

Conservation Committee Report

Volume 16 Issue 3

Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

April -May 2014



How's My Waterway - Now More User-Friendly

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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App Lets Users Check Health of Waterways Anywhere in the US

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released an enhanced version of "How's My Waterway," an app and website to help people find information on the condi-

tion of thousands of lakes, rivers and streams across the United States from their smart phone, tablet or desktop computer.

The How's My Waterway app and website, <http://www.epa.gov/mywaterway>, uses GPS technology or a user-entered zip code or city name to

provide information about the quality of local water bodies. The new version of the site includes data on local drinking water sources, watersheds and efforts to protect waterways, as well as a map-oriented version of "How's My Waterway" designed for

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DEP Warns Consumers that a Recent Production Run of Tyler Mountain Water in Three, Four and Five Gallon Sizes are Contaminated with Total Coliform and E. Coli Bacteria

DEP is warning consumers that Tyler Mountain water, bottled on April 17, 2014, and April 18, 2014, in three, four and five gallon sizes should not be used and consumers should contact Aqua Filter Fresh at 1-

800-864-8957 for further instructions.

Only those customers that recently received a new delivery of water from Aqua Filter Fresh need to be concerned about this recall.

Aqua Filter Fresh, a company that produces Tyler Mountain water, is in the process of replacing all suspect water. People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some

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How's My Waterway - Now More User-Friendly (continued)

museum kiosks, displays and touch screens, available at:

<http://watersgeo.epa.gov/mywaterway/kiosk/>.

“Communities and neighborhoods across the U.S. want to know that their local lakes, rivers and streams are healthy and safe to enjoy with their families, and providing that information is a priority for EPA,” said acting assistant administrator for EPA’s Office of Water Nancy Stoner. “The enhanced version of ‘How’s My Waterway’ provides easy, user-friendly access to the health of the places we swim, fish and boat, where we get our drinking water, and what is being done to curb water pollution. People can get this information whether researching at a desktop or standing streamside looking at a smart phone.”

The enhanced version includes new data and improvements based on user feedback to the original site, including localized information on:

- The waterways that supply drinking water to communities.
- The health of watersheds and organizations working to protect watersheds.
- Permits that limit pollutant discharge into waterways.
- Efforts to restore waterways to protect and improve fish habitats by the National Fish Habitat Partnerships.

Here’s how to use “How’s My Waterway”:

SEARCH: Go to <http://www.epa.gov/mywaterway> and allow GPS technology to identify the nearest streams, rivers or lakes or enter a zip code or city name.

REVIEW: Instantly receive a list of waterways within five miles of the search location. Each waterway is identified as unpolluted, polluted or unassessed. A map option offers the user a view of the search area with the results color-coded by assessment status.

DISCOVER: Once a specific lake, river or stream is selected, the How’s My Waterway app and website provides information on the type of pollution reported for that waterway and what has been done by EPA and the states to reduce it. Additional reports and technical information is available for many waterways. Read simple descriptions of each type of water pollutant, including pollutant type, likely sources and potential health risks.

EXPLORE: Related links page connects users to popular water information on beaches, drinking water and fish and wildlife habitat based on a user’s search criteria.

Source: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

DEP Warns Consumers that a Recent Production Run of Tyler Mountain Water in Three, Four and Five Gallon Sizes are Contaminated with Total Coliform and E. Coli Bacteria
(continued)

elderly may be at increased risk. If you have specific health concerns, you should consult your doctor.

Presences of E. coli bacteria indicate that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, some of the elderly and people with severely compromised immune systems.

If you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, you may want to seek medical advice. People at increased risk should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers.

General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

Source: PA DEP

DCNR launches *Kids in Nature* to engage children in learning about natural resources, playing outdoors



DCNR Secretary Ellen Ferretti at Nescopeck State Park has unveiled *Kids in Nature*, renewing a focus on getting Pennsylvania's families to spend more time enjoying the outdoors.

To celebrate Earth Day, Ferretti spent an hour talking with the 8th grade students from the Hazleton Area School District attending a full-day program at the park about protecting watersheds.

