Allegheny County Sportsmen's League

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Conservation Committee Report

Volume 16 Issue 4 Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman June—July 2014

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!

Inside this issue:

EPA Releases EnviroAtlas Ecosystem Mapping Tool 6

EPA Ensures Company Discloses Pesticide Hazards 8

EPA Proposes Updates to Reduce Methane, Other Harmful Pollution from New Landfills 10

Statewide survey keeping tabs on Pa. reptiles, amphibians 12

FDA and EPA issue updated draft advice for fish consumption

Advice encourages pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers to eat more fish that are lower in mercury

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued updated draft advice on fish consumption. The two agencies have concluded pregnant and breastfeeding women, those who might become pregnant, and young children should eat more fish that is lower in mercury in order to gain important developmental and health benefits. The updated draft advice is consistent with recommendations in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Previously, the FDA and the EPA recommended maximum amounts of fish that these population groups should consume, but did not promote a minimum amount.

(continued on page 2)

EPA Recognizes Environmental Innovation at World's Largest Science Competition for High School Students

Miriam Terese Demasi wins EPA Patrick H. Hurd Sustainability Award and will participate in National Sustainable Design Expo in 2015

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced Miriam Terese Demasi as the winner of its 2014 Patrick H. Hurd Sustainability Award for her project to develop a sustainable, affordable and environmentally sound building material for earthquake-prone areas in the developing world to use in place of adobe, demonstrating a commitment to environmental sustainability and stewardship.

(continued on page 4)

FDA and EPA issue updated draft advice for fish consumption (continued)

Over the past decade, however, emerging science has underscored the importance of appropriate amounts of fish in the diets of pregnant and breastfeeding women, and young children.

“For years many women have limited or avoided eating fish during pregnancy or feeding fish to their young children,” said Stephen Ostroff, M.D., the FDA’s acting chief scientist. “But emerging science now tells us that limiting or avoiding fish during pregnancy and early childhood can mean missing out on important nutrients that can have a positive impact on growth and development as well as on general health.”

An FDA analysis of seafood consumption data from over 1,000 pregnant women in the United States found that 21 percent of them ate no fish in the previous month, and those who ate fish ate far less than the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends–with 50 percent eating fewer than 2 ounces a week, and 75 percent eating fewer than 4 ounces a week. The updated draft advice recommends pregnant women eat at least 8 ounces and up to 12 ounces (2-3 servings) per week of a variety of fish that are lower in mercury to support fetal growth and development.

“Eating fish with lower levels of mercury provides numerous health and dietary benefits,” said Nancy Stoner, the EPA’s acting assistant administrator for the Office of Water. “This updated advice will help pregnant women and mothers make informed decisions about the right amount and right kinds of fish to eat during important times in their lives and their children’s lives.”

The updated draft advice cautions pregnant or breastfeeding women to avoid four types of fish that are associated with high mercury levels: tilefish from the Gulf of Mexico; shark; swordfish; and king mackerel. In addition, the updated draft advice recommends limiting consumption of white (albacore) tuna to 6 ounces a week.

Choices lower in mercury include some of the most commonly eaten fish, such as shrimp, pollock, salmon, canned light tuna, tilapia, catfish and cod.

When eating fish caught from local streams, rivers and lakes, follow fish advisories from local authorities. If advice isn’t available, limit your total intake of such fish to 6 ounces a week and 1-3 ounces for children.

Before issuing final advice, the agencies will consider public comments, and also intend to seek the advice of the FDA’s Risk Communication Advisory Committee and conduct a series of focus groups.

(continued on page 3)

FDA and EPA issue updated draft advice for fish consumption (continued)

The public can provide comment on the draft advice and the supplemental questions and answers by submitting comments to the Federal Register docket or by participating in any public meetings that may be held. The comment period will be open until 30 days after the last transcript from the advisory committee meeting and any other public meetings becomes available. The dates of any public meetings, as well as when the public comment period will close, will be published in future Federal Register notices at www.federalregister.gov.

For more information:

Draft advice on fish consumption, and supplemental questions and answers about the draft advice: Fish: What Pregnant Women and Parents Should Know

Federal Register Notice of Availability: Advice About Eating Fish; Draft Update

2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

FDA Consumer Update: New Advice: Some Women and Children Should Eat More Fish

EPA information on wild-caught fish

FDA Audio Clips

EPA Audio Clips

To comment on the draft advice on fish consumption:

Read the draft advice.

