

-PA ——— Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

March 10, 2008

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

500 Attend Keystone Coldwater Conference, Schuylkill Watershed Congress



Why We Work to Restore Our Watersheds

Over the last two weekends 500 people attended the Keystone Coldwater Conference and the Schuylkill Watershed Congress anxious to learn more about how to protect and restore Pennsylvania's watersheds. Here's a quick summary of each of these very successful conferences.

Keystone Coldwater Conference Attended by 300

The Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited held their 8th [Keystone Coldwater Conference](#) on February 22-23 at the Penn Stater Conference Center in State College.

This year's conference, titled "Headwater Ecosystems: Protection, Management and Research" focused on tools and techniques to best protect headwater ecosystems and highlighted emerging research and successful partnerships.

The conference was attended by nearly 300 people from Conservation Districts, watershed associations, Trout Unlimited Chapters, conservation agencies and universities.

The conference featured keynote presentations from Larry Schweiger, President of the [National Wildlife Foundation](#), and Bern Sweeney, President of the [Stroud Water Research Center](#). They spoke with the audience about the current state of our headwater ecosystems, the threats we face, and why they are imperative to protect.

Eight breakout sessions rounded out the morning and afternoon, with presentations from the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#), Clean Water Action, SE Montgomery TU, [National Trout Unlimited](#), Fish and Boat Commission, [Western Pennsylvania Conservancy](#), U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Environmental Protection, and Penn State University.

Some conference participants also attended a headwater taxonomy and field identification workshop looking at headwater amphibians, reptiles, fish, mussels, invertebrates and plants. The Conference agenda and session descriptions are available on the [Coldwater Heritage website](#).

The 2010 conference will be held on February 26-27 at the Penn Stater Conference Center in State College.

[PA Trout Unlimited](#) is a non-profit organization working to conserve and enhance Pennsylvania's coldwater resources. PA Trout Unlimited organizes this conference every two years.

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For additional information about the program content, please contact Deb Nardone by sending email to: dnardone@coldwaterheritage.org or call 814-359-5233.

Schuylkill Watershed Congress Attracts Nearly 200

Nearly 200 people gathered for the [Schuylkill Watershed Congress](#) on March 1-2 to share ideas on how to better protect and restore watersheds on the Southeast.

The Keynote Speaker was John K. Jackson, Senior Research Scientist, at the Stroud Water Research Center, who spoke on the topic, "Is a Cold Water Fishery by any other name still as clean a stream? A look at Pennsylvania's complex system for labeling streams and what these labels mean for a stream's biodiversity, management, and protection."

Attendees also took advantage of 30 different breakout sessions on a variety of topics in addition to three watershed tours the following day to a Natural Lands Trust meadows management project, the Fairmount Water Works Interpretive Center and a stream bank stabilization project by the Lower Merion Conservancy.

An impressive group of nearly 50 groups helped sponsor the event including: Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Albert Scientific, Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring, Berks County Conservancy, Berks County Conservation District, Bucks County Planning Commission, Center in the Park Senior Environmental Corps, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Chester County Conservation District, Clean Water Action, Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, Friends of Manayunk Canal, Friends of Mingo Creek, Greater Pottstown Watershed Alliance, Green Valleys Association, Hay Creek Watershed Association, League of Women Voters of PA WREN Project, Lower Merion Conservancy, Maiden Creek Watershed Association, A.D. Marble & Co., Monocacy Hill Conservation Association, Montgomery County Community College, Montgomery County Conservation District, Montgomery County Lands Trust, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Natural Lands Trust, Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center, Octoraro Native Plant Nursery, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers, Pennsylvania Sea Grant, Perkiomen Valley Trout Unlimited, Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy, Philadelphia Water Department, Schuylkill Action Network, Schuylkill Canal Association, Schuylkill Conservation District, Schuylkill Headwaters Association, Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area, Stell Environmental Enterprises, Streamline Organizational Services, Stroud Water Research Center, Tulpehocken Creek Trout Unlimited, Valley Creek Restoration Partnership, Valley Forge Trout Unlimited, West Chester Fish, Game & Wildlife Association and United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

Coldwater Heritage Partnership Announces \$35,000 in Grant Awards

The [Coldwater Heritage Partnership](#) recently announced that \$35,000 in grants have been awarded to local organizations to protect and conserve Pennsylvania's coldwater stream habitats.

The Coldwater Heritage Partnership is a cooperative initiative of [Pennsylvania Trout Unlimited](#), the [Department of Conservation and Natural Resources](#), the [Fish and Boat Commission](#), and the [Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds](#).

"Pennsylvania Trout is excited to award grants to worthy organizations for the conservation and protection of their local streams," stated Ken Undercoffer, President of the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited.

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Funded organizations will be responsible for creating a Coldwater Conservation plan that: gathers existing data about the coldwater ecosystem; identifies potential impacts, threats, problems and opportunities to our coldwater streams; formulates a plan of action for proposed conservation and protection strategies; and, builds community awareness and support for the conservation of our coldwater streams.

Grants have been made to the following organizations:

Western PA Conservancy: \$5,000 to assess the aquatic health and status of coldwater fisheries in the Browns Run watershed in Warren County.

Chester-Ridley-Crum Watersheds Association: \$5,000 to prepare a watershed action plan for the W. Branch of Crum Creek, Chester County, that identifies specific sites, recommendations for actions and programs to maintain and enhance stream health and habitat.

Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy: \$5,000 to help establish broader partnerships within the upper Perkiomen Creek watershed and identify feasible water quality and habitat improvement projects in Montgomery, Berks and Lehigh Counties.

Clinton County Conservation District: \$5,000 to collect and analyze data to determine existing and potential impacts to Fishing Creek and Cedar Run and get community investment in order to complete a conservation plan for the restoration and protection of the watersheds in Clinton and Centre Counties.

Fayette County Conservation District, in partnership with Penns Corner Conservancy: \$5,000 to collect water samples, macroinvertebrate samples and conduct electro fishing to determine the health of Ramcat Run and how to improve the fishery in Fayette County.

Bob's Creek Stream Guardians: \$5,000 to conduct an assessment including land use, water chemistry, aquatic insect investigation, and fishery population studies on named tributary of the wild trout section of Bob's Creek, Bedford County.

Clean Water Fund: \$5,000 to collect data and create CHP Plan on Waltz Creek and Greenwalk Creek in Northampton County to Exceptional Value status. Besides offering grants, the Coldwater Heritage Partnership works to provide technical and educational assistance to organizations interested in protecting coldwater ecosystems.

For more information, please contact the Deborah Nardone at 814-359-5233, or by sending email to: dnardone@coldwaterheritage.org.

DEP Announces Growing Greener Watershed Grant Awards

The Department of Environmental Protection this week announced \$22 million in [Growing Greener Watershed Grants](#) for more than 120 projects that will help restore the state's polluted streams, provide clean water, and help prevent devastating floods in communities across the commonwealth

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“Pennsylvania has been blessed with incredible natural resources,” said Gov. Rendell. “Unfortunately our streams have been tainted by agricultural run-off and acid mine drainage from the unregulated activity of the past. Furthermore, recurring floods in many places have eroded stream banks and rendered many flood measures ineffective, which can exacerbate the damage caused to our communities.

“The \$22.3 million in grants we’re announcing today will help undo this damage with effective treatment systems, agricultural best management practices, stabilization work, stormwater management strategies, and flood protection projects. Together, these measures will help restore the health and natural functions of our streams.”

Of the \$22.3 million awarded today by the Department of Environmental Protection, \$9 million comes from the Growing Greener program in the form of watershed grants and \$10.1 million comes from the Growing Greener II initiative. The remaining \$3.2 million was awarded by DEP in nonpoint source implementation program grants, which are funded by the federal government through Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act.

The grants support acid mine drainage treatment facilities, stream bank stabilization efforts to reduce erosion and protect against flooding, added riparian buffers to filter pollutants before reaching streams, aquatic habitat improvements, and comprehensive watershed protection planning. The grants will also be used to implement innovative agricultural and stormwater management techniques that reduce nonpoint source pollution in streams.

This year, DEP is allocating up to \$2 million to begin addressing the unmet operation and maintenance costs of acid mine drainage remediation projects.

The grant funds also will support the first Watershed Renaissance Initiative, awarding \$381,000 to treat acid mine discharges in Indiana County’s Bear Run watershed. The new initiative is intended to fund the complete or substantial implementation of an existing watershed restoration plan by encouraging public-private partnerships, long-term coordinated stewardship of the water resources, and educational outreach to promote environmental protection.

Smaller, impaired watersheds that have existing comprehensive plans to restore water quality are targeted through the Watershed Renaissance Initiative, which will again be available in next year’s grant round.

Since 1999, DEP has invested more than \$190 million in watershed grants for 1,657 projects in all 67 counties of Pennsylvania through the traditional Growing Greener program. The grants are used to create or restore wetlands, restore stream buffer zones, eliminate causes of nonpoint source pollution, plug oil and gas wells, reclaim abandoned mine lands and restore aquatic life to streams that were lifeless due to acid mine drainage.

Voters overwhelmingly approved the \$625 million Growing Greener II initiative in May 2005 to clean up rivers and streams; protect natural areas, open spaces and working farms; and shore up key programs to improve quality of life and revitalize communities across the commonwealth.

Since then, DEP has awarded \$38.5 million for watershed projects to make Pennsylvania healthier, a better place to live, and more competitive in attracting and supporting business investment.

[A list of grants awarded is available online.](#)

DEP is now accepting grant applications for the next Growing Greener grant round. Applications will be accepted until May 16. (*See separate story*)

DEP Accepting Applications for Growing Greener Watershed Restoration Grants

The Department of Environmental Protection is now accepting applications for the 2008 [Growing Greener](#) Plus Watershed Restoration Grants Program.

The deadline for applications is May 16.

For the upcoming grant round, the Department will invest in projects that will ultimately protect and/or restore this Commonwealth's watersheds from impairment due to nonpoint source pollution. Example of special priority areas include: Watershed Renaissance--comprehensive watershed plan implementation in a small watershed; projects located in "priority" watersheds that reduce the source of impairment; beneficial reuse of waste products and/or remining; and beneficial use of abandoned mine pools.

Examples of eligible projects could include reducing nonpoint source pollution in watersheds where streams are impaired; integrating stormwater management and flood protection into watershed management; encouraging the beneficial use of abandoned mine pool water; and water conservation strategies and projects that will help reduce Total Maximum Daily Load pollutants.

The Department is authorized to allocate these grants to a variety of eligible applicants including: counties, authorities and other municipalities; county conservation districts; watershed organizations recognized by the Department who promote local watershed conservation efforts, council of governments and other authorized organizations involved in the restoration and protection of the environment in this Commonwealth. Growing Greener II provides additional focus on capital improvement projects related to watershed protection, mine and abandoned mine remediation, and plugging of abandoned oil and gas wells.