"Well-documented statistics indicate our children are becoming increasingly disconnected from the outdoors," Ferretti said. "At DCNR, we work daily to connect people of all ages to nature through the public lands we manage and help support in communities.

"*Kids in Nature* will step up our efforts to raise the awareness of existing opportunities for connecting children and their families to the wonders of nature and getting them actively involved in recreation, educational programs and environmental careers," Ferretti said.

Many child advocates fear that the lack of outdoor activities has a devastating effect on children's mental and physical health. Environmental stewards worry that the younger generations' disconnect to the outdoors will mean as adults they will be less likely to be personally committed to the protection of our natural resources.

DCNR staff will spend much of this year learning from youth and elevating the awareness of existing opportunities to get kids outdoors.

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"I plan on visiting schools and state park and forest kid-focused events throughout this year to gain an understanding of what is keeping kids and their families from exploring nature. We'll also be conducting a few contests this summer to draw attention to *Kids in Nature*," Ferretti

DCNR launches *Kids in Nature* to engage children in learning about natural resources, playing outdoors (continued)

said. "Our intent is to have conversations with young people to find out their wants, likes and dislikes related to learning about nature and spending time outside."

The department has launched a website <http://www.panaturekids.org/> as a source of information for parents and teachers about where to go outside, and what to do when you get there.

"I believe that young people visiting our state parks and forests with their families, scout troops and schools, and participating in the unique programs we offer including Adventure Camps for kids from urban areas will come to know and love our natural resources and be advocates for their stewardship," Ferretti said.

Source: PA DCNR

DEP Releases 2014 Integrated Waters Report

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) released the 2014 Pennsylvania Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report, providing an assessment of the overall water quality of the state's many creeks, streams, rivers and waterways.

"This report is an important tool to gauge our progress on protecting Pennsylvania's waters." DEP Secretary E. Christopher Abruzzo said. "While we have more work to do, this report demonstrates that DEP is working hard to improve water quality."

The report, required every two years by the federal Clean Water Act, is an assessment of the state's rivers and streams. DEP assesses four protected uses of all surface waters: fish consumption, recreation, potable water and aquatic life. DEP examines water chemistry, macro-invertebrates, pathogens, iron, nitrates and sulfates.

The report proposes listing or delisting waterways as impaired for the protected uses. This year there are two listing changes.

The Monongahela River, which was impaired for potable water use, will be removed from the impairment list because the in-stream level of sulfates now meets Pennsylvania's water quality standards. The lower main stem of the Susquehanna River will be added to the fish consumption impairment list for channel catfish larger than 20 inches due to Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). The recommended consumption is no more than one meal per month.

DEP has conducted a comprehensive analysis of the Susquehanna River since 2012 and continues to do so in 2014. The 2013 Susquehanna River Study Report will be available in mid-May. A public webinar will take place at that time to discuss the results.

The Integrated Waters Report is now open for a 45-day comment period. After the comment period, comments will be reviewed by DEP, changes will be made and a comment response document released. DEP's final draft of the report will be sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval.

Public comments on the report are encouraged. The public comment period will begin on April 26 and continue until June 10. Written comments should be submitted to Molly Pulket, Division of Water Quality Standards, Bureau of Point and Non-Point Source Management, P. O. Box 8774, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8774 or via email to RA-WQAssessments@pa.gov. Comments received by facsimile will not be accepted.

For more information or to view DEP's 2014 Integrated Waters Report, visit www.dep.state.pa.us, keyword: Water Quality.

Source: The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

DEP Releases First-Ever Oil and Gas Annual Report, Unveils Video Highlighting Work of Dedicated Oil and Gas Staff

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced it has released the 2013 Oil and Gas Annual Report, along with a video highlighting the important work and professionalism of the dedicated members of DEP's Oil and Gas Program staff.

"Today I am proud to continue the department's commitment to open, transparent and accountable government with the release of the first-ever Oil and Gas Annual Report," Secretary E. Christopher Abruzzo said. "This report illustrates the great progress we have made in protecting our environment through increased inspections, tougher regulations and improved oversight of this industry."

