

Conservation Committee Report

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Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

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Governor's Budget Invests in Energy Development, Conservation of State Environmental and Recreational Resources

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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Governor Tom Wolf's 2015-16 Budget released today will make Pennsylvania an energy leader through new investments to take full and responsible advantage of our rich natural resources, including natural gas, coal, wind, solar, and timber. In addition, the plan also invests millions more to pro-

tect, clean and conserve the commonwealth's land, air and water.

"To take the reins as the nation's energy leader, we must expand and develop new markets for Pennsylvania's energy technologies, services and fuels, and this budget makes historic investments

to bolster and transform our energy economy," Acting Secretary of Environmental Protection John Quigley said, "Governor Wolf's budget attests to his commitment to create new jobs and protect public health

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CSX Agrees to EPA Order for Clean-up of Areas Impacted by West Virginia Train Derailment

CSX Transportation Inc. (CSX) has agreed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to clean up and restore the areas affected by the Feb. 16 train derailment in Mount Carbon, W. Va. Twenty-seven cars

derailed from the 109-car CSX train carrying more than three million gallons of crude oil from the Bakken Shale in North Dakota. The derailment resulted in an explosion, fires, loss of a house and required nearby residents to evacuate.

The settlement signed by CSX and EPA was filed on March 3 and replaces EPA's order for cleanup and restoration issued last week on Feb. 27. Within the next 21 days,

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Governor's Budget Invests in Energy Development, Conservation of State Environmental and Recreational Resources (continued)

and our environment, all of which strengthens Pennsylvania's economy."

Acting Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources Cindy Dunn added, "Governor Wolf's budget prioritizes investing in our parks, forests and open spaces. Our award-winning state park system generates more than a billion dollars annually for local economies and supports 13,000 jobs that pay."

The proposed spending plan includes a new \$225 million energy investment initiative as part of the Governor's larger economic growth package to ensure a comprehensive energy portfolio that supports gas, coal, oil and renewables, and encourages conservation and clean technology alternatives.

Responsible Shale Development

Governor Wolf's budget proposal provides for the agency's safe and responsible development of Pennsylvania's shale gas resources, while providing a renewed focus on clean energy production. \$225 million in revenue from a new severance tax will be preserved to assist local communities and governments manage the impact of natural gas extraction.

The Governor's proposal invests \$10 million for additional inspection and oversight of oil and gas operations.

Advancing Clean Energy

Governor Wolf's energy investment initiative includes \$50 million to re-launch the PA Sunshine Solar program that provides rebates on qualifying solar projects. Another \$50 million will provide grants for projects to improve energy efficiency at small businesses, local government units, schools and non-profits, with larger grants awarded for collaborative projects.

The energy investment also includes:

- \$30 million for a combined heat and power competitive grant program;

- \$30 million to the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority for clean energy market development;

- \$20 million for clean energy and energy efficiency projects in the agriculture sector;

- \$25 million for a "last mile" natural gas distribution line fund to provide access to natural gas to Pennsylvania's manufacturing sector; and

- \$20 million for a wind energy generation program.

The governor's spending proposal also restores more than \$7.8 million to the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) \$147 million general fund budget to protect water and air quality, address abandoned mine reclamation, and improve enforcement of Pennsylvania's environmental laws.

Protecting Our Parks and Forests

The proposed budget for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) includes an increase in General Fund appropriations of about \$20 million, which previously came from the Oil and Gas Lease Fund.

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Governor's Budget Invests in Energy Development, Conservation of State Environmental and Recreational Resources (continued)

Activities that provide monitoring and oversight of the department's lands that were previously leased for gas development include:

- A monitoring program to track, detect and report on the impacts of shale gas development on state forest lands to continue to improve management practices;

- A major upgrade of the environmental review tool that identifies threatened and endangered species for protection;

- Improvements in seismic monitoring to enhance the sophistication of our geological information; and

- A robust auditing program to ensure the commonwealth is adequately compensated for shale gas activities on DCNR lands.

Governor Wolf's proposal maintains the budget for the Bureau of State Parks at about \$93 million, the Bureau of Forestry at about \$71 million, and anticipates an additional \$1.4 million for the Keystone Fund to support DCNR's grant program for conservation and recreation in local communities, bringing it to about \$51 million total.

The proposal includes 22 new full-time positions in the Bureau of State Parks, primarily to support the transfer of Washington Crossing Historic Park in Bucks County into the state park system and for Point State Park in Pittsburgh.