Through the same application, applicants can also apply for funding through the Department's Flood Protection Grant Program and Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grant. Flood protection grants are for communities that operate and maintain State and Federal flood protection projects. Section 319 grants focus on funding similar projects to Growing Greener but with special emphasis within targeted watersheds.

Information for this round of grants will be available on the [Growing Greener webpage](#) or interesting persons can send e-mail to: GrowingGreener@state.pa.us or contact the Center at (717) 705-5400. Written requests should be addressed to the Department of Environmental Protection, Grants Center, 15th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, P. O. Box 8776, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8776.

Video Blog Feature

Cleaning Up 15,000 Miles of Water Quality Impaired Streams, Chesapeake Bay

Pennsylvania has 15,000 miles of water quality impaired streams and rivers, but the focus of recent months has been on requirements to cleanup Pennsylvania waters draining into the Chesapeake Bay.

In December 2004 the Department of Environmental Protection began to develop the [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy](#), a plan to reduce nutrient discharges from wastewater treatment plants, agricultural lands, streets, parking lots and other sources to meet federal Clean Water Act requirements.



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The cost of this cleanup then was estimated to be \$8.2 billion from both point and non-point sources, but more recently the cost for just the first 183 wastewater plants may exceed \$1 billion. DEP has estimated that funding to help farmers reduce nutrient loadings is annually \$174 million below what is needed.

Harry Campbell, a Science Advocate from the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#), helps explain the challenges of cleaning up Pennsylvania's watersheds in this Video Blog Feature.

Video Blog Feature: [Cleaning Up Pennsylvania's Watersheds](#)

Link: [Sticker Shock for Upgrades at PA Water Plants, Chesapeake Bay Journal](#)

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On the Hill

- Session Schedule
- On the Senate/House Agenda
- Secretary Says DEP's Proposed Budget Makes Tough Choices, Limits Programs
- Gypsy Moths, Lifeguards, PA MAP Highlight DCNR Budget Hearings
- Senate Committee Meets on Game Commission Annual Report, Deer Management

Other News

- 2008 Philadelphia Sustainability Award Winners Announced
- New iConserve Website to Inspire Pennsylvania to Protect, Enjoy Natural Resources
- Stormwater Management Administration Grant Applications Due March 31
- New Web Tool Maps Critical Characteristics for PA's Streams and Watersheds
- Commission Invites Public Input in Norfolk Southern Stream Cleanup Plans
- 2008 Adult Trout Stocking Schedule Now Online, Anglers Invited to Expos
- Volunteers Provide Protective Passage for Spotted Salamanders
- Learn "Green" Backyard Gardening Techniques from EPA's Exhibit
- PA Home Energy Conference Set for March 18-19 in State College
- West Chester Passes Energy Star Ordinance for Commercial Construction
- New EPA Tool Helps Water/Wastewater Plants Tap into Energy Savings
- Climate Change Uncertainties, Opportunities for Business Innovation Workshop
- EPA Awards \$2.5 Million for Brownfields Job Training, Including in PA
- DCNR Soliciting Applications for Volunteer Forest Firefighter Grants
- Petitions Circulated to Urge Hunting License Increase for Game Commission
- Peregrine Falcon Educator's Workshop to be Held April 3
- Help Wanted: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve

Feature

- Bill for Upgrades at PA Water Plants Creates Sticker Shock, *By Karl Blankenship, Chesapeake Bay Journal*

Grants & Awards

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

On the Hill

Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to voting session the week of March 10 and will be in session the next two weeks.

You can watch the [Senate Floor Session](#) and [House Floor Session](#) live online.

On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House published committee schedules and floor Calendars for the week of March 10—

Calendars

House (March 10): [House Resolution 546](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging Congress to investigate gas and energy prices; [House Resolution 518](#) (Petrone-D-Allegheny) commemorating the life and contributions of Lady Bird Johnson for her leadership role in preserving its natural beauty.

The Special Energy Session Calendar includes: [Special Session House Bill 1](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing a grant program and authorizing indebtedness for Energy Development Authority; [Special Session House Bill 13](#) (Bennington-R-Mifflin) amends the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act to provide for increased use of energy efficiency, extends the compliance period from 15 to 21 years and providing additional milestones for the use of alternative energy.

Senate (March 10): [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to take steps to protect the Appalachian Trail; [House Bill 1329](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) further providing for appeals and challenges to zoning ordinances; [House Bill 1330](#) (Kessler) further providing for appeals from official maps and local development ordinances; [Senate Bill 1264](#) (Boscola-D-Lehigh) providing for geologists in training; [Senate Bill 1248](#) (Rhoades-R-Schuylkill) providing for a home heating oil rebate program; [House Bill 1214](#) (Surra-D-Elk) changing the terms of Game Commissioners from eight to four years.

Committees

House: the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meets to consider [House Resolution 567](#) (Petri-R-Bucks) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study intermodal transit in southeastern PA; the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Special Session House Bill 42](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) providing for biodiesel production incentives and House Resolution XX to restore full LIHEAP funding; the Commerce Committee holds a hearing on DCED program and budget issues.

Senate: the Game and Fisheries Committee holds an information meeting on the Game Commission's Deer Management Program and Game Commission Annual Report; the Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee holds a hearing on the PUC

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budget; the Public Health and Welfare Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1320](#) (Siptroth-D-Monroe) establishing a disposal program for home-generated medical sharps.

Other: Legislative Budget & Finance Committee meets to release a report on its performance audit of Fish and Boat Commission.

Bills Introduced

This environmental bill of interest was introduced this week—

Great Lakes Compact: [Senate Bill 1301](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) adoption of the Great Lakes Compact regulating water withdrawals from the Lake Erie Watershed in Pennsylvania.

Spring Environmental Legislation Scorecard for the Senate and House

The Senate and House made some progress on key environmental issues during the first two months of the year, but much work remains to be done. Here's a quick scorecard of environmental bills pending in the General Assembly.

Energy Independence: Both the Senate and House have passed competing versions of major parts of an Energy Independence Plan proposed by Gov. Rendell, but much more work remains to reconcile the differences and fill in pieces that Gov. Rendell sees as missing.

The Senate passed [Special Session Senate Bill 1](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) which outlines a \$650 million investment plan to support alternative and renewable energy use, [Special Session Senate Bill 22](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) that includes an incentive program for the use of biofuels in transportation and [Special Session Senate Bill 36](#) (MJ.White) that includes a biodiesel mandate. (*12/17/07 Pa Environment Digest*)

The House has passed [House Bill 1200](#) (DePasquale-D-York) creating a grant and loan program to encourage the use of renewable energy at the PA Energy Development Authority (but without a funding source), [House Bill 1202](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) that includes a renewable transportation fuels mandate and [House Bill 2200](#) (George-D-Clearfield) requiring electric utilities to reduce electric usage by 2.5 percent. (*6/25/07 Pa Environment Digest*) (*2/18/08 Pa Environment Digest*)

The House is poised to consider [Special Session House Bill 1](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing Gov. Rendell's \$850 million bond-funded Energy Independence Plan to support renewable energy resources (this time with the same funding source as Special Session Senate Bill 1) when it returns on March 10. (*2/18/08 Pa Environment Digest*)

The portion of the energy package related to transitioning from electric rate caps to a competitive electric market has seen a number of hearings, but no action was taken by the full Senate or House. The bills include [House Bill 1201](#) (George-D-Clearfield) (*6/18/07 Pa Environment Digest*) and [Senate Bill 1134](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) (*11/26/07 Pa Environment Digest*).

Other energy-related legislation is also likely to be considered that is not part of the primary Energy Independence Package.

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For example, [Special Session House Bill 5](#) (M.Smith-D-Montgomery) establishing High-Performance Green Building Tax Credit Program, [House Bill 894](#) (Leach-D-Montgomery) increasing state reimbursements for school buildings built using green technology, [Special Session House Bill 8](#) (Leach-D-Montgomery) providing an exclusion from Sales Tax for fluorescent bulbs, [Special Session House Bill 11](#) (Parker-D-Philadelphia) providing an exclusion from Sales Tax for Energy Star appliances and [House Bill 690](#) (Cohen-D-Philadelphia) creating a plug-in hybrid vehicle task force were all passed the House and are now in the Senate and [House Bill 656](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) allowing preserved farms to lease property for the development of wind farms is still in the House.

Deep Mine Safety: Five and a half years after the [2002 Quecreek Mine Accident](#), the coal industry, mine workers and the Rendell Administration have now apparently agreed on a bill—[Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset)-- to adopt recommendations made by the 2002 Governor’s Commission formed after the accident and to make sweeping updates to Pennsylvania’s deep mine safety law. The bill passed the Senate and is in the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. (*[2/18/08 Pa Environment Digest](#)*)

Climate Change: The Senate and House have both passed legislation directing the state to come up with a Climate Change Action Plan and now will have to resolve the differences between the two by deciding whose bill to move: [Senate Bill 266](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) or [House Bill 110](#) (Vitali-D-Delaware). (*[11/26/07 Pa Environment Digest](#)*)

Great Lakes Compact: [House Bill 1705](#) (Harkins-D-Erie) that would adopt the Great Lakes Compact on water withdrawals affecting the Lake Erie drainage basin was passed by the House and is now in the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee. (*[2/4/08 Pa Environment Digest](#)*)

Phosphate Dish Detergent Ban: [Senate Bill 1017](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) banning dishwasher detergents with phosphates was passed by the Senate and now is in the House.

Center for Environmental Education: [Senate Bill 356](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) establishing the [Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education](#) in law was passed by the Senate and is now in the House Appropriations Committee.

Historic Preservation Grants: [House Bill 221](#) (Tangretti-R-Westmoreland) establishing a Historic Preservation Grant Program passed the House and is now in the Senate Community, Economic and Recreation Development Committee.

Public Review of Clean Air Plans: [Senate Bill 355](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) requiring further public review of State Clean Air Implementation Plans passed by the Senate and is now in the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

EQB Legal Advice: [Senate Bill 105](#) (Musto-D-Luzerne) requiring independent legal advice for the Environmental Quality Board was passed by the Senate and is now in the House.

Justifying Regulations: [Senate Bill 752](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) requiring a detailed justification prior to the adoption of regulations through the Independent Regulatory Review Commission process was passed by the Senate and is now in the House.

Keystone Fund Reporting: [Senate Bill 1069](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) requiring a detailed annual report by DCNR on expenditures from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund was passed by the Senate and is now in the House.

County Waste Management Fee: [House Bill 934](#) (Scavello-R-Monroe) authorizing a county solid waste management fee was reported from the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and is now on the House Tabled Bill Calendar.

Conservation District Law Update: [Senate Bill 1020](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) update of the 1945 county conservation district law was reported from the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee and is now in Senate Appropriations.

Game Commission Board: [House Bill 1214](#) (Surra-D-Elk) changing the terms of members of the Game Commission Board in order to make them more responsive to hunters' interests passed the House and is now in the Senate.