The 2013 Oil and Gas Annual Report was created to provide information and insight into how DEP's Oil and Gas Program is fulfilling the department's mission to protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of Pennsylvania citizens. Highlighted in the report is information on program structure and processes, permitting, inspections, compliance and enforcement, regulatory and policy developments, and program innovations.

In September 2011, in order to adequately regulate and monitor the quickly growing industry, the Bureau of Oil and Gas Management was elevated to the Office of Oil and Gas Management, making it a deputate-level program for the first time in DEP history. Staffing was also significantly increased, with the program currently employing 202 individuals, 80 percent of whom are involved in engineering, scientific, permitting or inspection-related work.

DEP today also released video featuring real, unscripted clips of program staff sharing their personal experiences conducting the important work of the Oil and Gas Program across the state.

"The individuals working in Pennsylvania's Oil and Gas Program are highly trained, dedicated professionals who devote their time and energy to protecting our environment and making sure energy resources are extracted in a manner that is deserving of the public's trust," Abruzzo said.

"Our regulators are Pennsylvanians. They often live in the same communities in which they serve, and have a professional and personal stake in ensuring there is a beautiful, healthy Pennsylvania to pass down to our children and grandchildren. It is an honor to work with them on this important mission."

The video was funded by the Environmental Education Fund. Mandated by the Environmental Education Act of 1993, five percent of all pollution fines and penalties collected annually by DEP is set aside for environmental education.

To view the video and read the full report, visit www.dep.state.pa.us and click on the "Oil and Gas Annual Report" button on the homepage.

Source: The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Diverse audience follows emerald ash borer's destructive path to Greenwood Furnace State Park

Some of the dead lay felled and sectioned. Others stood leafless, lifeless, contrasted against the vibrant blue that is the Huntingdon County sky in early morning. Together they serve as too-real props in the tragedy that is playing out in stands of trees across Pennsylvania.

"I'm sure most of you noticed the downed ash trees as you drove into the office parking lot this morning," said Greenwood Furnace State Park Manager Michael Dinsmore, "and you can't miss the cut, stacked wood throughout the park grounds. This is just one way we're dealing with the emerald ash borer."

His audience was a diverse gathering, indeed—foresters, state park managers, arborists, municipal officials, homeowners—all drawn together to take stock of the massive damage one very small invasive insect has wrought. They crowded into a park building for Act Two of a Bureau of Forestry production that is playing to packed houses across the state. They came to hear what they can do—or, as some speakers emphasized, *must* do—when the emerald ash borer targets trees close to home.

"Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan for Pennsylvania Communities" was the title of the day-long workshop hosted April 16 at Greenwood Furnace State Park. There were no empty seats. Same topic, same interest a month earlier in West Chester, Chester County. Similar interest already has been generated in Tioga and Allegheny counties where future workshops will be held.

And that's not surprising, workshop organizers say, when one considers costly treatment options, dangers posed by borer-killed trees, and the insect's rapid spread eastward and north across the state. Indeed, since the Greenwood Furnace meeting, three counties—Susquehanna, Berks and Lebanon—reported first-time emerald ash borer infestations. It now is found in 51 of the state's 67 counties.

"It could very well be in every county now, but we have not yet had it reported," bureau Forest Entomologist Dr. Houping Liu told his workshop listeners. "One thing is certain, if you have a lot of ash trees, you will have a lot of issues."

And with those issues comes a need for preparedness, said the man spearheading the bureau's emerald ash borer education effort. Whether a small golf course or a sprawling municipality, Liu said, dead and dying ash trees will pose problems for those who own them, try to treat them, or are forced to take them down.

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Diverse audience follows emerald ash borer's destructive path to Greenwood Furnace State Park (continued)

"What options do we have to remove the emerald ash borer?" asked the entomologist spearheading the workshop series. "For a problem of this size, not very many, really."