Dunn added that additional budget highlights include a continued attention to maintaining the department's vast infrastructure and improving its energy efficiency, support for a gypsy moth spraying program to counter the cyclical pest that impacts public and private forests, and continuing to improve cost efficiencies related to workforce safety.

DCNR's proposed 2015-16 budget from all revenue sources is \$342.6 million, which includes \$34.2 million from the General Fund.

For more information about DCNR, visit www.dcnr.state.pa.us. For more information about DEP, visit www.dep.state.pa.us.

Source: PA DCNR

CSX Agrees to EPA Order for Clean-up of Areas Impacted by West Virginia Train Derailment (continued)

CSX has agreed to submit a comprehensive long-term plan for cleaning up and restoring areas impacted by the derailment.

CSX has committed significant resources to respond to the derailment and has worked closely with the Unified Command at the scene. Under the agreement CSX will continue the short-term cleanup efforts that are already underway. This includes air and water monitoring and testing; recovering oil from Armstrong Creek, the Kanawha River and their tributaries and shorelines; and educating residents about the potential effects from the incident including potential health threats, protective measures, wildlife preservation, and claims and notification procedures.

“The agreement between CSX and EPA provides a framework within which CSX can work, with oversight from EPA and West Virginia, to ensure that oil contamination from the derailment in Mount Carbon continues to be safely contained and that long lasting impacts are mitigated to protect human health and the environment,” said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin.

EPA and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection have worked closely together to ensure proper cleanup and minimize any immediate or lasting environmental impacts.

The initial emergency response was conducted under a Unified Command with federal, state and local agencies and CSX responding. The response was conducted during and affected by harsh winter weather conditions. The residents were able to return to their homes in six days after being evacuated. Clearance for their return was based on verification from consistent monitoring and testing of air, drinking water and surface water. The roadway and the railroad track are now open.

The agreement is available here:

<https://www.epaossc.org/sites/9762/files/Mt.%20Carbon%20AOC.pdf>

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Feds, State, Settle Clean Water Violations with Harrisburg and Capital Region Water

Agreement offers protections to public health, Susquehanna River and Chesapeake Bay

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced a proposed partial settlement with co-plaintiff Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) and the City of Harrisburg and Capital Region Water to resolve alleged Clean Water Act violations involving sewer overflows and discharges of polluted stormwater to the Susquehanna River and Paxton Creek. The agreement will help protect people's health, the two impacted waterways, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

Under the proposed agreement, Capital Region Water will take major steps to improve the operation and maintenance of Harrisburg's wastewater and stormwater collection systems, including construction upgrades at its wastewater treatment plant. The upgrades will significantly reduce discharges of nitrogen pollution from the plant, which is currently the largest point-source of nitrogen pollution to the Susquehanna River. In addition, Capital Region Water will conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing conditions within its combined sewer system and develop a long term control plan to curtail combined sewer overflows.

The work under the partial settlement is estimated to cost \$82 million and be completed within a period of about five years. Once a long term control plan is approved by EPA, the court agreement will need to be modified, or a new one will need to be put in place to include implementation of the plan.

"This settlement reflects EPA's commitment to an integrated approach for tackling multiple sewer and stormwater overflow problems, and helping Pennsylvania meet the nitrogen and phosphorus reduction goals for improving its local waters and restoring a healthy Chesapeake Bay," said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin. "This phased approach for controlling combined sewer overflows over time includes some early action projects to reduce pollution now, while conducting further assessment and planning for long term solutions."

The settlement, filed simultaneously with the complaint in federal court in Harrisburg by the U.S. Department of Justice on behalf of EPA and PADEP, addresses problems with Harrisburg's combined sewer system, which during rain events and dry weather, frequently

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Feds, State, Settle Clean Water Violations with Harrisburg and Capital Region Water (continued)

discharges raw sewage, industrial waste and polluted stormwater into Paxton Creek and the Susquehanna River, which are part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. The settlement does not impose civil penalties against the City due to Harrisburg's current financial situation.

Keeping raw sewage and contaminated stormwater out of the waters of the United States is one of EPA's National Enforcement Initiatives. EPA is working to reduce discharges from sewer overflows by obtaining commitments from cities to implement timely, affordable solutions.

The proposed settlement is subject to a 30-day comment period and court approval after it is published in the federal register. It will be available at:
http://www.justice.gov/enrd/Consent_Decrees.html

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Pa. lawmakers need to stand up to the EPA on unfair clean air regulations

Now back in Harrisburg for the 2015 legislative session, Pennsylvania state lawmakers have a number of complex policy issues to wade through.

