureau of Forestry and State Parks, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of Agriculture - assure the continued success of the program.

These committed partners provide educational reference materials for over 700 participating high school teams as well as technical expertise, knowledge, and manpower at not only the state event but also at 67 county events.

Pennsylvania's sixty-six county conservation districts, the State Conservation Commission and the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts sponsor the Envirothon program. Special project funding from the State Conservation Commission enabled the program to become established statewide in 1984.

Corporate sponsorship and state grants continue to allow the PA Envirothon Board of Directors to ensure a quality event for all those who participate. Air Products and Chemicals Inc. has been a corporate sponsor since 1997, Pennsylvania Power and Light (PPL) Company since 1999, and in 2003, Nestle Water North America Inc. joined the Envirothon as a corporate sponsor.

Other sponsors include Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association, Pennsylvania's County Conservation Districts, and the Canon Envirothon. Pennsylvania's Growing Greener grant program enables the Envirothon to develop and purchase education and outreach resources and tools as well as sustain the program.

Sponsors and partners of the program will present awards to the top ten teams. For the first time ever, first, second and third place team members will be awarded scholarships that can be used toward post secondary education. The scholarships are being funded by the Department of Agriculture in partnership with the State Conservation Commission. Station awards are also presented to the teams with the highest score in a specific area.

The winning team will represent Pennsylvania at the 2005 Canon Envirothon - North American Program, which will take place in Springfield, Missouri, on July 18 - 24, on the campus of Southwest Missouri State University.

The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission and the Pennsylvania Game Commission provide grant funding to cover transportation and lodging for the five-

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member team and its advisors. Pennsylvania has won nine of 17 Canon Envirothon events.

For more information visit the [PA Envirothon webpage](#) or contact Lorelle Steach at 814-623-7900 ext. 111.

**NewsClips:** [Outdoor class teaches value of environment](#)  
[Emmaus Students Win Envirothon](#)  
[Enviro Fair at Tunkhannock High School](#)

### **Reminder: Water Works, Riverfront Communities Conferences Coming Up**

Just a reminder that two important water conferences are coming up: May 3-5 [PA-American Water Works Association Annual Conference](#) in Hershey and the June 8-10 [Susquehanna Riverfront Communities Symposium](#) in Harrisburg (deadline for registration May 6).

### **Extension Sponsors Pond Management Workshop May 21**

The Penn State Extension Service is sponsoring a Pond Management Workshop for May 21 in Mifflinburg. Registration deadline is May 13.

The workshop is for landowners who now have or planned to construct ponds and will feature a discussion of construction techniques, pond ecosystems and fish and water management practices.

There is a \$30 registration fee. Contact Norm Conrad by email to: [ngc1@psu.edu](mailto:ngc1@psu.edu) or Jim Clark by email to: [jac20@psu.edu](mailto:jac20@psu.edu) for more information.

### **10 Final TMDLs Published for Watersheds in 10 Counties**

The Department of Environmental Protection and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published 10 final Total Maximum Daily Load plans for watersheds in ten counties. They include—

- Berks- Lake Ontelaunee
- Bucks- Lake Nockamixon
- Bucks, Chester, Montgomery - Delaware River Estuary
- Chester - Christina River Basin
- Indiana- Marsh Run and McCarthy Run
- Montgomery- Glanraffan Creek
- Montgomery, Philadelphia -Wissahickon Creek
- Montgomery -Greenlane Reservoir
- Northhampton- Waltz Creek
- Washington - Brush Run

Visit the DEP [TMDL webpage](#) to review copies of the TMDLs.

## **\$5 Million in Grants Available to Fund Truck Idling Reduction Projects**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is making available \$5 million dollars in grants to states, nonprofits and academic institutions to demonstrate innovative idle reduction technologies for the trucking industry. Idle reduction conserves fuel and prevents air pollution.

The deadline for applications is June 6.

EPA is requesting proposals to demonstrate commercially available technologies that small trucking fleets can use to equip trucks they already own; that truck engine manufacturers can package into a simple installation kit for aftermarket use; or that trucks can use while parked at truck stops, terminals, ports and borders.

A copy of the [request for applications package](#) is available online.

## **DCNR Opens Conservation Partnership Grant Application Period**

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources [announced it will accept applications](#) for its Conservation Partnership Grant Program through September 30.