That's why Liu and other bureau Forest Pest Management staff have been working closely with municipalities to encourage inventorying of ash trees, weighing of options, and consideration of safety and costs concerns. The Bureau of State Parks has been heeding that call for years now, since the emerald ash borer first reared its deadly head in 2007 in Cranberry Township, Butler County.

"As you have seen and heard here today, the Bureau of State Parks is trying to go at this with a selective pace," said Park Manager Rachel Wagoner. "We certainly are not going to be able to save every tree, nor are we going to remove everything that's dead, or dies in the future."

Instead, all state parks are taking inventory of their ash trees, said Wagoner, a parks resource manager responsible for forest health and plant communities. Also, they are identifying what trees should come down, others that should—and can be—treated by injection with minimal cost.

"This is an evolving but uniform process that is constantly undergoing a process of evaluation," the park manager said.



Dead ash trees at Greenwood Furnace State Park form a graphic backdrop for a recent workshop focusing on the "Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan for Pa. Communities." Discussing one of the larger trees felled at the Huntingdon County park are, from left, park managers Michael Dinsmore and Rachel Wagoner and Bureau of Forestry Forest Entomologist Dr. Houping Liu.

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Diverse audience follows emerald ash borer's destructive path to Greenwood Furnace State Park (continued)

And what fills the future void of dead ash? Guest speaker Dr. James Finley, a Penn State University forestry professor urged his listeners to think ahead toward viable replacement species and possible retention of ash tree seed sources:

"If you are a forest owner or landowner and you love your forest, start thinking now how you can best take care of it," Finley said. "Take care of it now so that it will be there for those who come after you."

Think ash trees are important to the diversity of Penn's Woods? They may rank No. 8 in number across the state—about 304 million trees—said the Bureau of Forestry's Shawn Lehman, but they are No. 1 when it comes to the manufacturing of baseball bats. And that's not all. Pennsylvania ash is used for flooring, molding, and in the manufacture of pallets, tool handles, drum shells, canoe paddles, even snowshoes. Lehman's utilization list goes on and on.

His hope for the species' future does not:

"We know that ash trees across the state are regenerating but we are not sure what's going to happen after that."

And what does the dead or dying ash tree mean to the passing park visitor, golfer or motorist? Or the working tree surgeon? Sometimes, a safety threat, said Dr. Anand Persad of The Davey Tree Expert Co., who detailed how an ash borer-targeted tree is a much weakened tree—that does very unusual things when rocked by wind or being felled by a tree surgeon or arborist.

"Bad breaks," including the infamous "widow makers," or dropping overhead limbs, and dead trees "popping at the base," all have accounted for a spike in injuries to workmen in infected trees, Persad noted. Still, he urged restraint in felling any ash tree that may not be dead or dying:

"Let's not chase the ambulance yet," the Davey representative said. "Do not let fear manage what you cut. I have seen instances where perfectly healthy trees were felled."

And the silver lining—if any?

To the man managing a park where 85 ash dead ash trees were taken out in 2013; 25 so far this year "with many more expected," there is a unique teaching tool that enables park staffers to better overcome public perception that is not always positive.

"It's not easy for park visitors to see a tree taken down that they were married under 20 years ago," said Dinsmore, Greenwood Furnace's manager, "but when we explain the scientific reasoning and the safety factors, they usually understand."

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Diverse audience follows emerald ash borer's destructive path to Greenwood Furnace State Park (continued)

And, perhaps see and hear new sights during park visits:

"I can't go a day around here without seeing a pileated woodpecker," Dinsmore said, noting the winged visitors fondness for borer larva in the dead ash. "Wood ducks are drawn to them, too, and, of course, the salamanders utilize the cover of fallen limbs.

"There is a public perception that a dead tree, a fallen tree, is a wasted species and that really is not the case."

Two remaining workshops addressing an "Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan for Pa. Communities" are planned in May and June. Admission to the day-long sessions is free, but pre-registration is required.

