

Conservation Committee Report

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Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

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DCNR Invites Student Applications for Environmental Careers Camp

Young Pennsylvanians interested in pursuing environmental careers are invited to apply by April 15 for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' summer residential camp, DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn said today.

"Exploring Careers Outdoors Camp has become one of DCNR's strongest

success stories since beginning 17 years ago," said Dunn. "We've successfully worked with hundreds of young people to hone their awareness of the natural world and the variety of related careers available to them."

The six-day camp begins Sunday, July 8, at Camp Kresge, White Haven, Lu-

zerne County. The camp is near Nescopeck State Park and about 10 miles north of White Haven.

"Past campers have come from small towns and large cities,

forming a unique pool of intelligence, spirit,

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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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Wolf Administration Announces Replacement, Renovation of Fire Towers in Woodlands Across the State

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn announced newly renovated and replaced fire towers will be added to the commonwealth's wildfire fighting arsenal to support the Bureau

of Forestry and volunteer fire company efforts answering forest fire calls across the state.

"We must always take wildfires seriously. That's why I'm delighted to note our Pennsylvania wildfire fighters are getting yet another weapon in their de-

tection and suppression efforts -- a new tool with a rich, storied past in the form of newly constructed fire towers," said Dunn. Pennsylvania's wildfire fighting force is viewed as among the best in the nation,

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DCNR Invites Student Applications for Environmental Careers Camp (continued)

and commitment to environmental improvement,” Dunn said. “In addition, many DCNR employees have supported this camp effort, some coming back year after year.”

The camp will introduce 20 students in grades 10-12 to conservation and environmental careers, and encourage their pursuit. From wildlife conservation projects and stream sampling of aquatic life, to various forestry skills, daily activities offer students a hands-on, team-building learning experience in an outdoor setting.

Participants explore a wide range of career experiences, including water quality assessments, geology field studies, and overnight camping experiences. They also will meet conservation professionals to learn about career opportunities.

Offered free of charge, the instruction and daily activities will be overseen by specialists and officials of DCNR’s bureaus of State Parks and Forestry. After the camp, attendees will have a chance to seek internships, job-shadowing, and other career-related opportunities through the camp’s mentor program.

For more details and applications, you can:

- Visit [DCNR's website](#)
- Write to ECO Camp Coordinator, Bureau of State Parks, Outdoor Programming Services Division, P.O. Box 8551, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8551
- Call 717-425-5330

Source: Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Wolf Administration Announces Replacement, Renovation of Fire Towers in Woodlands Across the State (continued)

and for good reason. They have excellent training; the latest equipment; and a 'can do' spirit that sets them apart when they fly out to help other states or fight wildfires here in the woodlands of Pennsylvania."

In September 2017, DCNR began a \$4.6 million Department of General Services capital project to replace 16 forest fire lookout towers on state forestland. Many of the original towers still in operation today were constructed in the 1920s through 1940 and needed to be replaced.

The new fire towers are sturdier to meet today's structural and foundation code requirements. They will be safer to ascend, with improved stairs and railings, and be topped with weather-proof cabs.

"Mountaintop fire towers continue to provide an excellent vantage point for spotting wildfire smoke along the horizon and conveying fire locations to bureau-led firefighting crews," Dunn noted. "We still use aviation, but its costs and insurance rates for these flights have made fire towers more economically feasible. Fire detection relies on fire towers, aviation, and people on the ground. We don't want to put all our eggs in one basket."

Considering their historical significance, at least one of the original fire towers will be carefully dismantled and repurposed at other locations. In Delaware State Forest, the original tower at Big Pocono State Park, Monroe County, has been delivered to the grounds of Gifford Pinchot's summer residence at the U.S.D.A. Forest Service's Grey Towers National Historic Site in Milford.

Though winter weather crimped replacement work, construction will be resuming close to Pennsylvania's Wildfire Prevention Week, March 3-10.

DCNR issues an annual warning of springtime danger when bright sun, strong winds, and warming temperatures quickly can increase wildfire dangers across Pennsylvania's forests and brush lands. Statistics show nearly 85 percent of Pennsylvania's wildfires occur in March, April and May, before the greening of state woodlands and brushy areas. Named for rapid spread through dormant, dry vegetation, under windy conditions, wildfires annually scorch nearly 7,000 acres of state and private woodlands.