Elk Damage Fund: [House Bill 1078](#) (Hanna-D-Centre) creating the Elk Damage Fund was passed by the House and is now in the Senate.

Appalachian Trail: [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) directing local governments to better protect the Appalachian Trail passed the House and is now in the Senate.

Local Planning: [House Bill 1280](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) further defining traditional neighborhood development, [House Bill 420](#) (Hickernell-R-Lancaster) further defining downtown development under the Main Street Program, [House Bill 1329](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) and [House Bill 1330](#) (Kessler) further providing for appeals from land development ordinances and [House Bill 1787](#) (M.Smith-D-Montgomery) further providing for curative amendments were passed by the House and are now in the Senate.

Secretary Says DEP's Proposed Budget Makes Tough Choices, Limits Programs



Department of Environmental Protection [Secretary Kathleen McGinty](#) told the Senate and House Appropriations Committees this week that an Administration plan to reduce climate changing greenhouse gases is unlikely, a state water resource atlas will be released later this month and funding is needed to address Pennsylvania's \$20 billion water infrastructure needs.

Here's more of what she said on these and other issues.

Budget Generally: Sen. Jake Corman (R-Centre) expressed concern over the fact the General Assembly has to pay the cost of a labor contract negotiated by the Governor with no input from legislators. The result is to balance the budget legislators have to cut programs to pay for the personnel costs.

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Secretary McGinty said there is no fat in this budget and it posed tough decisions for the Governor and the General Assembly. She noted the budget reduces the opportunities for public input on agency decisions by limiting overtime spending, student internships have been cut by 56 percent and vehicle maintenance is postponed.

The Secretary also said she lost hundreds of employees to retirements due to changes made in health benefits by the Rendell Administration.

Sen. Corman concluded by saying he did not know if the General Assembly could restore the line items they traditional do each year given the increase in personnel costs.

The Rendell Administration is still projecting a \$427 million fiscal year-end surplus.

Climate Change: In response to a question by Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) asking where the climate change plan was that Gov. Rendell promised in February 2007, Secretary McGinty said the slower than anticipated movement of energy legislation and the fact that both the [House and Senate passed legislation](#) to create stakeholder groups to develop state climate plans meant the Rendell Administration would not be proposing its own plan. She said at the moment, energy legislation dealing with the ending of electric rate caps in 2010 is a more important issue.

Secretary McGinty also said a \$300,000 program to provide grants to municipalities to develop local greenhouse gas reduction plans would be soon soliciting applications.

Abandoned Mine Reclamation: Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne), Rep. David Reed (R-Indiana) and Rep. Brian Ellis (R-Butler) asked about the status of plans to spend the increased funding the state will receive from the [federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation fund](#). Secretary McGinty said they have not yet finished consulting with focus groups about the most efficient use of the monies, but expected to issue a report soon covering recommendations made by these groups and during public meetings last year. DEP was also considering setting up a special operation and maintenance fund for passive mine drainage treatment systems.

In response to a question from Rep. Ellis about the need for legislation to specify the use of federal AML funds, Secretary McGinty said she thought it might be a good idea, especially for setting up a plan to create an operation and maintenance fund. She said they would be bringing the recommendations back to the General Assembly for guidance.

Chesapeake Bay Cleanup: Senators Pat Vance (R-Cumberland), John Wozniak (D-Cambria), John Gordner (R-Columbia), Jake Corman (R-Centre), Roger Madigan (R-Bradford), Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) and Jim Rhoades (R-Schuylkill) as well as Rep. Scott Conklin (D-Mifflin), Rep. Katie True (R-Lancaster) and Rep. Gordon Denlinger (R-Lancaster) all expressed concern about the [pending \\$1 billion cost](#) for wastewater plants to meet the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy cleanup requirements and the lack of a funding plan from the Governor to meet those needs.

Secretary McGinty said the Governor last week created a special task force, like he did for transportation funding, to study the issue of not only the infrastructure needs for complying with the Chesapeake Bay cleanup, but the over \$20 billion water and wastewater infrastructure needs statewide, including combined sewer overflows.

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Sen. Corman commented that he would like to see much more enthusiasm from the Governor on this issue, noting he held press conferences and rallies in Philadelphia on mass transit funding, but he does not see that on the Bay issue.

A number of Senators pointed to the urgent need to deal with the Chesapeake Bay issue now because of the short 3-year window that wastewater plants have to meet these requirements. (*See separate article: Bill for Upgrades at PA Water Plants Creates Sticker Shock*)

Budget Secretary Michael Masch told the House Appropriations Committee later in the week the Governor will announce additional steps to deal with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy funding issue in the "next few weeks," but would not go further so as not to preempt his announcement.

He also said there are some wastewater systems that have not taken the steps they should have to implement upgrades and any plan should not reward those systems for not doing what they should have. In addition, he said private companies have taken over some systems and have an ability to tap private financing to meet their upgrade requirements.

Conservation District Funding: Sen. Pat Vance (R-Cumberland), Rep. Ron Miller (R-York) and many other Senators and House members asked why the Rendell Administration [cut funding for conservation districts](#) when districts were being called on to do more, including help farmers with conservation work so they can devote more acreage to crops going into biofuels. Secretary McGinty said they proposed the same budget number this year as last year. Quoting from the budget document Sen. Vance noted the Governor proposed \$3.1 million, a cut of \$3.6 million from last year.

Water Resources Plan: Sen. Stuart Greenleaf (R-Montgomery) requested the status of the state's [Water Resources Plan](#). Secretary McGinty said by March 18, the statutory deadline, DEP will deliver copies of a water resource atlas for each of the regions outlined in Act 220 along with a water resource budgeting tool that will help guide decision makers as they look at ways to meet water demands in the future. She said she agreed with the regional advisory committees that much more work remains to be done on the plan.

Delaware River Flooding: Rep. John Siptroth (D-Monroe) and Rep. Mario Scavello (R-Monroe) expressed concern about the management of New York City reservoirs in the upper Delaware River that their constituents believe do not keep enough reserve capacity to store flood waters in times of heavy rains. The House members said the reservoirs are at or near 100 percent capacity when Pennsylvania expects more heavy rain.

Secretary McGinty said the Delaware River Basin Commission's new [flexible river management program](#) will allow better management of the river to reduce flooding. She added that DEP was proposing changes to Chapter 102 regulations to require stream buffers that will help protect floodplains and the proposed Governor's budget initiative to help provide updated floodplain maps.

Wind Mill Siting Criteria: Sen. John Wozniak (D-Cambria) and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) asked if DEP supported creating siting criteria for wind mill farms like is done for municipal waste landfills, citing concerns in a number of counties. Secretary McGinty said DEP worked with a variety of groups to develop a [model ordinance](#) local governments can use to help control the local impacts of wind farms and that the Governor was reluctant

to overrule local governments in the siting issue. For these reasons she was opposed to having statewide siting criteria.

Low-Level Radioactive Waste: Sen. Jim Rhoades (R-Schuylkill) raised a concern over the closure of the [Barnwell Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal facility](#) on June 30, 2008 to waste generated in Pennsylvania and many other states and asked DEP what it plans to do. (In 2006, Pennsylvania sent 1,981.1 cubic feet of [low-level radioactive waste](#) to Barnwell and 55,646 cubic feet to Energy Solutions in Washington.) Secretary McGinty said they are working to find alternatives.

Electric Rate Caps: In response to several questions about energy legislation, Secretary McGinty said the [expiration of electric rate caps](#) in 2010 is an “economic train wreck waiting to happen.” She said the General Assembly should adopt a least cost rates policy rather than continue with prevailing market rates which she said amounted to letting electric companies charge whatever they want to charge.

Secretary McGinty also told the House Committee she supports legislation sponsored by Rep. McCall (D-Carbon)—[House Bill 2201](#)-- that provides a “glide path” to transition to market rates without the need for extending electric rate caps. However, if the General Assembly does not act soon, the Secretary said she could see a scenario where caps could be extended to allow more time to act.

Use of Coal/Carbon Sequestration: In response to a question from Sen. Jim Rhoades (R-Schuylkill) asking if Secretary McGinty was quoted accurately in a [news article](#) saying “we need to find ways not to burn coal,” the Secretary said the article was full of errors. She said she supports finding ways of using coal cleanly, including coal gasification and using [carbon sequestration technology](#). She noted Pennsylvania’s geology could be a good reservoir for carbon dioxide stripped from coal plant emissions.

Environmental Justice: In response to a question by Rep. Jake Wheatley (D-Allegheny), Secretary McGinty said DEP will be holding an environmental justice summit sponsored by the agency’s [Environmental Justice Advisory Board](#).

Trash Cleanups: Sen. Jim Rhoades (R-Schuylkill) urged DEP to continue its support for rural cleanup efforts like [COALS](#) and [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful](#) initiatives which he said he and other legislators supported with legislative initiative funds in the past. Secretary McGinty said she would continue to support these activities.

A copy of [Secretary McGinty’s testimony](#) is available online.

The Senate and House have now completed their initial schedule of agency budget hearings. Several additional hearings will be held, including the Department of Transportation, so watch Calendar of Events as they are scheduled.

Link: [Senate Republican Budget Hearing Summaries/Hearing Videos](#)

Gypsy Moths, Lifeguards, PA MAP Highlight DCNR Budget Hearings



Department of Conservation and Natural Resources [Secretary Michael DiBerardinis](#) was questioned closely in the Senate and House budget hearings this week on plans for dealing with the surging gypsy moth populations, lifeguards at State Parks and the PA MAP Program.

Here's a quick summary of key items—

Gypsy Moths: Deputy Secretary James Grace told the House Appropriations Committee the level of funding for [gypsy moth spraying](#) this year should be adequate to spray over 200,000 acres around the state. He also said the formula for the Bti spray used in the program would be strengthened to make it more effective.

Floodplain Mapping: Secretary DiBerardinis said the requested \$2.4 million for the [PA MAP program](#) should be enough funding to finish digital maps for the entire state and help update floodplain maps that are used in the Federal Flood Insurance Program.

Keystone Fund: Declining home sales may have an impact on revenues on the Keystone Recreation, Parks and Conservation Fund, said Secretary DiBerardinis since it depends on the realty transfer tax. His statement prompted Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) to observe the Rendell Administration projected growing revenues in the realty transfer tax over the next five years from \$75.2 million this year to \$101.2 million in 2012-13.

Natural Diversity Inventory Reviews: Secretary DiBerardinis noted that an additional position is being assigned to [Natural Diversity Inventory](#) reviews required to identify threatened and endangered species in construction projects to help speed up reviews and eliminate the current backlog.

Lifeguards: A number of legislators expressed concerns about the reduction or elimination of lifeguards at [State Park](#) swimming facilities. Secretary DiBerardinis said eliminating the lifeguards had saved \$800,000 and said he was not concerned about questions of increasing the Commonwealth's liability, noting the program was started before he became Secretary.

A copy of [Secretary Michael DiBerardinis' testimony](#) is available online.