Starting Wednesday, June 11, 2014, submit comments through the Federal Register docket at FederalRegister.gov.

The FDA, an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, protects the public health by assuring the safety, effectiveness, and security of human and veterinary drugs, vaccines and other biological products for human use, and medical devices. The agency also is responsible for the safety and security of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, dietary supplements, products that give off electronic radiation, and for regulating tobacco products.

The EPA, a federal agency, works to protect all Americans from significant risks to human health and the environment where they live, learn and work. The agency focuses on all parts of society, from individuals to businesses and local governments. It develops regulations concerning natural resources, energy, transportation, agriculture, and industry and supports the various facets of environmental research and protection.
Source: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

EPA Recognizes Environmental Innovation at World's Largest Science Competition for High School Students (continued)

The high school freshman of Wheeling Park High School, Wheeling, West Virginia was selected from over 1,783 young scientists and engineers competing in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF) this week in Los Angeles, CA. Ms. Demasi won the EPA Award for her project titled, Safe and Sound Housing: Lime/Fly Ash Papercrete as a Substitute for Adobe in Seismically-Active Regions in Developing Nations.

"Each year these young students competing at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair demonstrate the importance of science, technology, engineering and math education in creating the next generation of scientists to find solutions to environmental problems," said Robert Kavlock, deputy assistant administrator for science for EPA's Office of Research and Development. "We are proud to highlight this year's award winner for her project that provides a sustainable solution to using waste products and providing housing in seismically active regions."

The EPA Patrick H. Hurd award funds the student winner and a chaperone to participate in and display the student's project at EPA's National Sustainable Design Expo featuring the P3: People, Prosperity, and the Planet (P3) Student Design Competition for Sustainability. Held each spring in Washington, DC, the National Sustainable Design Expo brings together student innovators, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and businesses that are working to create a sustainable future.

The Expo, which is free and open to the public, is a unique opportunity to discover innovative, cutting-edge environmental technologies developed by university students and their faculty advisors, learn what nonprofit organizations and government agencies are doing to advance sustainability, experience sustainable products that are currently available, and recruit talented hires with diverse educational backgrounds.

The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair is the world's largest pre-college science competition. Students advance to it from several levels of local and school-sponsored, regional, and state fairs showcasing their independent research. The Society for Science & the Public, a non-profit organization dedicated to public engagement in scientific research and education, owns and has administered the International Science and Engineering Fair since its inception in 1950. The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair encourages millions of students worldwide to explore their passion for innovation and develop solutions for global challenges.

(continued on page 5)

EPA Recognizes Environmental Innovation at World's Largest Science Competition for High School Students (continued)

More information about EPA's participation in the Intel ISEF: http://www.epa.gov/ord/scievents/isef/index.htm

More information about the Intel ISEF: http://www.societyforscience.org/ISEF/

More information about EPA's People, Prosperity and the Planet Student Design Competition for Sustainability: http://www.epa.gov/p3/

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

EPA Releases EnviroAtlas Ecosystem Mapping Tool

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released EnviroAtlas, a web-based interactive tool that integrates over 300 separate data layers, helps decision makers understand the implications of planning and policy decisions on our fragile ecosystems and the communities who depend on goods and services from these ecosystems. EnviroAtlas is designed for people from all levels of government, professionals, researchers, educators, non-governmental organizations, and anyone interested in considering the benefits or impacts of a decision, such as siting a new road or city park.

“Our health and well-being, our economy and our security depend upon healthy ecosystems,” says Bob Perciasepe, Deputy Administrator of EPA, “By providing EnviroAtlas, which contains a wealth of information for the United States, EPA is helping to ensure that anyone making decisions that may impact ecosystems will have the best available knowledge to build prosperous communities while conserving our natural resources.”

EnviroAtlas can help people learn about ecosystems, and how they provide us with benefits such as clean air and water; opportunities for recreation; and protection from severe weather, such as hurricanes and floods. EnviroAtlas also highlights how ecosystems provide habitats for plants, fish, and wildlife as well as the materials people need to produce food, clothing, shelter, and pharmaceuticals, and provides maps on all of these topics.

