

Conservation Committee Report

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Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

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DEP Citizens Advisory Council Names New Executive Director

The Conservation Pledge

I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully defend from waste, the natural resources of my country; the soil, the water, the air, the minerals, the plant life and the wildlife.

This is my Pledge!

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The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Patrick McDonnell appointed Keith Salador to the position of Executive Director of DEP's [Citizens Advisory Council](#).

"Keith has provided outstanding legal counseling to DEP for the past four years," said McDonnell. "His broad experience within DEP and his extensive knowledge of environmental law will serve the Council very well as they explore big-picture issue areas affecting the commonwealth."

Salador has served as an attorney in DEP's Bureau of Regulatory Counsel since 2014, where he advised DEP staff in the Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields, Radiation Protection,

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DEP Helps Improve School Safety with Laboratory Chemicals Training and Cleanout

Cleanout underway at 11 schools through August 9

With the new school year approaching, 11 schools in seven counties are protecting students' safety by improving management of laborato-

ry chemicals in the 2017-2018 [Schools Chemical Cleanout Campaign](#) led by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). By the time the campaign ends on August 9, 2018, DEP will have removed more than 57,000 pounds of

outdated, excess, and high-risk chemicals and 158 pounds of low-level radioactive materials from 180 schools statewide since the annual program began in 2011.

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DEP Citizens Advisory Council Names New Executive Director (continued)

Storage Tanks, Clean Water, Compacts and Commissions, and Oil and Gas programs. He was involved in a broad range of agency activities that included the drafting of regulations, enforcement actions, litigation, and major policy decisions.

As Executive Director, Salador will coordinate the council's research and reviews related to environmental protection, conservation, and resource management issues and its recommendations regarding policies, procedures, plans, and goals for protecting the environment and natural resources in Pennsylvania.

Before his career at DEP, Salador was an Assistant Regulatory Manager at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia. He also served as a Law Fellow with the Center for International Environmental Law and a Law Clerk for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, both in Washington, D.C. He earned his law degree from Widener University School of Law in Delaware, where he served on the school's Law Review, and a Master of Studies in Environmental Law from the George Washington University School of Law in Washington, D.C.

The Citizens Advisory Council was legislatively created in 1970 by Act 275, which also established the Department of Environmental Resources, the predecessor to DEP. The council comprises 18 citizen volunteers appointed by the governor, president pro tempore of the Pennsylvania Senate, and Speaker of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. The council meets 10 times per year in meetings that are open to the public.

For more information on the Citizens Advisory Council please visit:

<http://www.dep.pa.gov/PublicParticipation/CitizensAdvisoryCouncil/Pages/default.aspx>

Source: The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

DEP Helps Improve School Safety with Laboratory Chemicals Training and Cleanout (continued)

“We’re committed to helping schools protect their students, faculty, and staff by preventing problems with mishandled chemicals,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “Lab accidents can and do happen at schools. To help reduce risk, we train teachers and staff on the full spectrum of chemical use in teaching, from thoughtful purchasing to safe handling, storage, and disposal. We may provide further support by funding and coordinating a one-time chemical cleanout event.”

Schools must complete DEP chemical management training to be eligible to apply for the one-time cleanout. DEP provides the training to personnel in the fall, and the school completes a laboratory chemical inventory over the winter. DEP then coordinates a cleanout event at the school in the summer.

Eighty teachers and staff from 61 schools participated in DEP’s fall 2017 training. Earning continuing education credits, teachers learned procurement best practices; what to include in a chemical inventory; how to replace high-risk chemicals with lower-risk ones; correct spill response; and proper storage, use, and disposal.

The following schools were approved for the 2018 chemical cleanout:

Bucks County: Council Rock School District;

Huntingdon County: Mount Union School District and Southern Huntingdon County School District;

Lackawanna County: Lakeland Junior/Senior High School;

Luzerne County: Crestwood School, Hazleton Area High School, and Northwest Area School District;

Mercer County: Mercer Area Middle School;

Montgomery County: Bala Cynwyd Middle School and Harriton High School;

Potter County: Coudersport Area Junior/Senior High School.