The Senate and House have now completed their initial schedule of agency budget hearings. Several additional hearings will be held, including the Department of Transportation, so watch Calendar of Events as they are scheduled.

Link: [Senate Republican Budget Hearing Summaries/Hearing Videos](#)

Senate Committee Meets on Game Commission Annual Report, Deer Management

The Senate Game and Fisheries Committee will hear a presentation on March 11 from the Game Commission on its annual report and comments on the Commission's [Deer Management Program](#).

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Carl Roe, Executive Director of the Game Commission, will present the agency's annual report summarizing major accomplishments and challenges.

The Committee will then have an informational meeting on the Deer Management Program and hear comments from Dr. Timothy Schaeffer, Executive Director [Pennsylvania Office of the National Audubon Society](#), and Steve Mohr, Gregory Levengood and Jim Slinsky from the Unified Sportsmen of Pennsylvania.

Sen. Charles McIlhinney, Jr. (R-Bucks) serves as Majority Chair of the Committee and Sen. Wayne Fontana (D-Allegheny) serves as Minority Chair.

Other News

2008 Philadelphia Sustainability Award Winners Announced



Hal Taussig

Seven winners were honored at the Pennsylvania Environmental Council's [2008 Philadelphia Sustainability Awards](#) held March 3 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

More than a dozen "sustainability innovators" were finalists for the awards presented at a ceremony held during the annual Philadelphia Flower Show produced by The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

The awards showcase the Philadelphia region's progress toward becoming the most sustainable city in America. The winners include homebuilders who design green buildings, environmentally-oriented charter schools, a business philanthropist, and a bicycling group that has young people refurbish old bicycles as a way to cut down greenhouse gases.

A distinguished panel of judges including nonprofit, government and business leaders from across the region selected six winners. Additionally, one "People's Choice Award," generated by online voting, was announced at the awards ceremony.

The awards ceremony is part of PEC's initiative to educate, promote and encourage sustainable policies and practices among consumers, business owners and government agencies in the local region.

"This year's winners confirm that the Philadelphia region is a hotbed of sustainable innovation by business leaders, entrepreneurs, individuals and government," said Patrick Starr, Vice President of the Southeast Region of PEC. "The awards highlight practical achievements towards sustainability and encourage all Philadelphians to 'go green' as a matter of economic and personal growth."

The award winners included:

[TreeVitalize Program](#): Trends in southeastern Pennsylvania showed the loss of an alarming amount of trees. When the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources saw a need to the trend around, it had to be about more than just putting trees in the ground. The department convened a variety of stakeholders to develop the approach for [TreeVitalize](#). Citizen and local government engagement, capacity building and stewardship became major program themes. The exciting results have led the department to apply the TreeVitalize model in other areas of the state.

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[Willingboro Sustainable Master Plan and Library](#): Willingboro, NJ is one of the three original Levittowns in America, and in the mid 90's was suffering from deterioration and economic loss that characterize the nation's 'First Ring' suburbs. Through a community-driven sustainability initiative, a Sustainable Master Plan has transformed Willingboro Plaza, a bankrupt, auto-centric, suburban, single-use project into a multi-purpose, diverse, secure and community-focused Town Center anchored by Willingboro Public Library. This accomplishment promises the best of possible sustainable futures within Greater Philadelphia.

[Wissahickon Charter School](#): [Wissahickon Charter School](#) works to educate the next generation of environmental stewards through use of an integrated, service-learning based, sustainability-focused environmental education curriculum. Established as a public charter school with the mission of creating an environmentally-focused community of learning designed to stimulate the intellectual, social, and civic development of each child, WCS first welcomed 200 students in grades 1-5 in 2002. Since that time, the school has expanded in number and grade level, now providing a stimulating, environmentally-focused educational experience for a diverse and stable enrollment of 408 students in grades K-8.

[Neighborhood Bike Works](#): [Neighborhood Bike Works](#) turns disused bicycles into opportunities for Philadelphia's youths. NBW introduces young Philadelphians to the fun and freedom of cycling in the city, increasing self-sufficiency and reducing dependence on fossil fuels. Community partnerships help expand NBW's reach and engage teachers, families and neighbors. Last year, NBW: Reclaimed 20 tons of bicycles; Put 800 refurbished bicycles back on the road; Taught 260 new youth safe bicycling and repair skills.

[Don Gradley: Green Building Pioneer](#): Visionary homebuilder Don Bradley is committed to integrating renewable energy and green building strategies into low and zero-energy homes that can be built and operated affordably. With innovative projects spanning his 18 year green building career, including the 'Solar Pennsylvanian' (1989), the zero-energy 'Solar Patriot' (2001), Philadelphia's first affordable solar homes (2005) and now the first market-rate zero-energy solar community 'Maple Point' (2007), Don is dedicated to building sustainable housing in our city, causing change through committed action, effective partnerships and education.

[Hal Taussing – Lifetime Achievement Award](#): Hal Taussig, president and founder of the travel company Untours, is committed to shrinking the growing gap between the rich and poor. His foundation, the [Untours Foundation](#), provides low interest loans to create jobs, build low-income housing, and support the Fair Trade movement all through the most environmentally friendly means possible. Hal has also led the effort to create America's first Fair Trade town in Media, PA, which is now a community inspired to use its buying power to improve the lives of others.

[Camphill Villiage Kimberton Hills – People’s Choice Award](#): [Camphill Village Kimberton Hills](#), a community of 110 people, fosters dignity and models community living for people with and without disabilities. It includes innovative ways of working ecologically,

agriculturally, therapeutically, and financially. Incorporating a biodynamic/organic CSA garden and dairy, photovoltaics, a constructed wetlands wastewater system, and a new geothermal heating and cooling system, as well as ecologically sustainable building and lifestyle practices, Kimberton Hills is a fine example of ecological practices incorporated into everyday life.

[All 14 finalists for the Awards are available online.](#)

The Philadelphia Sustainability Awards is a program of the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#), in collaboration with the City of Philadelphia, Delaware Valley Green Building Council, PennFuture, The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, The Reinvestment Fund, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, and American Institute of Architects,. The 2008 awards ceremony was sponsored by Urban Engineers and Environmental Management Assistance Program at the University of Pennsylvania.

NewsClip: [Seven in Philadelphia Region Honored for Environment](#)

New iConserve Website to Inspire Pennsylvania to Protect, Enjoy Natural Resources

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week announced a new [iConserve Pennsylvania website](#) designed to share the stories of people taking everyday actions to conserve, protect and enjoy the natural resources of the Commonwealth.

"You can't pick up a newspaper today or have a conversation with your neighbor that doesn't touch on issues like the Earth's climate warming, how energy bills are taking a toll on household budgets, or that kids don't play outside anymore," Gov. Rendell said. "Even small actions, when taken collectively, can make a difference; but it's sometimes hard for individuals to sort through all of the information to figure out what steps we can take.

"The iConserve Pennsylvania initiative's website can help by providing a place for people to share their stories about conservation, get tips, learn why Pennsylvania's natural resources are so special, and be inspired to start with simple steps," the Governor said.

The new effort is being introduced this week at exhibits that reach the thousands of visitors at the [Philadelphia Flower Show](#) and the [Pennsylvania Garden Expo](#) in Harrisburg.

Twelve "founding" iCons demonstrate some conservation practices needed to combat Pennsylvania's core environmental challenges. Others are encouraged to share their conservation story by filling out a profile with their own tips, stories and favorite places in Pennsylvania.

"As a family, we practice conservation in many ways from buying organic and local, to biking to work and using florescent light bulbs, however, we are most passionate about reducing consumption," said Sarah Ruppert, of Nazareth, one of the 12 founding PA iCons. "We found that by recycling/reusing everything from water bottles, toys, clothing, furniture, and even household appliances we minimize our footprint and save money!"

"We are at an important crossroads for the environment, much as Pennsylvanians were 100 years ago when mountains were stripped of their woodlands, and waterways were choked with debris, sediment and pollution," Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis said. "Our issues are different, but the future of our natural resources still depends on how we react to them now."

Website visitors can subscribe to a free monthly electronic newsletter that will include fun facts and green tips. Also featured are simple commitments, next steps and

lifestyle change ideas that can help anyone become familiar with conservation, grow their interest, and take action.

Secretary DiBerardinis said iConserve Pennsylvania will eventually expand to include partnerships with organizations and businesses that want to become more active in promoting conservation and stewardship of the state's natural resources.

Visit www.iConservePA.org to explore why conservation is needed and what each person can do to make a difference.

Stormwater Management Administration Grant Applications Due March 31

The Department of Environmental Protection is now accepting applications from local governments eligible to receive reimbursement for their [stormwater management administrative costs](#) under Act 167 of 1978.

Applications are due March 31.

Eligible local government must be in watersheds that have a stormwater management plan prepared and adopted by the count and approved by DEP. The grants cover up to 75 percent of the costs to adopt or revise their ordinances or regulations and comply with the state Stormwater Management Act.

For more information contact Barry Newman, DEP's Stormwater Planning and Management Section at 717-705-6364 or send email to: bnewman@state.pa.us.

New Web Tool Maps Critical Characteristics for PA's Streams and Watersheds

The U.S. Geological Survey has released a new web-based application, [Pennsylvania StreamStats](#), allowing users to delineate watersheds, determine their characteristics, and obtain stream-flow statistics quickly and easily anywhere in the state.

Users can select locations of interest from an interactive map or enter latitude and longitude to obtain information for these locations.

Stream-flow statistics, including peak-, low-, base-, and mean-flow are used by engineers, planners, and hydrologists in many projects. Bridge and dam design, aquatic habitat studies, and water use allocations all require accurate stream-flow statistics, which until now, typically were compiled in a time-consuming process over many hours.

“Critical information about streams is now available at your fingertips,” said Marla Stuckey, USGS Hydrologist and StreamStats project lead in Pennsylvania. “What used to take hours can now be done accurately in seconds,” explained Stuckey.

Watershed characteristics and statistics are used by water resource professionals, but they are also of interest to watershed organizations and the general public. Using Pennsylvania StreamStats, users can determine a watershed's drainage area in square miles, mean annual precipitation in inches, mean basin elevation in feet, and percentage of area covered by carbonate bedrock, glacial deposits, forests, or urban areas.

“I have been a proponent of the use of StreamStats in our agency and have provided demonstrations to various user groups within our agency,” said Tom Denslinger, Chief, Water Use Management Section, Department of Environmental Protection.

Some examples of stream-flow characteristics available include the 7-day, 2-, 10-, and 30-year low flows; 30-day, 2-, 10-, and 30-year low flows; 90-day, 10-year low flow; annual mean flow; harmonic mean flow; and base flow at the 10-, 25- and 50-year recurrence intervals.

For more information, visit the [Pennsylvania StreamStats webpage](#).

Commission Invites Public Input in Norfolk Southern Stream Cleanup Plans

The Fish and Boat Commission invites the public to participate in its first stakeholder meeting concerning the [Norfolk Southern spill cleanup plan](#) on March 12, at the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Region 1 Office in Emporium starting at 11 a.m.