But one should be very simple: Protecting state taxpayers against the Obama administration's pending climate regulations, including one that will effectively take over our state's electricity grid.

The regulation in question is the Environmental Protection Agency's so-called "Clean Power Plan."

Under the auspices of fighting climate change, the regulation forces Pennsylvania to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 32 percent in the coming years. Yet as the EPA's own data show, the regulation will do nothing of the sort.

The EPA's climate model predicts the regulation will slow global warming by all of 0.018 degrees by the year 2100--by which time very few of us will still be around to notice the non-effect.

It also is predicted to slow sea level rises by approximately 0.01 inch--roughly the thickness of three sheets of paper.

What the regulation lacks in environmental benefits it more than makes up for with other consequences--and none of them are of the positive variety.

Achieving such drastic emissions reductions will require that Pennsylvania shutter a number of our existing coal plants, which today produce nearly a third of our state's electricity.

We'll instead have to rely on government-favored energy sources like wind, solar, and other renewables, which currently provide less than three percent of our electricity.

This transition will come with enormous consequences. For one, it may jeopardize the reliability of our state's energy grid. According to the electricity industry's regulator (the North American Electric Reliability Corporation) it may even result in rolling blackouts as increasingly more coal and fossil fuel plants are forced offline.

It will also be exorbitantly expensive to consumers and businesses alike. A recent study by NE-RA Economic Consulting estimates it will cause Pennsylvania household electricity rates to jump a staggering 14 percent every single year until the regulation is fully implemented in 2030. And compared to their 2012 prices, industrial rates are likely to skyrocket 62 percent by 2020.

These higher industrial rates will have especially harmful consequences. Everything we buy--from milk to eggs to clothes--requires electricity to eventually make it to the store shelf.

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Pa. lawmakers need to stand up to the EPA on unfair clean air regulations (continued)

So we'll actually pay for this regulation once with higher utility bills at home, and then again at the cash register with everything we buy.

Pennsylvania manufacturers--which require the most energy of all--will suffer the most.

As their costs of business continue to increase, they'll be forced to either cut employee pay, hire fewer workers, or worse, send our well-paying middle-class jobs overseas.

Our state's decimated steel industry shows what happens when our costs rise compared to foreign competitors'.

To put it bluntly, this regulation will be among the most economically painful in recent memory--and all for non-existent environmental gains some 85 years away.

The Obama administration is nonetheless barreling ahead with this ill-conceived plan--but states are beginning to fight back.

Twelve states have already sued the EPA to stop the regulation's implementation, arguing that it's both unconstitutional and illegal.

These arguments enjoy broad bipartisan support. Even liberal Harvard Law School professor Laurence Tribe--a former law professor of President Obama's who went on to serve in his Justice Department--has joined this growing chorus.

While Pennsylvania has not joined this lawsuit, lawmakers responded last year by passing legislation requiring the state Department of Environmental Protection to seek its approval before submitting any implementation plan to the EPA.

Although a step in the right direction, state legislators should go further and prohibit the use of public funds to craft such an implementation plan until the EPA proves in federal court that it has the legal authority to enforce this regulation.

It's the right thing for our state legislators to do: Pennsylvania taxpayers shouldn't have to spend millions of our hard-earned dollars preparing for a federal regulation that is legally dubious and, as a result, may never go into effect.

As stewards of our state budget, protecting taxpayers should be at the top of lawmakers' to-do list in now that they're back in Harrisburg.

Beth Anne Mumford is the Pennsylvania state director for Americans for Prosperity.

Source: By Beth Anne Mumford

Monarchs on the brink

John Muir once said, "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe." So true for the exquisite monarch butterfly, which finds itself inextricably hitched to the milkweed plant. Without the milkweed, the monarch cannot survive, and that's what is happening. Two decades of habitat loss, primarily due to the eradication of milkweed with herbicides on agricultural lands, has led to about 970 million monarchs disappearing—nearly 90 percent of the species. Today, only about 30 million monarchs remain.

Hoping to rebuild the population through a concerted planting and education effort, just this month the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service teamed up with the National Wildlife Federation and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, to find spaces to plant as much milkweed as possible. Funded by \$2 million for conservation projects, the effort includes providing seeds to anyone willing to plant milkweed along roadsides and in parks, forests, even backyards. The federation will use another \$1.2 million to generate a larger fundraising match from private organizations. Fish and Wildlife will create 200,000 acres of habitat along the Interstate 35 corridor from Texas to Minnesota, where 50 percent of monarchs migrate and will encourage other federal and state agencies to do the same on public lands. For more information on the project, visit the Fish and Wildlife's Save the Monarch initiative website.