DCNR also scheduled a series of eight regional workshops that will focus on funding sources for recreation and conservation programs including Community Recreation, Land Trusts, Rails-to Trails, Rivers Conservation, Pennsylvania Recreational Trails, Snowmobile/ATV and Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The workshops will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on —

- June 1 - Radisson Hotel--Valley Forge Convention Center, King of Prussia
- June 2 - Holiday Inn Conference Center, Allentown
- June 14 - Holiday Inn, Clarion
- June 15 - Four Points by Sheraton, Pittsburgh
- June 21 - Radisson Hotel, Williamsport
- June 22 - The Inn at Nichols Village, Clarks Summit
- June 28 - Ramada Inn, Altoona
- June 30 - Holiday Inn, Harrisburg

The primary open application period will officially end at 5 p.m. on September 30. A supplemental open application period for planning and acquisition projects only will begin October 1 and end April 14, 2006.

For more information, go to DCNR's [Conservation Partnerships Grant Program webpage](#).

## **EPA Adds 2, Proposes 1 New Site to Federal Superfund List in PA**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finalized the addition of two sites and proposed one new site to the federal Superfund list in Pennsylvania.

The two sites added were: [Safety Light Corporation](#), Bloomsburg, Columbia County; and [Price Battery](#), Hamburg, Berks County. The proposed site is [Jackson Ceramix](#), Falls Creek, Jefferson County.

These sites were among ten new sites added to the Superfund list and seven proposed sites this week.

### **Green Technology: Microbial Fuel Cell Research at Penn State**

Using a new electrically-assisted microbial fuel cell (MFC) that does not require oxygen, Penn State environmental engineers and a scientist at Ion Power Inc. have developed the first process that enables bacteria to coax four times as much hydrogen directly out of biomass than can be generated typically by fermentation alone.

Bruce Logan, the Kappe professor of environmental engineering and an inventor of the MFC, says, "This MFC process is not limited to using only carbohydrate-based biomass for hydrogen production like conventional fermentation processes. We can theoretically use our MFC to obtain high yields of hydrogen from any biodegradable, dissolved, organic matter -- human, agricultural or industrial wastewater, for example -- and simultaneously clean the wastewater."

The new approach is described in a paper, "Electrochemically Assisted Microbial Production of Hydrogen from Acetate," released online currently and scheduled for a future issue of Environmental Science and Technology.

[Read the full story.](#)

### **Pittsburgh Falcon Eggs Hatch, HBG Falcon Banding Event Set for May 26**

The pair of Peregrine Falcons [nesting at the Gulf Tower nest in Pittsburgh](#) are now the proud parents of three little ones. Their eggs hatched right on schedule on April 21 and 22.

Now the nearly 24-hour chore of feeding the fast growing youngsters begins for both parents. The Pittsburgh nest is maintained as a project of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

Although counting your "chickens" before the eggs are hatched is usually a bad idea, the Peregrine Falcon eggs in the nest on the Rachel Carson Building in Harrisburg usually hatch right on schedule, about May 8 this year.



Feeding frenzy in Pittsburgh.

About four weeks after hatching the young falcons have already grown to their full adult proportions, so the Pennsylvania Game Commission schedules a special event to band the young falcons.

This year the banding event is set for May 26 at 12:30 pm in the Rachel Carson State Office Building. The event will again be available to watch online through a live webcast by clicking on the "[Register to Watch the Webcast](#)" link beginning May 25.

The falcon nestlings will be examined and banded with a falcon specific code number.

Teachers and their students can attend the banding event and learn about endangered species reintroduction as well as the science and techniques used by wildlife management professionals.

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If you are a teacher or non-formal educator in the mid-state region and would like to attend the event, click on the “Contact the PA DEP Staff” link and send an email to “Falcon-Related Questions” or call 717-772-1828.

Include your name, grade level, school, number of students and adults and contact information to be registered to attend the event live.

### **Holtwood Environmental Preserve to Host ‘Return of the Bald Eagle’**

Little more than two decades ago, the bald eagle had virtually disappeared from the Pennsylvania landscape. Pesticides, development and persecution had all but wiped out one of the nation’s most revered symbols of strength and freedom. Just two nesting pairs were known in the state. The outlook was bleak.

Today, the eagle remains on the endangered species list in Pennsylvania, but the future is bright. Assisted by man, protected by laws, and bolstered by its own ability to adapt and evolve, the eagle is making a comeback.