The meeting is in response to the Commonwealth's natural resources damage settlement with Norfolk Southern in November 2007 to resolve its liability for a June 2006 derailment in McKean County.

The derailment caused three railcars of a train operated by Norfolk Southern to spill liquid sodium hydroxide into wetlands and to enter Big Fill Run, Sinnemahoning-Portage Creek, and the Driftwood Branch of Sinnemahoning Creek.

The release of liquid sodium hydroxide contaminated soils, sediments, surface water, groundwater, and wetlands, and killed or injured fish and other aquatic life and terrestrial plant and animal life.

As part of the agreement, Norfolk Southern will pay \$3,675,000 to the Commission. A portion of the settlement – \$93,000 – will be used to reimburse the Commission for costs incurred investigating and responding to the accident.

The Commission will deposit the remaining share of its settlement into an interest-bearing, restricted revenue account that can be used only for the development and implementation of projects that benefit recreational fishing and boating and the aquatic resources of Cameron, McKean, Elk and Potter counties.

Initially, the Commission will focus on projects in the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed upstream of the confluence with the First Fork of Sinnemahoning Creek.

Prior to funding projects in the watershed affected by the derailment, the Commission will convene a stakeholder group to seek input regarding the best ways to mitigate impacts stemming from the sodium hydroxide spill.

Projects to be considered include, but are not limited to, acid mine drainage abatement; habitat protection, enhancement and restoration; the acquisition of properties for public fishing and access and improvements to existing access areas; and aquatic inventories. Commission staff will talk to attendees about the process and priorities for restoration activities.

To participate in the first stakeholder meeting, the public should go to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Region 1 Office located at 260 Sizerville Road, Emporium, on March 12, at 11 a.m.

2008 Adult Trout Stocking Schedule Now Online, Anglers Invited to Trout Expos

The Fish and Boat Commission is [stocking adult trout](#) in a variety of lakes and streams that are open to public angling throughout Pennsylvania in 2008 and has posted “where” and “when” those fish will be released online.

Anglers are also invited to celebrate the upcoming trout season by attending educational trout expos at [Gander Mountain stores](#) throughout the state.

The stocking schedule webpage can be searched by county and by date. Stockings began on March 1 and will continue throughout the spring, fall and winter months.

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The Commission will stock some 3.4 million adult trout in Pennsylvania waters open to public angling. This figure includes trout produced at state fish hatcheries, trout obtained from the United States Fish & Wildlife Service as part of a cooperative agreement, and trout obtained through a purchase contract with a commercial hatchery. The average length will be 11 inches – with more than a few trophy-sized fish mixed in as well.

The [2008 trout season](#) will open at 8 a.m. March 29 in waters located in Adams, Berks, Bucks, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Perry, Philadelphia, Schuylkill and York counties.

The regular trout season starts at 8 a.m. on April 12 in the rest of the state. The rationale for providing two opening days of trout season is based on the differences that exist in climate across Pennsylvania and the timeframe for providing optimum conditions for trout angling during the spring arrives earlier in portions of southern Pennsylvania.

Warmer temperatures there offer conditions better suited for trout angling at an earlier time in the spring. However, these same warming conditions also can limit trout angling opportunities by mid-spring.

The combination of a mid-April opening day and the potential for these waters to become too warm for trout angling by mid-May constricts the amount of time that trout angling can be provided.

Trout Fishing Education Expos

Fish and Boat Commission [educational trout expos](#) will be held at [Gander Mountain stores](#) throughout the state, running March 14 through March 16, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. (Participation varies by store.)

The Fish and Boat Commission will be on hand to answer questions, provide visitors with helpful maps and how-to information, and offer insights on the best places to trout fish in Pennsylvania. Plus, Gander Mountain stores are offering an added bonus for visitors. Anyone who comes to Gander Mountain stores on the event dates can also enter to win \$200 in fishing gear!

Volunteers Provide Protective Passage for Spotted Salamanders



For some residents of Chester County, this week brought an irresistible mix: rain, cold, dark, and the chance to see hundreds of spotted salamanders.

On the night of March 4, the Amphibian Friends, a group organized by the Green Valleys Association, gathered along St. Peters Road in North Coventry Township with their flashlights, safety vests and buckets, ready to assist migrating salamanders and frogs.

The night met ideal migration conditions: end of February or beginning of March; raining or very damp; above freezing; and dark. Conditions were right for critter crossing, and for several hours, humans helped amphibians cross the road to reach their destination: a vernal pool on crossing coordinator Kim White's property.

More than 200 spotted salamanders took advantage of the protected passage. So did 15 Jefferson salamanders, 132 wood frogs, three peepers, and a red spotted newt.

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After several weeks in the pool, when mating and egg-laying have concluded, the amphibians begin their hazardous return from the pool to the woods.

Once again, Amphibian Friends are there to help.

White reports that the number of volunteers has grown over the years, to a group of almost 40 Friends that she and the amphibians can count on, a group that has included staff from DEP's southeast regional office.

And how successful was this week's assisted migration? "It was great," White notes, "We were seeing spots!" (From [DEP's Daily Update](#))

Learn "Green" Backyard Gardening Techniques from EPA's Exhibit

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2008 Philadelphia Flower Show exhibit teaches techniques for having a [beautiful, carefree garden](#) that doesn't need mowing, uses little water and fossil fuels, reduces the need for fertilizers and pesticides, and keeps garden waste out of landfills.

"We want to show people it's possible to have a beautiful garden without a lot of fuss, and have it do good for the environment," said Jeff Lapp, an EPA scientist who helped design and construct EPA's exhibit.

No-mow sod, native plants, composting, using a rain barrel to capture rain and using recycled materials such as old wrought iron fencing are just some of the topics demonstrated in this year's EPA exhibit.

One of the more intriguing methods for backyard gardeners this year is the no-mow sod. It's an ornamental grass that has long slender blades which grow long and lay over. The sparkling green color remains beautiful year-round. It is fairly wear resistant and works best in areas that don't get a lot of wear from foot traffic.

Gas powered law equipment such as mowers, blowers and trimmers emit 10 to 30 times more air pollution than a typical car for every hour in use. And in the Eastern U.S., 30 percent of residential water consumption goes toward watering lawns. The no-mow sod requires less watering, and less mowing – from once a month to once a year depending on landscape tastes.

EPA's exhibit stresses the importance of minimizing air emissions from mowing and reducing the use of chemicals on lawns. Structural elements include re-used wrought iron fencing, re-cycled glass mulch, and re-cycled glass and aluminum tiles in fountains and obelisks. Our final elements include the composting of yard waste and capturing water in a rain barrel to assist with garden watering.

EPA's exhibit won two awards – the award of merit for non-academic education from the [Pennsylvania Horticultural Society](#) and the [Philadelphia Flower Show's](#) exhibit of distinction. The Flower Show runs through March 9.

For more information, visit [EPA's green landscaping webpage](#).

PA Home Energy Conference Set for March 18-19 in State College

Plan now to attend the [PA Home Energy Conference 2008](#) and learn about new programs to help consumers reduce home energy use, and integrate whole house performance with green design.

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Get in on the ground floor, as the pilot rolls out through the 23-county [Allegheny Power service region](#), introducing [Energy Star programs](#) for both new home construction and existing homes.

Learn about marketing, sales, and customer service strategies that can create demand and higher profit margins for your company. Take advantage of this emerging opportunity to become the local expert in diagnosing and fixing a home's energy, health, and comfort issues.

Get information on how [Keystone Home Energy Loan \(HELP\) Program](#) plays a vital role by providing homeowners with fast low-cost, unsecured financing for qualified high efficiency improvements.

Explore the latest home performance diagnostic tools, and gain technical knowledge from respected building science experts.

PA Home Energy is a new program that is focused on assisting Pennsylvania consumers reduce their home energy use while improving their overall home performance. On the PA Home Energy website you can find tips on making your existing home more energy efficient, how to build a Energy Star home, find a energy conservation service provider and explore financing options.

The PA Home Energy Program was developed by the West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund and its founding supporters – Allegheny Power, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Energy, Performance Systems Development, and Affordable Comfort.

For more tips on saving energy, [download 16 Ways to Green Your Home](#) or call 1-800-PHE-1408. To register for the Conference, visit the [PA Home Energy website](#).

West Chester Passes Energy Star Ordinance for Commercial Construction

[West Chester Borough](#), Delaware County, has become the first municipality in the country to require commercial buildings to earn the [Energy Star](#), thanks to a new ordinance passed unanimously by borough council.

According to the new ordinance, a developer who is required to seek a “conditional use” approval for a project must design the building(s) to meet the energy performance goals of the Energy Star program. One year after operation, the building owner must assess energy use and apply for the Energy Star label. In West Chester, conditional use approvals are required for buildings higher than 45 feet.

The Energy Star program all but ensures that these buildings will be among the most energy efficient in the country. To earn the Energy Star label, a building must be in the top 25 percent of similar buildings nationwide in terms of overall energy efficiency.

“Borough Council’s unanimous vote demonstrates our commitment to a greener, more sustainable West Chester through a common-sense program that conserves energy. There are no drawbacks to anyone, only positive actions for our economy and our environment,” says Councilwoman Carolyn Comitta, who was instrumental in ‘greening’ West Chester’s conditional use criteria.

The Energy Star program offers a vetted, easy-to-understand, non-prescriptive and cost-effective way for building designers to make significant inroads toward this goal. And, the program’s on-line tools and resources are cost-free. “We applaud West Chester Borough’s innovative use of the Energy Star program to meet its climate protection and

sustainability goals," says Donald S. Welsh, regional administrator of EPA's Mid-Atlantic Regional Office.

"This is a win-win situation for our entire community," agrees Brian McFadden, president of The McFadden Group, Inc., a West Chester-based real estate development company. McFadden volunteered to seek the Energy Star label for his 90-room hotel project, currently planned for the town center, even though his plans were submitted before the ordinance was passed.

"With the rising cost of energy and the environmental challenges we face, this is smart from both economic and environmental viewpoints," he said. "Lower utility bills make a hotel more profitable. More and more people seek out 'green' hotels and residences. And the Energy Star rating is an increasingly desirable feature that adds value to commercial real estate."

Improving building design can go a long way toward reducing energy demand and cutting global warming pollution. Data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration show that nearly half of all energy consumption and greenhouse gas pollution, and more than two-thirds of all electricity consumption, come from buildings.

In fact, the American Institute of Architects—with the support of the U.S. Conference of Mayors; U.S. Green Building Council; American Society of Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Engineers; and a host of other groups—has issued a challenge to the architectural and building community to achieve carbon neutrality (no fossil-fuel greenhouse gas emitting energy coming from buildings) by 2030, in order to avoid "catastrophic climate change."