EnviroAtlas integrates geospatial data from a variety of sources to allow users to visualize and analyze how decisions impact ecosystems and their ability to provide goods and services. Communities are often faced with difficult decisions, such as trade-offs between transportation, residential or commercial development and maintaining local wetlands, urban greenspaces, or urban forests. EnviroAtlas helps communities better understand the potential benefits and drawbacks of their decisions by providing data, maps, information and tools to analyze relationships between nature, health and well-being, and the economy.

EnviroAtlas combines hundreds of data layers developed through collaboration between EPA; US Geological Survey; US Forest Service; other federal, state, and non-profit organizations; and several universities. Using powerful web application tools, it lets users generate customized maps and images that show the condition of their local community’s air, water, and landscape; as well as population density and other demographic data. Users can investigate land cover patterns, see how ecosystem services reduce pollution, and view closer to true scale data to compare them across selected communities.

(continued on page 7)

EPA Releases EnviroAtlas Ecosystem Mapping Tool (continued)

EnviroAtlas is available to anybody with access to a computer and an internet connection. No special software is needed. It is currently not optimized for smartphone or tablet use, but a mobile-friendly version is planned for the future.

Using tools like EnviroAtlas to make informed decisions will help ensure that people can continue to enjoy economic, social, and environmental benefits of ecosystems now and in the future.

http://enviroatlas.epa.gov/enviroatlas/

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

EPA Ensures Company Discloses Pesticide Hazards

A Milwaukee pesticide manufacturer paid a $738,000 civil penalty to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for advertising “Rozol Prairie Dog Bait” (Rozol PD) without identifying it as a “restricted use” pesticide, and for making unapproved claims about the pesticide, in violation of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

This is the largest penalty ever imposed by an administration law judge for FIFRA violations.

“Restricted use pesticides can be dangerous to wildlife, public health and the environment,” said Cynthia Giles, assistant administrator of EPA’s Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. “Today’s record penalty underscores the seriousness of these violations, and supports EPA’s commitment to ensure pesticides are handled safely, as required by law.”

In a March 2014 ruling, Chief Administrative Law Judge Susan Biro found Liphatech, Inc. liable for over 2,100 violations of FIFRA committed between 2007 and 2008. The violations included advertising the Rozol PD, which is highly toxic, on radio and print advertisements without identifying its restricted use classification. They also included selling the pesticide while making claims inconsistent with the label approved by EPA. These unapproved claims undermined the instructions on the label and overstated the efficacy and safety of the pesticide.

In 2007 and 2008, Rozol PD was registered with several agricultural agencies as a pesticide to control black-tailed prairie dogs in the Great Plains states. EPA classified Rozol PD as a restricted use pesticide because of its potential to seriously harm non-target animals, including endangered species.

In 2010, EPA initiated the case against Liphatech by filing an administrative complaint against the company, alleging it violated FIFRA for illegal distributions, sales, and advertisements of registered pesticides between 2007 and 2008. Today’s payment of the civil penalty resolves these violations.

FIFRA is designed to ensure pesticides are not produced, imported, distributed, sold, or used in a manner posing unreasonable risk to human health or the environment. The law requires manufacturers provide restricted use information on labels ensuring customers understand pesticide hazards and proper use.

(continued on page 9)

EPA Ensures Company Discloses Pesticide Hazards (continued)

EPA and state agricultural agencies in Colorado, Kansas, South Dakota, and Wisconsin investigated this case.

For more information about this case: http://www.epa.gov/oalj/orders/2014/FIFRA-05-2010-0016_Liphatech_14-03-12_ID_Biro.pdf

For more information about FIFRA: http://www.epa.gov/agriculture/lfra.html
Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

EPA Proposes Updates to Reduce Methane, Other Harmful Pollution from New Landfills

Agency also seeks public input on potential updates to guidelines for existing landfills

As part of the President's Climate Action Plan – Strategy to Reduce Methane Emissions, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing updates to its air standards for new municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills. These updates would require certain landfills to capture additional landfill gas, which would reduce emissions of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, and help further reduce pollution that harms public health. The agency also is seeking broad public feedback on how and whether to update guidelines for existing landfills.