Discover how and learn more about these majestic birds May 12, when PPL Corporation’s [Holtwood Environmental Preserve](#) hosts “Return of the Bald Eagle.” Presented by Doug Gross of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, this special program will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Holtwood Environmental Center, located at the intersection of Old Holtwood and New Village roads in Holtwood, Pa.

Gross, who manages the state’s bald eagle program, will share the story of the bald eagle’s resurgence in Pennsylvania and the Game Commission’s continuing efforts to support eagle restoration. A wildlife biologist and expert on endangered species, Gross will offer participants a glimpse into the world of a creature that has captured the imagination of young and old for centuries.

Nowhere has the eagle’s resurgence been more apparent, perhaps, than at the Holtwood preserve, home to four of the state’s more than 80 known nesting sites. The sites flank both sides of the Susquehanna River near PPL’s Holtwood hydroelectric plant. One site, established several years ago on the York County side below Holtwood Dam, sits atop an electric transmission tower and can be viewed from nearby.

Bald eagles mate for life, and the York County nesting pair at Holtwood has contributed more than 16 new eagles to the lower Susquehanna River Valley since choosing the site. The eagles’ behavior in recent weeks indicates that the pair is likely caring for young chicks again this spring, said Arbogast.

To see photos of the Holtwood eagles and monitor their activity, visit the [Holtwood Preserve webpage](#). New photos and eagle updates are posted regularly.

For more information about the May 12 program, contact Arbogast at 717-284-6272.

In addition to the May 12 program, PPL has scheduled an eagle watch for Saturday, May 14, from 10 a.m. to noon. The public is invited. Participants should gather at the Lock 12 Historic Site on the York side of the Holtwood Dam west of the Norman Wood Bridge on Route 372.

The Holtwood Environmental Preserve, in conjunction with PPL’s Holtwood hydroelectric plant, provides lakeside recreational opportunities and facilities for camping, hiking, picnicking, boating, sightseeing, fishing and hunting on more than 5,000 acres along the Susquehanna River.



## 10 Year Anniversaries for Land Recycling, DEP Website

In May two significant programs in the Department of Environmental Protection celebrate their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary—the Land Recycling Program and DEP’s website.

**Land Recycling:** On May 19, 1995 Gov. Ridge and a bipartisan group of Senate and House members gathered in the former U.S. Steel's Tube Works in McKeesport on a rainy day to sign the Land Recycling and Environmental Standards Act into law at the site of an old steel plant.

Just over two years later, Gov. Ridge stood on the same site and cut the ribbon on the site of a new business that employed over 2,000 people, a symbol of what the program could do.

Since then dozens of states, the federal government and other countries looked to the “Pennsylvania Brownfields Law” as a model to follow.

Through 2004 the program has rehabilitated more than 1,700 brownfield sites across Pennsylvania providing places of employment for tens of thousands of people.

Progress continues today with new innovations like the Brownfields Team to build on the success of the past.

DEP just issued its [Land Recycling Program 2003-2004 Annual Report](#) which is now available online.

**DEP Website:** In May 1995 the Internet and the World Wide Web were something brand new, but the Department of Environmental Protection moved quickly to take advantage of the new technology.

Thanks to the ingenuity of Russ Stutzman, an aquatic biologist in DEP’s Southwest Regional Office, DEP became the first Pennsylvania state agency to have its own website to give citizens instant access to information from the department.

Over the years the website expanded dramatically from 20,000 hits a month in 1995 (which folks thought was outstanding) to a record 58 million hits in May of 2002 when hundreds of thousands of people logged on to watch the Peregrine Falcons at the Rachel Carson Building take their first tentative flights.

Take a trip through time in the online [Way Back Machine](#) and look at how DEP’s website (and the web) has evolved—

[November 1996](#) [January 1998](#) [February 2000](#) [September 2002](#)  
[Present Day Department of Environmental Protection](#)

**Upcoming Birthdays:** On June 28, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources celebrates its 10<sup>th</sup> birthday and the Department of Environmental Protection celebrates its 35<sup>th</sup>; its roots going back to the original Department of Environmental Resources formed in 1970.

## Discover Appalachia Interactive Map by National Geographic Highlights PA

National Geographic, state tourism officials and representatives of several regional agencies unveiled a new "Geotourism Map Guide to Appalachia" this week at the "Assets to Opportunities" Conference in Altoona.



The map, developed by National Geographic with assistance from the Appalachian Regional Commission and state tourism officials, highlights the region's natural, cultural, and heritage-related assets.