"Attendees will leave these workshops with a wealth of newfound knowledge on what they can do personally to challenge the emerald ash borer's spread," said DCNR Secretary Ellen Ferretti. "Do you have ash trees in your community? Is the emerald ash borer in your area or nearby? Do you want to save your ash trees? These are among the many questions experts and tree-care professionals will be asking and answering."

Panels will focus on the biology of the ash tree and its insect enemy; damage detection and control; and ash tree inventories and management strategies.

Attendees also will be introduced to urban tree benefits; insect management tools; utilization of dead ash trees; costs of management options; and species selection to replace dead ash trees. Field trips to local management areas and chemical treatment demonstrations are planned.

Municipal officials, urban foresters, arborists, conservationists, pesticide applicators, tree-care professionals, landscapers and home and woodlot owners are expected to attend. Scheduled between 8:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., workshops are planned:

- Wednesday, May 14, North Park Lodge, North Park, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County;
- Wednesday, June 18, Allen Hall 104, Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, Mansfield, Tioga County.

Reservations must be made five days in advance of the workshops by telephoning (717) 783-2066 or emailing cshafer@pa.gov. Workshops will be held regardless of weather; refreshments will be provided at the sessions.

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Diverse audience follows emerald ash borer's destructive path to Greenwood Furnace State Park (continued)

Training is funded by the USDA Forest Service through a grant to the Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council. Other supporters include DCNR, West Chester University of Pennsylvania, the Pa. Horticulture Society, Pennsylvania State University, The Nature Conservancy, Allegheny County Department of Parks, Tree Pittsburgh and Mansfield University of Pennsylvania.

Native to Asia, the emerald ash borer first was detected in the United States in Michigan in 2002. Beetle larvae bore through ash trees, disrupting flow of water and nutrients through the tree, and eventually killing it. Tree owners fearing infestation should be alert for the May and early June emergence of adult insects through D-shaped exit holes in the bark.

Details on the emerald ash borer and other Pennsylvania forest pests can be found here. <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/insectsdisease/index.htm>

DEP Releases 2014 Susquehanna River Sampling Plan

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) released a work plan outlining efforts to continue studying and sampling the Susquehanna River basin throughout 2014. The plan includes analysis of water quality, water flow, sediment, pesticides, hormones, invertebrates, fish tissue and more.

“Over the last two years where we tremendously enhanced our examination efforts, DEP has learned a great deal about the health of the Susquehanna River,” DEP Secretary E. Christopher Abruzzo said. “It is important to continue these efforts so that DEP can create policy and regulation based on facts and sound science.”

In 2013, DEP staff spent 927 days collecting samples on the river. The amount of work days in 2014 is expected to be the same or increase slightly.

DEP will collect samples at sites along the Susquehanna in Marietta, City Island and Sunbury and along the Juniata River at the Lewistown Narrows and Newport. Additional sampling sites along the Delaware, Allegheny and Youghiogeny rivers will be used as control sites to establish a baseline for water quality. Portions of the study will focus on areas where smallmouth bass reproduce.

Staff will test for various water quality parameters, like dissolved oxygen, temperature and pH, at multiple sites in the Susquehanna River.

Samples of fish, mussels and macroinvertebrates, such as mayflies, will also be collected. Fish tissue from bass collected during the spawning season will be analyzed for pesticides, PCBs and metals.

Throughout 2014, DEP will continue to sample for pesticides at existing water quality network stations along the Susquehanna, Juniata and Delaware rivers. Samples will be collected during high and low flows to better document pesticides in these waters.

DEP’s biologists continue to consult with a contracted algal expert to analyze samples collected in the Susquehanna River Basin and control sites. Algal samples are analyzed for total suspended solids, ammonia, nitrogen and phosphorus to determine the relationship between nutrient run-off, or discharges, and algal growth. Excessive algae may be indicative of poor water quality.

For more information, visit www.dep.state.pa.us and click on the “Susquehanna River Study Update” button on the homepage.

Source: PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Governor's 2014 Environmental Excellence Award Winners Honored

The 23 organizations involved in 19 environmental projects from across the state were honored with the 2014 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence.