Non-hazardous waste from homes, business and institutions ends up in municipal solid waste landfills, where it decomposes and breaks down to form landfill gas, which includes carbon dioxide, a number of air toxics and methane. Methane has a global warming potential 25 times that of carbon dioxide.

"Reducing methane emissions is a powerful way to take action on climate change," said Administrator Gina McCarthy. "This latest step from the President's methane strategy builds on our progress to date and takes steps to cut emissions from landfills through common-sense standards."

Today's proposal would require new MSW landfills subject to the rule to begin controlling landfill gas at a lower emissions threshold than currently required. Under the proposal, landfills would capture two-thirds of their methane and air toxics emissions by 2023 – 13 percent more than required under current rules. EPA estimates the net nationwide annual costs of complying with the additional requirements in the proposed rule would be $471,000 in 2023.

Today, methane accounts for nearly 9 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions in the United States, and landfills are the third-largest source of human-related methane in the country, accounting for 18 percent of methane emissions in 2012. Regulatory and voluntary programs, including the agency's Landfill Methane Outreach Program, have helped reduce emissions from landfills by 30 percent from 1990 to 2012. However, without additional actions, methane emissions are projected to increase through 2030.

Also today, EPA issued an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) seeking broad public input on whether and how to update current emissions guidelines for existing landfills to further reduce their emissions, including methane. The agency is considering updating those guidelines based on a several factors, including significant changes that have occurred in the landfill industry since the original guidelines were issued in 1996. Nearly 1,000 MSW landfills in the U.S. currently are subject to either the 1996 emission guidelines for existing landfills or the 1996 NSPS for new landfills.

(continued on page 11)

EPA Proposes Updates to Reduce Methane, Other Harmful Pollution from New Landfills (continued)

EPA will take public comment on the proposed performance standards updates and the ANPR for 60 days after they are published in the Federal Register. If a hearing is requested, it will be held on August 12, 2014 in Washington, D.C.

More information: http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/landfill/landflpg.html

Information on the Strategy to Reduce Methane Emissions: http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/03/28/strategy-cut-methane-emissions

Information on the Climate Action Plan: http://www.whitehouse.gov/climate-change

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

Statewide survey keeping tabs on Pa. reptiles, amphibians

Maybe you regularly cross paths with a wood turtle or two while heading back to that favorite brook trout stream tucked away in the hardwoods.

Or perhaps you keep uncovering redback salamanders while removing that decaying woodpile from the back yard.

And then there's that errant Northern ring-necked snake that seems to delight in checking out your garage.

Live in Pennsylvania and you see your share of reptiles and amphibians. Enjoy its outdoors and you see lots of them. But what exactly are you seeing—and when and where are you seeing them? There is a cadre of dedicated folks who want to hear what you're seeing.

Enter the ongoing PA Amphibian and Reptile Survey or PARS. Think of it as an informal census by scientists to take the pulse of all that dart, hop, paddle, plod and slither into your outdoors world. It is an important state-sponsored atlas project launched in 2013. PARS is designed to determine the distribution and status of all amphibians and reptiles throughout Pennsylvania, building upon previous atlas efforts and combining modern technology with an army of volunteer citizen scientists.

The project is a joint venture by the Pa. Fish and Boat Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Center for Herpetology and Conservation. It is funded by the commission, through its U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service State Wildlife Grants Program, and DCNR, through its Wildlife Resources Conservation Program.

"It is a project that you can participate in by keeping track of any amphibians or reptiles that you see in the field during your daily work duties, outdoors recreation or time spent in your back yard," said Aura Stauffer, wildlife biologist with the Bureau of Forestry's Ecological Services Section. "Even if you have no idea what the species is, just take a picture. Besides a picture as a voucher, you will also need to document the coordinates for where the species was found and some basic habitat information."

The PARS website asks all the data you will need to know. There is also a mobile phone app that can be used in the field to immediately report data in places where there is good cell phone service. Data for sensitive species—threatened or endangered—will not be available for the public to view.

"We are hoping more folks will participate in this most worthy endeavor and pass information along to others across the state who may be interested in helping out," Stauffer said. "Everyone's help is invaluable."

Source: Pa. Fish and Boat Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Center for Herpetology and Conservation