Energy Star also offers tools and resources to help eliminate energy waste in new and existing homes, and the West Chester community will be evaluating these options, as well. "We need to reduce energy use in all buildings—new and existing, commercial and residential—as a way to bring real change to our community," concludes Martin Indars, a member of West Chester Borough Leaders United for Emissions Reduction, better known as BLUER. "The Energy Star program simply shows us how."

For more information, contact BLUER Chair Dianne Herrin at 610-864-4731.

New EPA Tool Helps Water/Wastewater Plants Tap into Energy Savings

America's drinking water and wastewater facilities can now save energy and reduce their carbon footprint with expanded tools available from EPA's Energy Star Program.

Enhancements to [Portfolio Manager](#).

This new energy tracking tool for commercial facilities allows water utilities to track energy use and associated carbon emissions, set targets for investment priorities, and verify efficiency improvements.

Water and wastewater facilities are energy intensive, accounting for more than one-third of municipal energy use. Improving the energy efficiency of America's drinking water and wastewater systems by 10 percent would save more than 5 billion kilowatt-hours each year representing a cost savings of about \$400 million annually.

"Wasting energy is sending good resources down the drain," said Benjamin H. Grumbles, assistant administrator for Water. "Energy efficiency is good for the planet as well as the plant managers who make water clean and healthy."

Drinking water and wastewater systems spend about \$4 billion a year on energy to pump, treat, deliver, collect, and clean water at the 52,000 community drinking water and

16,500 wastewater facilities in the United States. Through Energy Star, EPA provides a proven energy management strategy and no-cost tools for public and private organizations to save energy and money, as well as demonstrate environmental leadership.

For more information, visit the [Energy Star Portfolio Manager webpage](#) and for information on other activities that explore the nexus between water and energy visit the [Energy and Water webpage](#).

Climate Change Uncertainties, Opportunities for Business Innovation Workshop

On March 27 a one-day seminar in Pittsburgh will explore the topic of “[Climate Change Uncertainties, Opportunities for Business Innovation](#)” at the Four Points Sheraton in Mars, Pa.

Registration deadline is March 21.

The seminar is sponsored by the Pittsburgh Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers’ Environmental & Water Resources Institute in association with the Allegheny Mountain Section of the Air & Waste Management Association and Sustainable Pittsburgh’s Champions for Sustainability.



Climate change, global warming, greenhouse gases, carbon footprint: all of these terms and issues continue to appear in conversations, many of which are heated and controversial. One thing is clear—these issues will present challenges to businesses and individuals, simply because of the degree of interest people have in these topics and the resulting worldwide concern and debate. Interest in climate change topics has already prompted foreign, federal, and state governmental considerations and actions.

Following is a listing of topics covered and corresponding speakers for this event:

- Human impact on climate change – William Easterling (Dean, PSU, College of Earth and Mineral Science);
- Natural cycles on climate change – Dr. S. Fred Singer (Science & Environmental Policy Project);
- Impact on business – Kathryn Klaber, Vice President (Allegheny Conference on Community Dev.);
- Regulatory issues – Krish Ramamurthy (Chief, Division of Permits, Bureau of Air Quality, PA DEP);
- Legal framework and carbon emissions trading – Harry Klodowski, Esq. (Betts, Hull, & Klodowski LLC);
- Measuring our impact – carbon footprint – H. Scott Matthews (Assistant Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and Engineering and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University);
- Possibilities of offsetting carbon – George Hoguet; and
- Climate action and leadership – Chris Steffy P.E. (Industrial Energy Engineering)

This event marks the second in a series of “how to” networking opportunities presented by Champions for Sustainability (C4S), a program of [Sustainable Pittsburgh](#). C4S’s focus is on making sustainable business practices operational by connecting Southwestern PA’s extensive sustainability knowledge base for its companies and communities.

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A [Registration form is available online](#) or contact Jerry Swart at 412-262-6291 or send email to: jerry.swart@Fedex.com or John Quinlisk at 412-503-4537 or send email to: John.Quinlisk@URSCorp.com.

EPA Awards \$2.5 Million for Brownfields Job Training, Including in PA

Thirteen communities in 10 states will share more than \$2.5 million in U.S. Environmental Protection Agency brownfields job training grants geared toward cleaning up contaminated properties and turning them into productive community assets.

A grant of \$197,051 was awarded to the [Heritage Health Foundation, Inc.](#) in Allegheny County to train 60 students, place 45 in environmental jobs, and track graduates for one year.

HHFI plans to conduct two sequential training sessions: a six-week, 240-hour construction technician track, followed by an eight-week, 320-hour engineering technician track. Courses will include HAZWOPER, OSHA 10-hour health and safety, materials handling, confined space entry, and asbestos and lead abatement worker and inspector training.

The training program will be developed and facilitated by the Western Pennsylvania Brownfields Center at Carnegie Mellon University.

Participants will be recruited from among the low-income, unemployed and underemployed residents living in the brownfields-impacted neighborhoods of southwestern Pennsylvania's Monongahela Valley.

HHFI will partner with the Allegheny County Housing Authority, Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board, Community College of Allegheny County, Allegheny County East Career Link, and several environmental employers and community organizations to place graduates in environmental jobs.

"The value of this brownfields grant is that it will help provide training and environmental career opportunities to residents living in the Monogahela Valley area," said Donald S. Welsh, administrator for EPA's mid-Atlantic Region. "It's important that the economic benefits derived from brownfields redevelopment remain in the affected communities."

For more information visit the [Heritage Health Foundation, Inc.](#) grant webpage.

NewsClip: [Training Grant Will Benefit Region's Brownfields](#)

DCNR Soliciting Applications for Volunteer Forest Firefighter Grants

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources announced it is now accepting applications for [volunteer forest firefighter grants](#).

Applications are due May 2.

"As the number of homes and communities in Pennsylvania's wooded and rural areas continues to grow each year, so, too, does the threat of wildfires," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "As the state agency responsible for protecting our state woodlands from fire, DCNR sees these grants as a boon to helping better organize, train and equip local firefighting forces in rural areas."

A record \$559,211 in grants is available to Pennsylvania volunteers this year. A total of 176 companies across the state were helped last year with grants totaling more than \$557,000. More than \$7 million has been awarded since 1982.

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The grants and other assistance are offered annually through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, with funding supplied by the USDA Forest Service through the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (Volunteer Fire Assistance).

In reviewing applications, the bureau will place priority on those requests seeking funds for projects that include the purchase of wildfire suppression equipment and protective clothing.

Grants also may be used for mobile or portable radios, installation of dry hydrants, wildfire prevention and mitigation, wildfire fighter training, or conversion and maintenance of federal excess vehicles received from the bureau to be used for fire suppression.

Grants for any project during a fiscal year cannot exceed 50 percent of the actual expenditures of local, public and private nonprofit organizations in the agreement. The maximum grant request that will be considered from any fire company in 2008 is \$7,500.

All items approved for purchase under the 2007 fiscal year program must be purchased between October 1, 2007, and November 30, 2008.

For more information, visit the [Forest Fire Protection webpage](#) or contact Forest Program Specialist Charles C. Choplick at 717-787-2925, or by sending email to: cchoplick@state.pa.us.

Petitions Circulating to Urge Hunting License Increase for Game Commission

The [PA Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs](#) and other hunting and environmental groups are urging those who care about wildlife management and protecting wildlife habitat [to sign a petition](#) to be sent to legislators supporting an increase in the Game Commission hunting license fee to at least \$35.

The current fee was increase only twice since 1985. The current fee is \$20 where it has been since 1999 when it was bumped up from \$12.50. That prior fee was in place since 1985.

The petition reads in part, "We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge our Legislators to act now to increase the fee for a general hunting license. We request a minimum increase to \$35.00 for a general license. We support maintaining a strong and independent Game Commission. While we may not agree with all PGC decisions on wildlife management, we believe a license increase is needed to assure our wildlife is scientifically managed in the future."

For more information and to sign the petition, visit the [Federation website](#).



Peregrine Falcon Educator's Workshop to be Held April 3

The Department of Environmental Protection and the Game Commission invite teachers, non-formal educators, homeschoolers and youth group and scout leaders to attend a free [Peregrine Falcon Educator's Workshop](#), WILD in the City, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., April



3 in the Rachel Carson State Office Building Auditorium in Harrisburg.

The workshop is sponsored by DEP and the Pennsylvania Game Commission in cooperation with ZOOAMERICA North American Wildlife Park.

Since 1997 a pair of Peregrine Falcons have made their home on the 15th Floor of the Rachel Carson State Office Building. Peregrine Falcons, an endangered species in Pennsylvania, were extremely rare for many years. Yet, through reintroduction programs, Peregrines have adapted to life in urban environments like Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Williamsport.

Each year, DEP and the Game Commission track the activities of these amazing birds of prey and share educational information with the world. The Rachel Carson nest site has been active and reproducing young peregrine falcons for the past eight years.

Workshop participants will explore the successes of peregrine falcon reintroduction in Pennsylvania; examine falcon specifics and endangered species concepts; and observe falcons in Harrisburg. Participating teachers are eligible for 5.5 Act 48 credit hours. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

The workshop will feature a number of peregrine falcon experts, including PGC ornithology biologists Dan Brauning and Dr. Art McMorris, ZOOAMERICA Education Coordinator Elaine Gruin, DEP Environmental Educators Jack Farster and Ann Devine, Project WILD Coordinator Theresa Alberici and others.

To register for the [Peregrine Falcon](#) workshop, educators should contact DEP's Environmental Education and Information Center at 717-772-1644 or send e-mail to adevine@state.pa.us by March 27. Space is limited, so registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-service basis.

Help Wanted: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve

The [Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve](#) is seeking candidates for Education Coordinator who will develop and implement the educational program for a 134-acre naturalistic botanical garden devoted to Pennsylvania native plant species.

Responsibilities include interpretation, docent program, lectures, classes, professional symposia, workshops, field trips, special events, and educational partnerships. Audiences include adults, children, teachers, and professionals.

Must be a creative, energetic, self-starter with the ability to work effectively with other staff, trustees, interns, and volunteers. Computer skills essential. Salary commensurate with qualifications. Health and retirement benefit package offered.

Send cover letter, resume, salary requirements, and list of three professional references to: Educator Search, BHWP, P.O. Box 685, New Hope, PA 18938. Fax: 215-862-1846, or e-mail application materials to arnott@bhwp.org.

Feature

Bill for Upgrades at PA Water Plants Creates Sticker Shock

**By Karl Blankenship
Chesapeake Bay Journal**

Anyone in Williamsport, Pa, who didn't know they lived in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed is getting an education.

Rate payers of the Williamsport Sanitary Authority, which serves about 50,000 people, could see their quarterly water and sewer bills jump from \$60 to \$190.

The reason: Two treatment plants that serve the area are facing upgrades estimated to cost \$150 million. More than half of the expense is for nutrient reduction improvements to help clean up the Chesapeake Bay, nearly 200 miles downstream from the West Branch Susquehanna community.