<http://www.fws.gov/savethemonarch/>

Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

First Clothes Dryers to Earn EPA's Energy Star Label Now Available Nationwide

Energy Star dryers offer Americans savings of up to \$1.5 billion annually

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today that Energy Star certified clothes dryers are now available nationwide through major retailers. At least 45 models of dryers earning the Energy Star label, including Whirlpool, Maytag, Kenmore, LG, and Safemate, are at least 20 percent more efficient and now available at prices comparable to standard dryers.

"Dryers are one of the most common household appliances and the biggest energy users," said U.S. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. "EPA's Energy Star certified clothes dryers offer Americans an opportunity to save energy and do their part to combat climate change. By working with industry, we are bringing innovative technology to market that's good for the planet."

Clothes dryers consume more energy than any other appliance in the home, and 80 percent of American homes have dryers. But unlike clothes washers, which have seen a 70 percent drop in energy use since 1990, the energy efficiency of most dryers has not improved. If all residential clothes dryers sold in the U.S. were Energy Star certified, Americans could save \$1.5 billion each year in utility costs and prevent greenhouse gas emissions equal to the electricity use from more than 1.3 million homes.

The efficiency specifications were developed with extensive input from manufacturers, retailers, the U.S. Department of Energy, and environmental groups. Manufacturers meet the specification requirements by incorporating advanced sensors that more effectively detect when clothes are dry and stop the dryer.

Energy Star certified dryers include gas, electric and compact models. The Energy Star label can also be found on dryers that feature new advanced heat pump technology and are 40 percent more efficient than conventional models. Heat pump dryers recapture the hot air used by the dryer and pump it back into the drum. By re-using most of the heat, a heat pump dryer is more efficient and avoids the need for ducts.

To earn the Energy Star label, products must be certified by an EPA-recognized third party, based on testing in an EPA-recognized laboratory. In addition, manufacturers must participate in verification testing programs operated by recognized certification bodies.

Energy Star is the simple choice for energy efficiency. For more than 20 years, people across America have looked to EPA's Energy Star program for guidance on how to save energy, save money, and protect the environment. Behind each blue label is a product, building, or home that is independently certified to use less energy and cause fewer of the emissions that contribute to climate change.

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First Clothes Dryers to Earn EPA's Energy Star Label Now Available Nationwide (continued)

Today, Energy Star is the most widely recognized symbol for energy efficiency in the world, helping families and businesses save \$300 billion on utility bills, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by two billion metric tons since 1992. Join the millions who are already making a difference at <http://www.energystar.gov/>

Learn more: http://www.energystar.gov/products/certified-products/detail/clothes_dryers

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

ECO Camp - Exploring Careers Outdoors

Where can a high school student experience a variety of outdoor careers? Where can you learn first-hand about the job of a forester, geologist or park manager? Where can you have a great time meeting new friends while enjoying outdoor recreation activities in Pennsylvania state parks and forests?

What is ECO Camp?

ECO Camp, Exploring Careers Outdoors, is a week-long residential camp for high school students focusing on outdoor careers in recreation, conservation and natural resources. Professional staff from DCNR including state parks, geology and forestry, act as counselors and educators, exposing students to a variety of careers and outdoor recreation activities while interacting with students on a daily basis.

Where and When is ECO Camp?

During the second full week of July, the program is conducted at the Kirby House near Wilkes-Barre, Pa. The site offers experiences in a variety of outdoor careers including forestry, fisheries, park management, geology, outdoor recreation and much more. The 2015 camp will be July 12-17.

Who can Attend ECO Camp?

High school students must be entering 10th grade through 12th grade and have a C average or better. Students attend free of charge and are selected by committee based on their application, essay and recommendation.

What Happens After ECO Camp?

ECO Camp graduates are offered career development opportunities through mentor programs, job shadowing, newsletters and alumni events. Outstanding students are selected to return as Student Leaders. Some students are involved in "School to Work" programs in DCNR. Alumni are encouraged to return as interns.

What is the Cost?

Students participate free of charge. ECO Camp is funded by DCNR and implemented by professional DCNR staff.

How do I Get Involved?

Read the [brochure](#). If you think this camp is for you fill out and submit the [application](#).

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Contact ECO Camp

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