The Appalachian Region boasts six of the top 10 states most visited by travelers.

Some of the Pennsylvania sites on the map include Old Bedford Village in Bedford, Manchester Craftsmen's Guild in Pittsburgh, the town of Jim Thorpe, Cherry Springs State Park Dark Sky Preserve in Galeton, and the Drake Well Museum in Titusville.

Visit the [Geotourism Map Guide to Appalachia](#) online.

## **Taking Positive Action**

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### **Funding Directed to Small Business Energy Efficiency, P2 Equipment Grants**

The Department of Environmental Protection this week announced it was retargeting funding to help finance equipment purchases and process changes that reduce energy consumption and prevent pollution by small businesses, rather than funding more site assessments.

DEP is redirecting \$500,000 into the [Small Business Advantage Grant Program](#), which provides a 50 percent matching grant of up to \$7,500 to pay for equipment or finance process changes that reduce energy consumption and prevent pollution -- initiatives that bolster a company's bottom line.

This year, the program reached the limits of its funding in January, five months before its scheduled deadline of June 30. Advantage grants are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. With \$500,000 in redirected funds and additional support from other appropriations, the program will be able to reopen July 1.

The \$500,000 is being redirected from the [Site Assessment Grant Program](#), which closes June 30.

The changes means more funding will be available to help businesses across the state find ways to increase energy efficiency, prevent pollution and save money.

For example, D. Pierce Transportation Inc. in Westmoreland County is saving \$60,000 annually by installing bunk heaters in 26 trucks. The heaters will warm the cabs in the winter and reduce fuel consumption by eliminating the need to idle during layovers. The Small Business Advantage Grant Program provided \$7,500 toward the \$29,120 project in March.

Boswell Lumber Co. in Somerset County is installing a new waste-wood grinder in its manufacturing plant. With the purchase of the new equipment, the company not only will save approximately \$14,560 annually in operating costs, but it also will increase production and be able to sell the recycled wood waste for animal bedding. The company was awarded a \$7,500 Small Business Advantage grant in March to buy the new grinder.

Visit the [Small Business Advantage Grant Program](#) webpage for more information.

**NewsClip:** [Dry Cleaner saves money, environment](#)

## Energy Efficiency, P2 Assessment Grants Available Only Thru June 30

There is still time for small business owners to take advantage of \$500,000 in [site assessment grants](#) from the Department of Environmental Protection, but the program closes on June 30.

Funds for this program have been redirected by DEP to the Small Business Advantage Program.

Site assessments help business owners finance assessments to evaluate their manufacturing processes, operational procedures, energy consumption, raw material use and waste streams.

Check the *PA Environment Digest's* [Professional Services Directory](#) for professionals that can help you with site assessments.

Visit the [Site Assessment Grant Program](#) for more information.

## Feature

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### Habitat Solutions, Inc. Restoring Native Plants, Wetlands & Streams

When Mike Mooney founded Habitat Solutions, Inc. he worked on lots of restoration projects, but didn't have a lot of experience running his own business.

Now three years later, Mooney has worked on jobs as far away as Georgia and as close as Greene and Allegheny counties supplying native species for wetland restoration and original plantings and has two employees.

"Non-native species are the Trojan horse of environmental problems," said Mooney. "Planting species from most nurseries could be doing more damage than good."

Habitat Solutions, Inc. is located on 15 acres and specializes in supplying native wetland and riparian species.

"The wetland and nursery area we have are on land owned by CONSOL Energy, Inc., 200 yards away from the Hahn mine discharge treatment facility," said Mooney.

"This project has really been a cooperative effort with CONSOL Energy, and has been mutually beneficial to both organizations," said Joseph A. Cerenzia, Manager, Public Relations, CONSOL Energy, Inc..

One of Mooney's most interesting jobs was to supply plant materials for the [Riverquarium](#) in Georgia that serves as an interpretative center for native species.

"They found us almost by accident on the Internet," said Mooney. "It's hard to find nurseries that supply these kinds of plant materials."

Mooney, 28, graduated from Wittenberg University with a degree in biology.

He started his business after getting practical experience in the [Ohio Natural Areas and Preserves Program](#) and working for a consulting firm in Pennsylvania that had its own native plant nursery.



Installing fiber mat to help stabilize Rocky Run stream bank. See the special photo feature at the bottom of this webpage.

## PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

“I worked on projects in the five preserves in the Ohio system and on Superfund restoration projects for the consulting firm,” said Mooney. “My experiences there led me to see the demand for nurseries like Habitat Solutions.”

The Greene County project involved wetlands and stream restoration as well as wetlands enhancement in Rocky Run for CONSOL Energy, something Mooney says is rare all in one project. (*See the special photo feature at the bottom of this webpage.*)

The [Pennsylvania Biodiversity Partnership](#) last year released its [draft Conservation Plan](#) which highlighted two main threats to biodiversity in Pennsylvania—loss of habitat and pollution.

Included in concerns about loss of habitat was the growing problem of non-native, invasive species of plants and animals. Restoration of native species on public and private lands was a key recommendation in the draft Plan.

Mike Mooney and Habitat Solutions, Inc. are part of a new industry spawned initially by government rules requiring land and stream restoration, but growing now because of the interest businesses, watershed groups and individual property owners have shown in restoring native species and systems in the environment.

“It’s great to be able to apply what you know and build a business that benefits the environment, all at the same time,” said Mooney.

Contact Mike Mooney at 412-853-7883 or by email to: [mike@habitatsolutions.net](mailto:mike@habitatsolutions.net)

**More Resources:** [Pennsylvania Native Plant Society](#)  
[Three Rivers Habitat Council](#)  
[Landscaping with Native Plants in PA](#)  
[Audubon Center for Native Plants](#)  
[Wildlands Conservancy Native Plants Initiative](#)  
[Non-Native Invasive Species](#)  
[PA Landscape & Nursery Association – Invasive Plants](#)  
[Octorara Native Plant Nursery](#)  
[Ernest Conservation Seeds](#)

## Opinion

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### **Community Water Systems and the EPA: Providing Safe, Clean Drinking Water**

*by Jon Capacasa*

*Director, Water Protection Division*

*Region 3, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

Our nation’s public water systems provide us with one of the safest supplies of drinking water in the world. This year marks an important milestone for public health protection in America: the 30th Anniversary of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

We have plenty to celebrate, but we’re not ready to declare victory. With passage of the Safe Drinking Water Act, we not only started preventing pollution of our rivers, lakes, and streams that serve as sources of drinking water, we ensured better treatment at the water plant, and began educating consumers about the water coming out of the tap.

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America's drinking water infrastructure is enormous. More than 168,000 water systems supply the vast majority of America's drinking water. This huge network delivers clean, safe drinking water to millions of people.

Whether your tap water comes from surface or ground water, all drinking water sources are vulnerable to contaminants from a variety of activities. The origin of contaminants might be in your neighborhood or many miles away. When rain falls, it picks up and carries pollutants, depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and even underground sources of drinking water.

The best way to protect drinking water is to keep contaminants from entering source water. Multiple federal, state, and local laws and programs and individual actions help communities identify the sources of drinking water and potential threats.

Public water systems are the first line of defense to reduce or eliminate contaminants in source water. They collect and treat water, hire trained and qualified operators, and have an emergency response plan in the event it is needed. These community water plants test for up to 90 regulated contaminants, conduct extensive daily and monthly water tests, and prepare vulnerability assessments of their infrastructure.

After source water has been treated and disinfected, the distribution system delivers water through pumps and pipes to your home. Thanks to the Safe Drinking Water Act, if systems have difficulty meeting regulations and providing safe, reliable drinking water, government agencies can help provide assistance. If all else fails, enforcement action can be taken against the system.

Constant vigilance to protect water before it becomes your drinking water is essential and involves all of us. The more you know about drinking water, the better equipped you are to help protect it. One way of learning about drinking water is through annual Consumer Confidence Reports that public water suppliers supply to all water customers. These reports tell you where your drinking water comes from, what's in it, and how you can help protect it.

An informed, involved, and supportive public is the foundation of drinking water protection. What we do in the watershed can directly impact the quality of water that arrives at the treatment plant.