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council hosted a dinner to recognize the award winners and featured keynote speaker Chris Abruzzo, Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection and opening remarks by Ellen Ferretti, Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Secretary Ferretti said DCNR's employees are excited about implementing Gov. Corbett's Enhanced Penn Woods initiative to repair and upgrade State Parks and Forests. She also congratulated PEC on its 44th birthday and recalled what a radical thing it was in 1970 to recycle.

"Each year, it's inspiring to learn about the innovative, environmentally friendly projects from across the state," said DEP Secretary Chris Abruzzo. "This year's award recipients are protecting Pennsylvania's environment with creativity and ingenuity."

Secretary Abruzzo provided an update on activities in DEP, including the Permit Review Guarantee (96 percent on time), transparency at the agency (a record number of hearings and webinars) and the best kept secret at the agency-- the dramatic reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as a result of increased natural gas use (2020 emissions will be lower than 2000 emissions).

"You have the commitment of this Governor and this DEP Secretary, that every day we will work extraordinarily hard to uphold our mission to protect our land, water and air resources," Abruzzo said.

Gov. Corbett recognized the award winners by saying, "The recipients of this year's award represent a few of the many dedicated Pennsylvanians who have committed their businesses, schools and other organizations to be good stewards of the environment. Their efforts are key to ensure that Pennsylvania's air, land and water are clean for generations to come."

Any Pennsylvania business, school, government agency, trade organization, non-profit organization or agribusiness that has completed projects to promote environmental stewardship and economic development was eligible to apply for the award. The winners were selected by the Department of Environmental Protection.

The winning projects include tailgate recycling, abandoned mine drainage (AMD) abatement, rain gardens and the use of alternative energy, among others.

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Governor's 2014 Environmental Excellence Award Winners Honored (continued)

The Award winners are--

- Collier Township, **Allegheny County**, pursued the Rooftop Photovoltaic Electrical Generating System Project, a renewable energy project that will reduce over one million pounds of carbon dioxide gas emissions over time. The project consists of 132 glass tube solar modules installed on a nearby roof. This 22kW photovoltaic system is estimated to generate a net savings of approximately \$75,000 over its lifespan by selling back to the local utility company via a "grid-tied" system.
- Pittsburgh Botanic Garden, **Allegheny County**, did a pond restoration project in the Woodlands of the World Garden where there is a pond once polluted with AMD. A passive treatment system was installed with a drainable limestone bed that neutralizes acidity and removes metal contaminants before clean water is released into the pond.
- Shell Appalachia, **Allegheny County**, created an Environmental Impacts Assessment with a web application that is used as a tool to help reduce risks associated with field development. This application allows planners in all facets of Shell Appalachia to choose from a library of spatial data layers including social, environmental, biological, regulatory, analytical (baseline water and air quality) data and critical infrastructure layers.
- Cumberland County's **Energy Efficiency Program** included replacement of boilers at the courthouse, old courthouse and old jail; replacement of the cooling tower at the courthouse; installation of energy efficient lights; installation of energy efficient motion sensors on vending machines; installation of low-flow faucets and toilets; replacement of hot water usage with an ozone system for laundry at the Claremont Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and county prison; and installation of an energy management system which provides remote computer access to the county's HVAC systems.
- Central Dauphin School District's **Energy Conservation Program, Dauphin County**, has helped the district save money and reduce energy consumption, as well as reducing its carbon footprint. The district partnered with Cenergistic, Inc. to identify feasible means for reducing energy use in its buildings.
- Phoenix Contact, **Dauphin County**, came up with the SunPlug-Solar Powered Electric Vehicle Charging Station Project to prove that electrical vehicles can be re-charged with solar power and without burdening the electrical grid. A solar canopy that is the size of a typical parking lot with 12 high-performance solar panels generates 2.7 kW and is supported with battery storage of 4 kW and a 4.2 kW off-grid inverter to charge electric vehicles.