"Devastating," is the way one local government official summed up the impact to residents and businesses.

They're hardly alone. Scranton is looking at a \$37 million tab to upgrade its wastewater treatment plants, of which \$16 million is to pay for nutrient reductions. Hazelton's sewage plant will need a \$29 million upgrade, of which \$15 million is for Bay-related nutrient reductions.

Similar news is spreading across Pennsylvania's portion of the watershed, where 183 wastewater treatment plants must reduce discharges of nitrogen and phosphorus, which degrade Bay water quality. (See [DEP's Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy](#))

All of the states in the watershed are facing hefty price tags to reduce sewer plant discharges—a recent EPA report estimated the needed nutrient upgrades will cost more than \$4 billion across the watershed.

But the issue has become especially heated in Pennsylvania, where a backlash is stirring as scores of local governments are threatening a lawsuit over the issue.

Unlike their counterparts in Virginia and Maryland, who are getting hundreds of millions of dollars in state grants to help pay for Bay-related upgrades, Pennsylvania municipalities have been left largely on their own to meet the goals.

"There is a lot of resentment that no help is coming," said state [Sen. Patricia Vance](#), a Republican who represents portions of Cumberland and York counties.

"I want to make it very clear, it's not that any of us think we shouldn't clean up the Chesapeake," Sen. Vance added. "That is not the issue. The issue is, how does one fund it?"

She and others were disappointed in February when Gov. Ed Rendell, despite mounting complaints about the costs, proposed a budget with no new money targeting the problem. Instead, her promised to name a panel to study statewide water infrastructure issues.

Administration officials have said they do not support new state taxes to support the upgrades. Instead, of grants, they say facilities should use existing loan programs or participate in the state's fledgling, and controversial, nutrient trading program.

"The governor does see there is an issue and a concern," said Neil Weaver, a spokesman for the Department of Environmental Protection, "but he also realizes that there have been other options out there."

Pennsylvania and other states in the watershed agreed in 2000 to achieve nutrient and sediment reductions to restore Bay water quality by 2010. Meeting Bay water quality standards is required under the federal Clean Water Act.

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The state developed a tributary strategy-its road map for meeting Pennsylvania's portion of the cleanup goal-which called for reducing the amount of nitrogen reaching the Bay to 71.4 million pounds from 112.7 million in 2000. The lion's share of that reduction, 32 million pounds, would come from agriculture.

But the strategy also called for "point sources"-wastewater treatment plants and industries-to reduce nitrogen discharges reaching the Bay from 12.7 million pounds to 10.5 million pounds a year.

In December 2004 Pennsylvania joined the EPA and other jurisdictions in the watershed in signing a policy requiring that tributary strategy goals for dischargers be written into permits for point sources.

After that, Pennsylvania officials contend they spent more than two years in meetings with stakeholders, including wastewater treatment plant operators, discussing how the goals would be incorporated into legally enforceable permits.

"We've been talking about this for years," Weaver said. "Everyone was on board." But as plant upgrade estimates came in, municipalities have gotten sticker shock. The original tributary strategy had estimated the point source cost at about \$376 million. State officials frequently cited an even lower number-\$190 million.

According to the [Pennsylvania Municipal Authority Association](#), which represents wastewater plant operators, 44 plants have received engineering estimates to date. The cost for nutrient upgrades at those facilities is \$512 million. Association officials say they expect the total cost for nutrient-related upgrades to be around \$1.2 billion. Because the upgrades are typically being combined with other improvements, the actual bill to wastewater authorities could be twice that.

The DEP disputes those figures, although it now pegs the cost at about \$620 million.

Weaver said the higher estimates assume all of the plants will require costly construction upgrades. "This is not a mandate for them to have to take the capital projects to upgrade their facilities," Weaver said.

Instead, he said, the DEP is encouraging plants to take advantage of the state's nutrient trading program, which allows wastewater treatment plant operators to meet their obligations by purchasing nutrient reduction "credits" from farmers or other dischargers who have reduced nutrients.

To settle the question, the state Senate in February unanimously approved a resolution introduced by Vance directing the legislative Budget and Finance Committee to determine how much the upgrades will cost.

"Let's find out the true price and quit fooling around," Vance said. "That's the bottom line."

Weaver insisted such a study was unnecessary and questioned its usefulness because it is not likely to include the trading option pushed by the DEP.

"The main concern with this is they are not looking at alternative ways of upgrading and reducing the nutrients," he said. "The study they are providing is all structure and capital improvements costs."

But the trading program has attracted relatively little enthusiasm from wastewater treatment plant operators, many of whom view it as untested and risky-especially in trades with nonpoint sources such as farms, where nutrient reductions are hard to measure. An analysis by the PMAA also suggested that, over the long term, the cost of purchasing credits every year exceeds the cost of upgrades for most facilities.

Instead, many would like to see the state follow the example of Virginia and Maryland, which offer grants-which unlike loans, do not have to be paid back-to help fund the upgrade cost.

Virginia has made more than \$900 million in grants-from state appropriations and bond sales-available for upgrades in recent years.

Maryland in 2004 created the Bay Restoration Fund financed by the so-called "flush tax," which levies a \$2.50 monthly fee on households. It raises about \$65 million a year to help pay for wastewater treatment upgrades. The state also plans to issue bonds, backed with revenue from the fund, to accelerate implementation.

In contrast, Pennsylvania has made about \$28 million in grants available for wastewater treatment plants in recent years.

"When you look at what Pennsylvania is doing comparatively to Maryland or Virginia, it becomes quite stark that as far as providing state funding sources, we're way behind," said Harry Campbell, a scientist with the [Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Pennsylvania Office](#), which has been urging the state to help fund upgrades.

Rather than considering any Bay-specific measure, Rendell in February announced the creation of a [Sustainable Water Infrastructure Task Force](#), which would report by Oct. 1 on options to address state drinking and wastewater infrastructure needs. The state has a backlog of \$18 billion in water infrastructure needs beyond its Chesapeake Bay obligations, according to Rendell.

But any funding options that stem from the task force could not be implemented before the 2009-10 budget, which starts July 1, 2009. That's too late for wastewater treatment plants that are contracting for upgrades now, critics say.

"The problem is here, the problem is now," said [Rep. Scott Perry](#), a Republican who represents portions of York and Cumberland counties. "There is no reason to hold it up for a task force. We know the issues, we know the goals. We need to find a solution." Perry in February proposed legislation that would provide \$300 million in matching grants to wastewater treatment plants over 10 years.

He acknowledged the \$300 million may not provide enough immediate relief for facilities under pressure to upgrade by 2010, so he also suggests the upgrade time frame be extended to keep the program affordable within the current budget.

"We don't want to raise taxes to do this," Rep. Perry said. "We want to be able to use what we have, and we think that money is available right now, so that's what we are going for."

His bill also addresses another frustration voiced by municipal officials: Their plants contribute only about 11 percent of the nitrogen that reaches the Bay from Pennsylvania. Most of the rest comes from agriculture.

But Rendell's budget cut spending for some key agricultural programs that help the Bay, including a reduction of nearly \$1 million or 33 percent-for county conservation districts, which provide technical assistance to farmers who want to implement conservation programs on their land. It also froze spending on the state's Nutrient Management Fund, which also assists farmers.

Perry said if local governments are asked to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to do their share, they should be assured that the full job of cleaning the Bay is accomplished by others as well. His legislation would make \$10 million in tax credits available each year to farmers to encourage the implementation of runoff control practices.

"If we're going to spend a bunch of money and not clean up the Bay, that's not something I'm interested in," Rep. Perry said.

John Brosious, deputy director of the PMAA, said the bill "will put the Chesapeake Bay in the budget debate. It's our hope they will realize both we and the agricultural sector need some financial assistance from the state of Pennsylvania and it is just not happening." The outlook for Perry's legislation is uncertain.

Chesapeake Bay initiatives lack the political support in Pennsylvania that they get in Maryland and Virginia. Although half of the state drains into the Bay-and the Susquehanna River is the source of half of the freshwater entering the Chesapeake-the state does not touch the Bay.

And while the bulk of the population in both Virginia and Maryland lives in the Bay watershed, neither of Pennsylvania's two largest cities-Philadelphia and Pittsburgh-drain into the Chesapeake. Most lawmakers in the General Assembly represent areas outside the watershed, making passage of any major Bay funding difficult without leadership from the governor.

"The governor should be making this a priority," said the CBF's Campbell. "We would hope that in the budget coming from the governor that this would be made a priority, not that the legislative bodies would have to make it a priority."

Meanwhile, anger continues to grow among local governments as sky-high upgrade estimates continue to pile up. "When they first came out and said \$190 million, that was a nice figure and didn't sound like a whole lot," said Perry Albert, executive director of the Capital Region Council of Governments. "But it's not a true figure."

Albert's group is contemplating a suit against the state, contending it is forcing a huge unfunded mandate on local governments. "What we would like to see happen is that they put a moratorium on this until such time as they can come up with some funding," Albert said.

So far, he said, more than 60 local governments have agreed to contribute toward the suit.

Weaver said it was "unfortunate" that municipalities were considering legal action against the state, saying it has an obligation under the Clean Water Act to help meet Bay water quality standards.

"We are extremely disappointed that these municipalities would go ahead and take the time, and take the money, away from their rate payers, because it is taxpayer money, to go ahead and sue the department over something that is a federal mandate," he said.

Pennsylvania Nutrient Reduction at a Glance

To clean up the Bay, the EPA and all jurisdictions in the watershed (Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, New York, West Virginia and the District of Columbia) agreed to reduce the average annual amount of nitrogen reaching the Bay from an estimated 285 million pounds in 2000, to 175 million pounds a year by 2010. They agreed to reduce phosphorus from 19.1 million pounds in 2000 to 12.7 million pounds.

Those goals were divided among the states. Pennsylvania's obligation was to reduce nitrogen from 112.7 million pounds to 71.9 million pounds. For phosphorus, it needs to reduce from 3.5 million pounds to 2.3 million pounds.

Pennsylvania's tributary strategy determines how those reductions are to be made. For example, for nitrogen, it calls on agriculture to reduce nitrogen losses from 56.2 million pounds to 24.1 million pounds. Urban runoff must be reduced from 7.6 million to 3.9 million pounds; septics from 4 million to 3 million pounds; and wastewater dischargers

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from 12.7 million to 10.5 million pounds. Various other sources account for the rest. State officials say the reductions sought from each source are roughly equivalent to the proportion of their total nutrient contribution.

Pennsylvania has a phased approach for wastewater treatment plants to meet their nutrient limits. Phase I plants—mostly larger plants—are required to meet new discharge limits by 2010 to meet Bay goals. Facilities may meet their goals through either structural upgrades or trading. Permits for other plants require meeting their goals over the next several years to help maintain the goal once it is met. New dischargers are required to find offsets for any additional nutrient releases, either by purchasing them from other facilities or from farmers and other runoff sources.