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DEP Helps Improve School Safety with Laboratory Chemicals Training and Cleanout (continued)

Cleanouts are carried out by approved contractors under DEP supervision, and hazardous and nonhazardous wastes are transported to appropriate permitted disposal facilities.

Teachers can return for chemical management continuing education even after their schools have had a cleanout under this popular program.

The DEP Schools Chemical Cleanout Campaign is provided to schools at no cost.

Training for the 2018-2019 campaign will begin in October. Teachers interested in participating should consult their Intermediate Unit Continuing Education courses. DEP offers the campaign as part of the Department of Education's Safe Schools Initiative.

Source: PA DEP

PA Outdoor Corps' Successful 2018 Summer Youth Program

After seven weeks of learning new skills and completing hard work (and dealing with a lot of rain), the third [Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps](#) summer program has wrapped up this month.

Sixteen crews across the state, each made up of about ten young people, ages 15-18 -- along with their crew leaders and support from DCNR staff, the Student Conservation Association (SCA), the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I), and the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation -- all made a world of a difference at state parks and forests and other public outdoor places this summer.

These hardworking teens helped with everything from trail maintenance and habitat restoration to building painting and bridge construction.

But it wasn't all tough labor! As part of their PA Outdoor Corps experience, they also had some fun. The teens had the opportunity to explore new outdoor places, enjoy environmental education and recreation days, make lifelong friendships, and have access to conservation staff and job resources to help support them in their future.

DCNR hosted an end of the summer PA Outdoor Corps celebration where leaders and program coordinators from DCNR, SCA, and L&I shared the importance of the program, noting where it started and ways that it's grown, and will continue to grow. The dozens of crew leaders also attended on August 13 to present about their accomplishments and the successes (and funny stories) about their teams.

DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn shared during this event that her favorite work days of the summer were visiting some of the crews, learning about their work, and working with them.

"This generation gives us hope in so many ways," Dunn said. "You are leaders, and you don't shy away from hard work."

DCNR Deputy Secretary for Parks and Forestry John Norbeck shared with the crew leaders: "Whether you get a job in natural resources or not, we wanted to introduce folks to conservation, so you can carry conservation ethics with you for the rest of your lives."

Many crew leaders discussed the pride they and their teams felt when working to better state parks and forests for improved visitor experiences and conservation. Many hope to go back to where they worked this summer to show their families and friends their efforts, and some already have!

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PA Outdoor Corps' Successful 2018 Summer Youth Program (continued)

Here is just a small sample of some of their outstanding work:

Altoona Crew -- Porcupine Cribs

The Altoona crew worked at Prince Gallitzin State Park during their first four weeks of the program. During this time, they helped fill porcupine cribs with invasive plants (Autumn Olive) and dropped them in the lake by boat to support fish habitat. The Fish and Boat Commission handed out awards for all their hard work.

Erie Crew -- Triosk and Nature Play Space Construction

During July, some of the Erie crew members worked to build an educational triosk at Erie Bluffs State Park. Others helped construct a Nature Play Space Area at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center.

Hazleton Crew -- Lehigh Tannery Historic Site Clean Up

Thanks to the Hazleton crew, visitors to the Lehigh Tannery Historic Site near Hickory Run State Park now can enjoy the view of stone ruins of the Lehigh Tannery. The smaller enclosures on the north end of the foundation used to be tanning vats and the larger enclosures on the south end were part of a long drying or storage building.

Pittsburgh Crew -- Adirondack Shelter Restoration

The Pittsburgh crew spent the first four weeks of their experience at Raccoon Creek State Park building a foot bridge, doing trail work, and restoring Adirondack shelters.

St. Marys Crew -- New Trail Construction

The St. Marys crew built a new trail from the campground to the dam by moving heavy rocks and materials as a team.

Some of the summer youth crews felt so strongly about conservation that after their August 10 program end date, they decided to continue to volunteer to help address issues caused by flooding at state parks.

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PA Outdoor Corps' Successful 2018 Summer Youth Program (continued)

Sparking this passion for outdoor service is what the PA Outdoor Corps is designed to do. DCNR and its partners hope to continue to build upon the program, to connect even more youth and young adults with the outdoors.

In addition to this work, the 10-month, young adult PA Outdoor Corps crews (ages 18-25) have been working since February 2018 and will continue to do great work through early November 2018.