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Governor's 2014 Environmental Excellence Award Winners Honored (continued)

-- SKELLY and LOY, Inc., **Dauphin County**, conducted the Allison Hill Automotive Brownfields Remediation Project. The former Allison Hill Automotive site was a 6.2-acre property with multiple vacant buildings that were an eyesore to the local community, an environmental hazard, and a tax liability to the City of Harrisburg. The restoration work included removing and disposing of hazardous wastes, abating materials containing asbestos, and demolishing the buildings. Fencing was installed around the site to improve security and to restrict direct contact to contaminated soils during the cleanup process.

-- Environment Erie's **St. George Rain Catcher Project** was a successful partnership of non-profits, private businesses, government and students. A rain garden was planted on the property of a local church to reduce stormwater runoff. Students from the partnering school were able to use the development and construction of the rain garden as a learning tool.

-- PPL Renewable Energy, LLC **partnered with the Borough of Chambersburg and IESI PA Blue Ridge Landfill in Franklin County** to develop the Blue Ridge Renewable Energy Plant. This unique project consists of a 6.4 MW landfill gas-to-energy plant.

-- Armstrong World Industries' **Recycling Program for Vinyl Composition Tile Flooring in Lancaster County** is the first program of its kind to recycle installed Armstrong vinyl flooring products as well as qualifying competitive vinyl products. Under the program, vinyl flooring is recycled in a closed-loop, post-consumer stream with reclaimed material incorporated into new flooring products.

-- City of Lancaster decided to improve stormwater management and traffic safety through its Plum and Walnut Green Intersection Project. The project integrates green infrastructure with enhanced pedestrian amenities and a roadway realignment that improves traffic safety. The project included a porous paver patio area, rain garden, and five porous paver, angled parking spaces in the area previously occupied by a troublesome merge lane, as well as a public art component – a cistern that collects rainwater from a local business' rooftop.

-- PPL Renewable Energy, LLC **created a partnership with Lycoming County and the Federal Bureau of Prisons** to work on a public-private-public project at Lycoming County's Landfill. The entities worked together to develop and construct two co-located landfill gas-to-energy power plants. The project improved its energy efficiency and created jobs.

-- North Penn Public School District, **Montgomery County**, created an Energy Management Program that combines operational changes, behavioral changes, demand response, energy efficiency savings and community engagement. The district has saved on energy expenses and created a program that educates and engages students and staff in energy conservation and efficiency.

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Governor's 2014 Environmental Excellence Award Winners Honored (continued)

-- Pennsylvania Horticultural Society **of Philadelphia** worked with local partners to create the Community Farm and Green Resource Center at Bartram's Garden along the shore of the Schuylkill River in the low income neighborhood of Southwest Philadelphia. The farm and resource center includes a full-scale greenhouse, community garden spaces, an orchard of 90 fruit trees, a farmers market and an entrepreneurial jobs training and leadership development program for local high school students.

-- Robindale Energy Services, Inc., **Westmoreland County**, created the Seanor-GFCC Project to remove approximately 305,097 tons of waste coal from the Loyalhanna Creek Watershed. Robindale entered into a contract with DEP to remove all usable waste coal, restore the site to approximate original contour, topsoil and re-vegetate the affected area to establish positive surface runoff, thus eliminating the acidic runoff to the streams and enhance the area throughout the Rails to Trail segment at no cost to DEP.

-- The Procter & Gamble Paper Products Company, **Mehoopany Plant in Wyoming County** installed a 64MW gas fired co-generator that produces electricity, steam and hot air for its operations with some excess electric for sale. The operation is completely self-sufficient, using natural gas extracted on the property to power the co-generator.

-- Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy, **Montour County Conservation District, Northumberland County Conservation District, Tioga County Conservation District, Union County Conservation District and Fish and Boat Commission's Division of Habitat Management** partnered together on the Northcentral Stream Restoration Project. The partners used proven in-stream stabilization structures, such as log vanes and muddills, and agricultural best management practices, such as walkways and fencing. The group was able to implement practices with 18 landowners on 13 streams in four counties.