**NewsClip:** [May 1-7 National Safe Drinking Water Week](#)

### Quick Clips

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[Solar Panels Offset Town's Electric Bill](#)

[Centre County Growth Under Debate](#)

[Students reap benefits studying environment](#)

[Volunteers spruce up damaged trail](#)

[Volunteers Beautify Bucks](#)

[They're Spreading Out to Pitch In](#)

[Conservancy Program Raises Awareness of Plant, Animal Habitats](#)

[Environmental Councils Connect Communities](#)

[PSU Workshop to Advise Well Owners](#)

[Teens dig deep for Earth Day cleanup](#)

[Fund Grows for Hunting & Fishing Museum](#)

[Luzerne Sees Recycling Success Story](#)

[County and City Teaming Up for Recycling Education](#)  
[Going with Green Fuels, Some Ticked Pink](#)  
[Pulling the plug on old energy](#)  
[Penn State Switching to Green Fuels](#)  
[Allegheny Port Authority rolls out first hybrid bus](#)  
[Hybrid drivers save \\$900 per year](#)  
[Same whale, different river](#)  
[Proposal designates more wilderness in Allegheny Forest](#)  
[Knoll's Earth Day award: a certified green building](#)  
[Deer population strategy outlined](#)

## **Watershed NewsClips**

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[Founder to leave Codorus Creek group](#)  
[Volunteers spruce up local parks, waterways](#)  
[Volunteers take pride to Lackawanna's Banks](#)  
[Stream Signs Going Up](#)  
[EPA Project to Protect River from Butler Mine Tunnel](#)  
[40 People Jump into Creek Cleanup](#)  
[Chartiers Creek to hold annual watershed walk](#)  
[Giving Back to the Lehigh River](#)  
[Troubled waters for Delaware River towns](#)  
[Medallions purchased to reduce pollution](#)  
[MASD students aid Earth Day cleanup](#)

## **Regulations**

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The Environmental Quality Board and the Coal and Clay Mine Subsidence Insurance Board published notices this week on several of their actions.

The Environmental Quality Board [provided notice it was accepting for study two rulemaking petitions](#) requesting redesignation of streams in Chester and Monroe counties.

The May 18 Environmental Quality Board meeting has been cancelled. The next scheduled meeting is June 21.

Coal and Clay Mine Subsidence Insurance Board published [notice of a final-form regulation related to insurance coverage limits](#).

### **[Pennsylvania Bulletin – April 30, 2005](#)**

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

[Copies of Proposed Regulations](#)

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

## **Technical Guidance & Permits**

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The Department of Environmental Protection [published notice of changes to four guidance documents](#) this week relating to names and addresses, municipal codes, storage tanks and community water systems. DEP also [published notice of final general air quality permits](#) for nonroad engines and two relating to diesel-fired engines.

**Rescind:** DEP ID: 012-0830-001. Data Standards for Names and Addresses. This document provided standard naming conventions for use within the Department.

**Rescind:** DEP ID: 012-0830-002. Data Standards for Pennsylvania Municipality Codes and Names. This document provided standard naming conventions for use within the Department.

**Proposed:** DEP ID: 393-0900-011. Modification and Maintenance Issues. This guidance document assists individuals in determining the classification of various modifications to storage tank systems and in determining when certified inspectors or installers are required. Comments due May 31.

**Final:** DEP ID: 383-2129-003. Consumer Confidence Report Handbook. This handbook was developed to assist community water suppliers in complying with the consumer confidence reporting requirements found in 25 Pa. Code § 109.416 (relating to CCR requirements).

- Visit the DEP [Air Quality General Permit webpage](#) for copies of the new General Permits.

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

## **Calendar of Upcoming Events**

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

- [More Regional Water Resource Planning Meetings announced.](#)
- **May 3** – House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee informational meeting on the effects of mine subsidence.
- **May 3** – House Local Government Committee meeting on [House Bill 88](#) (Steil-R-Bucks) authorizing certain municipalities to develop comprehensive watershed stormwater management plans; [House Bill 965](#) (Hickernel-R-Lancaster) amending the Main Street Program to encourage downtown redevelopment; [House Bill 1108](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) establishing the Water and Wastewater System Connection Funding Program.



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- **May 3-5** – [Annual Conference](#), Pa Section-American Water Works Association in Valley Forge.
- **May 5-6** – [PA Greenway and Trail Summit](#). Mechanicsburg.
- **May 6-7** - West Branch Susquehanna Restoration Symposium - \_Location: Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College, PA \_Contact: Amy Wolfe at 570-726-3118 or [awolfe@tu.org](mailto:awolfe@tu.org)
- **May 9** – Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee Environmental Issues Forum to discuss greenhouse gas action plans.

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

#### [Watershed Events](#)

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

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

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

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

### **Helpful Web Links**

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

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

### **Contributions Invited**

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

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