Learn More

To learn more about the PA Outdoor Corps program, visit DCNR's [PA Outdoor Corps web page](#). You can also hear more about crew member experiences from recent years from this [video](#).

DCNR also posts updates on social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) and our resource e-newsletter about current projects, program events, and PA Outdoor Corps hiring announcements.

Young people interested in conservation can also check out our new [Youth Ambassador Program](#).

Source: PA DCNR

PURSUE YOUR TRAIL!

In Pennsylvania, we're fortunate to have thousands of miles of trails of all types to hike, ride, and paddle, just waiting to be explored at little to no cost.

To recognize their many values, we're celebrating trails in September! Check out the trail and recreation opportunities Pennsylvania offers:

KICKING OFF TRAILS MONTH

DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn this week is visiting three trails in northeastern Pennsylvania to hear from stakeholders and local officials about the trails' importance to healthy citizens and attracting visitors.

"Trails connect places, they are one of the best guides to nature, and more than 75 percent of Pennsylvanians believe that, along with parks, they are an essential component of our health care system," Dunn said.

Stops on the visit include:

- A ribbon cutting for the Pocono Creek pedestrian bridge in Monroe County. The bridge and trail connect Knights Park and local neighborhoods to Stroudsburg High School and the Stroudsburg Borough Park. DCNR provided a \$360,000 investment in the bridge.
- Promised Land State Park in Pike County to highlight the opportunities for horseback riding. Horseback riding is allowed on park roads and designated trails, and provide access to 26 miles of equestrian trails in Delaware State Forest.
- The trailhead for the Delaware and Hudson Trail, which runs two miles to the south and eight miles to the north in Forest City in Susquehanna County.

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PURSUE YOUR TRAIL! (CONTINUED)

The trail section is a center for organized events that attract participants, including a half marathon that will be held on September 9.

“At these three locations in northeast Pennsylvania, we can see the exciting range of trail opportunities that are examples of what you can find across the state -- trail connections between schools and places to enjoy nature; a wide range of trail types including for those who like to ride horses, bikes, or ATVs; and locations for events that draw visitors who reenergize towns along the path,” Dunn said.

HOW TO FIND A TRAIL

Anyone who wants to visit a trail but is not sure where to go can find 12,000 miles of trails on the recently refreshed [Explore PA Trails website](#).

You now can search for trails in the way you prefer -- by trail name, county or zip code, or the type of trail to find your perfect path! You also can find DCNR’s calendar of events, the Pennsylvania Trail of the Year, and a featured trail.

TRAIL PARTNERS MOVING EFFORTS FORWARD

DCNR helps coordinate a 20-member Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee that represents many different types of users and stakeholders. It advises the department of the use of state and federal trail funding.

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PURSUE YOUR TRAIL! (CONTINUED)

The committee recently published its [2017 Trails Report \(PDF\)](#), which shares helpful information about trail planning, closing trail gaps to reach the goal of having a trail within 15 minutes of every Pennsylvanian, and many great accomplishments for the year.

DCNR partners with various trail organizations to help maintain all the trails across the state. You can help care for your favorite trails. Find upcoming trail events at [DCNR's calendar](#).

THE PATH TO GOOD HEALTH

Not only is hitting the trail usually free, trails also have a role to play in maintaining good health by:

- Providing walkable access to appropriate sites to motivate people to participate in physical activity and to do so more frequently
- Encouraging physical activity that can improve heart health
- Along with parks, providing safe spaces for people to play and exercise, away from busy streets and commercial zones

LEARN MORE ABOUT TRAILS

Visit explorePAtrails.com to find a trail near you that suits you!

Learn more about [staying safe](#) while hiking, [Leave No Trace ethics](#), and ways reduce your chances of [spreading invasive species \(PDF\)](#) on the trail.

There's a PA trail for everyone. **Pursue your trail!**

Source: PA DCNR

State Rebates Available to Help Pennsylvanians Drive Cleaner Cars

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is offering rebates up to \$2,000 for Pennsylvania residents who purchase alternative fuel vehicles. Rebates are available depending on the type of vehicle purchased. Eligible vehicles are plug-in hybrid, plug-in electric, natural gas, propane, and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

“Since the program’s inception, DEP has awarded more than 3,500 rebates to Pennsylvania residents who made the switch to alternative fuel vehicles,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “Switching to an alternative fuel vehicle can save on fuel costs for the owners, and improve air quality in Pennsylvania.”