-- Pennsylvania Resources Council, Inc., in Delaware and Allegheny counties developed the Tailgate Recycling Initiative to target large-scale special events and promote recycling. The Resources Council designed, developed and implemented a program to collect recyclables from tailgating fans attending Pittsburgh Steelers and Philadelphia Eagles home games. In addition to the collection effort, the council also used the program to educate the public about the benefits of recycling.

-- Trout Unlimited, Inc. **launched its AMD Technical Assistance Program** in 2005. The program provides free technical services to assist Growing Greener-eligible entities in their efforts to improve water quality in AMD-impacted streams toward the ultimate goal of restoring fish and other aquatic life and whenever possible, removal of the stream or stream segment from the DEP's Impaired Waters List.

Source: **PA Environment Digest**

Electric Car Charging Stations Now Available on Pa. Turnpike



DEP Southcentral Regional Director Lynn Langer joins Turnpike Commission officials and representatives of Car Charging Group Inc. in cutting the ribbon on the turnpike's new electric-vehicle charging station at the Bowmansville Service Plaza.

DEP participated in a ribbon cutting event April 21 for an electric car charging station hosted by the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) at the Bowmansville Service Plaza in Lancaster County. At the event, the PTC announced the unveiling of electric-vehicle charging stations at two Turnpike service plazas -- one at Bowmansville and one at the King of Prussia plaza.

"Charging stations provide another important part of Pennsylvania's balanced energy portfolio," DEP South-central Regional Director Lynn Langer said. "The environmental benefits of these low- or no-emission vehicles is tremendous."

The turnpike charging stations were made possible by a \$1 million Alternative Fuel Investment Grant to the Car Charging Group of Miami, Florida, to help stimulate the project.

"Within the next two weeks, two more service plazas will have electric charging stations: Oakmont plaza in Allegheny County and New Stanton plaza in Westmoreland County," says Turnpike COO Craig Shuey. Eventually, the plan is to offer EV charging at all 17 service plazas that dot the Pennsylvania Turnpike system."

Source: PA DEP

Erie to Pittsburgh Trail generates \$7 million in economic activity annually

A recent survey of trail users along the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail between Titusville and Parker by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy showed a total economic impact of more than \$7 million annually in local communities.

Data was collected that shows 158,507 users visited the combined trails in 2013.

The economic impact comes from the amount of money trail users spend on food and lodging in the area. The average amount spent per user visit was \$21.62.

“When cyclists are traveling 20 miles or further they tend to either take some food with them or stop along the trail to purchase something,” said Patricia Tomes, Program Manager for the RTC Northeast and project manager for the survey. “The more a town can inform the trail user of what services they have available, the more likely the trail user is to get off trail to participate. This works equally for attractions like the Drake Well Museum the convenience store in downtown Franklin, or the ice cream shop in Emlenton.”

Uses of the trail ranged from biking to walking to fishing to geocaching.

The survey also collected data to determine where the trail users are coming from. They are residents from 25 different counties in Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio with the majority of users residing in Venango County, Butler County, Allegheny County, Clarion County and Crawford County. Another 10 percent travelled from 14 different states. Thirteen percent paid for overnight lodging in the area, with an average stay of 2.6 nights.

The new survey confirms a \$3 million increase in the annual economic impact between Titusville and Parker since 2006.

This survey and report is the eighth in a series of surveys that RTC has completed on trails in Pennsylvania. Every trail surveyed has demonstrated a positive economic impact from a low of \$8.35 per user visit to a high of \$33.50 per user visit. The results from this section of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail are among the highest in the state and correlate to the tremendous popularity of the trail.

With assistance from the Council on Greenways and Trails and the Allegheny Valley Trails Association, infra-red counters were located along the rail-trails that parallel Oil Creek and the Allegheny River. The counters detect passing heat signatures and provided an hour by hour count of activity on the trail 24/7.

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Erie to Pittsburgh Trail generates \$7 million in economic activity annually (continued)

A self-selecting paper survey was used in conjunction with the counters to solicit feedback from trail users throughout the valley. The survey was designed by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy specifically to collect and analyze data that reflects the economic impact of the trail users in local communities.

Source: PA DCNR