(Reprinted with permission from the March issue of the [Chesapeake Bay Journal](#))

Links: [Groups Say Funding Needed to Cleanup PA Waters Going to Bay](#)

Grants & Awards

This section gives you a heads up on upcoming deadlines for grants and financial assistance as well as nominations for awards and other recognition programs. **NEW** means from last week—

- **March 12**— [PEC Western PA Environmental Awards](#)
- **March 17**— [Community Action for a Renewed Environment Grants](#)
- **March 21**— [Society of Women Environmental Professionals Grants](#)
- **March 31**—**NEW**. [DEP Stormwater Management Administration Grants](#)
- **March 31** – PAEP [Karl Mason Environmental Award](#).
- **March 31**—[DEP Host Municipality Inspector Grants](#)
- **March 31**—[Pa CleanWays Litter Hawk Youth Award Program](#)
- **April 1**— [Write On! Wetlands Challenge Student Competition](#)
- **April 2** – [WREN Water Resources Education Project Grants](#)
- **April 4**— [Schuylkill River Heritage Area Mini-Grants](#)
- **April 25**— DCNR [Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grants](#)
- **May 1**— [PA CleanWays’ Sue Wiseman Student Scholarship](#)
- **May 2**—**NEW**. [DCNR Volunteer Forest Firefighter Grants](#)
- **May 16**—**NEW**. [DEP Growing Greener Watershed, Flood Protection Grants](#)
- **May 20** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **June 20**— DEP [Section 902 Recycling Development Grants](#)
- [RC&D Grants for Improving Livestock Operations](#)
- **September 20**— [Fish & Boat Commission Boating Facilities Grants](#)

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

Quick Clips

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

[Editorial: There's a CO2 Question With Fossil Fuel](#)
[Editorial: Global Warming Shills](#)
[Cash for Carbon: Farms Sequester Greenhouse Gases](#)
[Students Attend Climate Awareness Event](#)
[Op-Ed: There's No Runaway Climate Change](#)
[Merits of Allegheny County's Air Quality Program Debated](#)
[Power Rates Likely to Skyrocket in 2011](#)
[Study: Competition Hasn't Cut Electric Rates](#)
[Lawmakers Divided Over Cost of Energy Plans](#)
[Editorial: Twisted Green Technology](#)
[Pike County Deregulation Shook This Town to Its Knees](#)
[Scrubbers to be Installed on Shamokin Dam Plant](#)
[Foes of Power Line Corridors Lose Again](#)
[Rendell Comments on DOE Decision Not to Review Transmission Line](#)
[PA's Biodiesel Industry Already in Trouble](#)
[Drivers Cut Back on Gas Use](#)
[Eichelberger Supports Statewide Wind Energy Siting Criteria](#)
[Tobyhanna Company Awarded Government Jobs to Build a Better Environment](#)
[Schools Leading Energy Efforts](#)
[DEP Presents Penn Township with Certificate of Environmental Stewardship](#)
[House is Sturdy, Innovative and Energy-Efficient](#)
[Philly Flower Show Offers Eco-Friendly Gardening](#)
[Morris Arboretum On Its Way Becoming Even Greener](#)
[Editorial: Compromise on Energy Savings is Doable](#)
[Editorial: Americans Slowly Learning World's Oil Doesn't Come With Guarantee](#)
[LED Bulbs in Traffic Signals Save Electricity](#)
[Is Green Losing Its Luster?](#)
[Pollution Control Will Also Create Jobs](#)
[Wyoming County OKs Growing Greener Funds](#)
[State-Owned Land Eyed for Gas Deposits](#)
[PA's Green Real Estate Attracts Buyers Worldwide](#)
[Editorial: Zoning Would Give Protection to Appalachian Trail](#)
[Editorial: Appalachian Trail Still Needs Protection](#)
[Preserving Land May Depend on Local Leaders](#)
[Op-Ed: This Land Is Our Land](#)
[Bucks Plan Would Preserve 204 Acres](#)
[SPIN Farming: Think Small Community Advocate Mark](#)
[Nolde Forest's Trails Make Up for Limited Size](#)
[Petition Seeks Hike in Hunting License Fee](#)
[Petitions Call for Hunting License Fee Hike](#)
[Disagreement Over Deer Management Threatens to Undermine Game Commission](#)
[Guard's Use of Game Lands Opposed](#)
[Editorial: Ned Smith's Work Deserves Proper Housing](#)
[Counting Crows In Scranton](#)
[First Grader to Grace Cover of Environmental Brochure](#)
[Student Radon Poster Contest Winner From Monroe County Recognized](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Raising Trout Casts a Wide Net Across Learning](#)
[Upgrade at PA Water Plants Creates Sticker Shock](#)
[Dozens of Towns Sue PA Over Chesapeake Bay Cleanup Costs](#)
[Municipalities Sue Over Bay Cleanup, Citing Cost of \\$1 Billion](#)
[Chambersburg Joins 63 Others in Lawsuit Over Clean Up of Chesapeake Bay](#)
[Chesapeake Bay Cleanup to be Costly to Danville](#)
[Tight Budgets Taking Bit Out of Ability to Restore Chesapeake](#)
[Lawsuit: DEP Lacks Authority on Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy](#)
[Editorial: Rendell, Do the Municipalities Have Your Attention Now on Bay Cleanup?](#)
[Editorial: Bay Pollution Plan Misses Prime Source of Pollution](#)
[PA Board to Tackle Failing Water System](#)
[Politicians Want to East Sewer Burden for Northampton Residents](#)
[Editorial: Water's Cost, Finally State May Be Getting a Repair Plan](#)
[Lehigh Valley Treatment Plants Earn Awards for Clean Water](#)
[Repairs to Tamaqua Dams Estimated at \\$6.4 Million](#)
[Clearfield County to Hear About DEP Stormwater Mandate](#)
[Abandoned Mine to be Reclaimed in Clearfield](#)
[Retired Teacher Helps Clean Up Watershed](#)
[Roaring Run Group Notes 25th Anniversary](#)
[Mountain Watershed Associate Seeks Input on Mine Project](#)
[Watershed Association Drops Creek From Name](#)
[New Law Would Aid Flood Victims](#)
[Wilkes-Barre Flood Gates to Be Installed Today](#)
[State Bills Would Address Flood, Stormwater Damage Prevention](#)

Regulations

The Department of Environmental Protection [published proposed revisions](#) to the State's Air Quality Implementation Plan dealing with particulate matter (PM2.5) and provided notice of an April 10 public hearing and a [separate notice of proposed changes](#) to the Greene County Ozone Nonattainment Plan. Other actions below—

The Environmental Quality Board gave notice it has [accepted a petition for study](#) for the reclassification of the Loyalsock Creek and [published a notice correcting](#) a proposed rulemaking setting standards for certain consumer products.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – March 8, 2008](#)

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 final guidance](#) on drinking water system laboratory reporting. See details below.

Final: DEP ID: 383-3301-107. Laboratory Reporting Instructions for Lead and Copper under the Lead and Copper Rule. This guidance, issued on February 1, 1999, provides instructions to community and nontransient, noncommunity water systems and certified laboratories for the reporting of drinking water lead and copper tap monitoring results as required by the Federal Lead and Copper Rule, published on June 7, 1991, and as implemented in 25 Pa. Code Chapter 109, Subchapter K (relating to lead and copper).

[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. **NEW** indicates new from last week.

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

- [Revised Meeting Schedule for DEP Certification Program Advisory Committee](#)
- [Revised Meeting Schedule for Water, Wastewater Systems Operators Board](#)
- **March 11-** House Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meets to consider [House Resolution 567](#) (Petri-R-Bucks) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study intermodal transit in southeastern PA. Room 302 Irvis Building. 8:30.
- **March 11**— Senate Game and Fisheries Committee information meeting on the Game Commission’s Deer Management Program and the Annual Report of the Game Commission. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 11:00.
- **March 11**—**NEW**. House Commerce Committee hearing on DCED program and budget issues. Room 39 East Wing. 9:00.
- **March 11**—**NEW**. DEP [Critical Water Planning Area Subcommittee](#) of the State Water Plan Statewide Committee meeting. 10th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 12:30. (*meeting notice*)
- **March 12**—**NEW**. House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Special Session House Bill 42](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) providing for biodiesel production incentives and House Resolution XX to restore full LIHEAP funding. Room 39 East Wing. 10:00.
- **March 12**—**NEW**. Legislative Budget & Finance Committee to release report on performance audit of Fish and Boat Commission. Hearing Room 3, North Office. 10:00.

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- **March 12—NEW.** Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee hearing on the PUC budget. Room 8E-A East Wing. 9:30.
- **March 12—NEW.** Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1320](#) (Siptroth-D-Monroe) establishing a disposal program for home-generated medical sharps. Room 461. 10:00.
- **March 12—NEW.** [Delaware River Basin Commission public hearing and meeting.](#) West Trenton, NJ.
- **March 17—** House Republican Policy Committee hearing on electric rate cap mitigation. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 10:30.
- **March 17—**Environmental Issues Form featuring a presentation on the Northampton Generating Company co-generation plant sponsored by the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee.](#) Room 205 Ryan Building. Noon.
- **March 18—CANCELLED.** Environmental Quality Board meeting.
- **March 19—** Capital Region Water Board Meeting. Susquehanna River Basin Commission Building. 1:00. Contact: Cindy Rock, Cindy.L.Rock@comcast.net or call 717-633-7959.
- **March 20—**House Game and Fisheries Committee meets to hear the annual report of the Game Commission. G-50 Irvis Building. 9:00.
- **March 28—** Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference and Shad Symposium. Holiday Inn, Fogelsville. Information, send email to: rkennedy@lehighconservation.org .
- **March 29—** [PennFuture’s Annual Watershed Conference.](#) Chadd’s Ford.
- **April 1—** [DEP Environmental Justice Advisory Board](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 8:30.
- **April 1-2—** The Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry 2008 [Environmental Regulations & Technologies Conference.](#) Eden Resort Inn & Suites, Lancaster.
- **April 14—NEW.** [PA Infrastructure Investment Authority](#) meeting. Dixon University Center, 2986 N. Second St., Harrisburg. 10:00.
- **April 15—RESCHEDULED.** PA Infrastructure Investment Authority meeting. (*notice*)
- **April 17—** Sewage Task Force, [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) meeting. Penn Stater, State College. 10:00.
- **April 18—**PEC [Water Trail Working Session Conference.](#)
- **April 19—** Protecting Our Headwaters Streams and Wetlands-What You Can Do. Cedar Crest College, Allentown. 10:00-3:00. Contact: Barbara Benson, 610-282-33611 or send email to: barbarabenson@bensonsails.com .
- **May 13-15—**[PA Water/Wastewater Association](#) annual conference. Valley Forge.
- **May 28—** [Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards Program.](#) Pittsburgh.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

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You can watch the [Senate Floor Session](#) and [House Floor Session](#) live online.

Helpful Web Links

[PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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

[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.

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