To be eligible for a rebate, a new alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) must have a manufacturer’s suggested retail price of \$60,000 or less and must have an odometer reading of less than 500 miles. One-time preowned AFVs with 75,000 miles or less and a true market value of \$50,000 or less are also eligible for a \$750 rebate. Leased vehicles are also now eligible for rebates, a change that allows additional flexibility for residents.

An additional rebate of \$500 for pre-owned vehicles is available to residents with household income below 200 percent of the federal income poverty level.

Rebates will be awarded in the order that the request forms and required documentation are received and approved, not the date a vehicle was purchased. Consumers may submit applications up to six months after the date of purchase. Consumers should be aware that funds may be depleted before their rebate application can be processed.

Flexible fuel, non-plug-in hybrid and biodiesel vehicles are not eligible. Businesses are not eligible to receive rebates through this program. Rebates issued as a part of this program are taxable income and will result in the issuance of a 1099 form for the taxable year in which the rebate was received.

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State Rebates Available to Help Pennsylvanians Drive Cleaner Cars (continued)

For program guidelines, application instructions, and an up-to-date listing of rebate availability, visit the Alternative Fuel Incentive Grants web page:

<http://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/GrantsLoansRebates/Alternative-Fuels-Incentive-Grant/Pages/Alternative-Fuel-Vehicles.aspx>

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

DEP's Oil and Gas Annual Report Details Increased Permit Efficiencies with Increased Inspections, Environmental Protections

Faster form submission for operators, progress on improved e-permitting options, and increased efficiency and number of site inspections are among program advances detailed in the [2017 Oil and Gas Annual Report](#), released by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

"As the production of natural gas in Pennsylvania reached record volume last year, DEP continued to work hard on program developments that improved customer service to industry and strengthened environmental protection," said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell.

The report notes that total inspections, as well as inspections of unconventional Marcellus Shale wells, were both at record levels in 2017, with over 36,000 compliance inspections conducted during the year. Through the first three years of the Wolf administration, DEP has averaged 35,483 total inspections per year, up from an average of 26,230 in the prior four years, in keeping with the Wolf administration's commitment to provide consistent, fair and timely enforcement of Pennsylvania's environmental regulations.

DEP expanded electronic form submission options for operators, enabling well records, pre-drill survey sample results, site restoration reports, and other forms to be submitted online. These upgrades save operators time and increase the public transparency of the regulatory process. A 2017 update of the DEP compliance and enforcement tracking database to show the number of days a company is in violation also increased public transparency.

Site inspections increased 2 percent over 2016, for a total of 36,288 inspections. Development of a tablet-based electronic tool in 2017 has greatly streamlined the process for field and office staff and for operators and made inspection results more quickly available to the public—in days rather than weeks.

The agency made significant progress in upgrading its current well-drilling online permit to be part of the new department-wide e-permitting system for enhanced functionality. Work also progressed on converting the Erosion and Sediment Control General Permit from a paper application to an e-permit. Both e-permits are expected to launch in fall 2018.

DEP's Oil and Gas Annual Report Details (continued)

DEP issued 2,028 unconventional well permits last year, 707 more than in 2016. An interactive map shows the locations. Operators produced 5.36 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, about a quarter-trillion increase over 2016.

New tools and initiatives were launched last year to step up efforts, in the face of great funding need, to address the statewide problem of orphan and abandoned wells left by oil and gas drilling operations before regulations were put in place in the 1980s. DEP increased inspections of these potentially hazardous wells; created online mapping and video educational tools; and started a Good Samaritan program to encourage and train the private sector to help plug them.

The interactive, multimedia annual report offers several levels of data: the year in review; deeper detail and historical data; and educational overviews of drilling and the regulatory process statewide. For example, users can see how much gas was produced in Pennsylvania in 2017, compare this to production since 2010, or drill down to see production by individual wells.

The annual report also features a section on the many ways the public can stay up-to-date on regulations, for example, by signing up for email notifications or attending Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board Meetings in person or by webinar.

Source: Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).