Besides the Big Pocono tower, others targeted for replacement include: Tamarack, Coffin Rock and Snowshoe, in Sproul State Forest; Rockton, Chestnut Ridge (Knobs), Rattlesnake, Summit and Black Hills, Moshannon; Dry Land, Mehoopany and Bear Springs, Pinchot; Brooks Run and Bootjack, Elk; and Bears Head and Mauch Chunk, Weiser.

A key component of the tower replacement projects is coordination with radio and data communication antenna systems. Because of their location and elevation, many of the towers will be outfitted with various state and federal radio communication antenna systems. These towers are anticipated to remain safe and functional for many decades.

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Wolf Administration Announces Replacement, Renovation of Fire Towers in Woodlands Across the State (continued)

Secretary Dunn noted DCNR's Bureau of Forestry is responsible for prevention and suppression of wildfires on the commonwealth's 17 million acres of state and private woodlands and brush lands. The bureau maintains a fire-detection system, and works with fire wardens and volunteer fire departments to ensure they are trained in the latest advances in fire prevention and suppression.

DCNR owns 50 fire towers that are still standing. Many were removed in the 1970s and 1980s. About 20 still are actively staffed in periods of high fire danger, and that number will grow as replacements come online.

Source: The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

DEP Penalizes Energy Corporation of America for Drilling Violations in Greene and Clearfield Counties

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has collected a \$1.7 million civil penalty prescribed in a consent order and agreement with Energy Corporation of America (ECA) for violations at 17 well sites in Cumberland, Jefferson, and Whiteley Townships, Greene County and Goshen Township, Clearfield County.

The violations for which ECA was penalized include: failure to properly contain fluids in onsite pits, unauthorized discharge of industrial waste into groundwater, unauthorized disposal of residual waste, failure to restore the pits and well sites, and operating solid waste storage, treatment, and transfer facilities without permits.

“Laws and regulations on the books and strong permitting are in place to protect the public and our natural resources,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “When we uncovered systemic violations of proper handling practices of flowback fluids, our compliance team conducted a thorough investigation to hold the operator accountable.”

At the Mohr A & B Well Site in Cumberland Township, Greene County, a substantial leak killed vegetation, impacted groundwater, and one natural spring used for drinking water. The release did not impair any streams or waterways. The property owner with the spring was provided with a temporary water supply and permanent water supply restoration is underway. Following this violation, DEP’s investigation from 2015 to 2017 uncovered incidents of leaking pits and wastewater impoundments at several of ECA’s unconventional well sites and forensically demonstrated ECA’s mismanagement of drilling, flowback, and produced fluids.

DEP’s investigation revealed that ECA transferred drilling fluids from well site to well site long after the last well at these sites was completed, making these sites an unlawful waste transfer station. These fluids were stored in onsite pits for over nine months after the completion of drilling, in violation of site restoration regulations. In October 2016, new regulations ([Chapter 78a](#)) specifically foreclosed the use of temporary storage pits and required the closure of onsite pits at unconventional well sites. Additionally, DEP determined that ECA transferred, stored, and treated fluids at these sites despite the fact that the fluids were not used for any well development or drilling activity at the sites.

Waste fluids have been removed from all sites. The consent order and agreement sets a schedule for the removal of sludge and accumulated precipitation that exists in onsite pits at the five sites where pits remain. ECA submitted an environmental pad assessment and remediation plan that detailed how it will assess and remediate environmental impacts. The agreement provides additional stipulated penalties if ECA fails to comply with its obligations in a timely manner.

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DEP Penalizes Energy Corporation of America for Drilling Violations in Greene and Clearfield Counties (continued)

Remediation work is ongoing. The agreement outlines sites for priority remediation and orders ECA to do the following:

- Close open onsite pits by removing and reusing or properly disposing of all fluids, removing and properly disposing of liners, sludge, and impacted soils, managing precipitation, and managing residual solids;

- Monitor on a quarterly basis any water supplies within 3,000 feet of the well pads with open pits and manager precipitation into the pits until the pits are closed;

- Provide DEP with written records of reuse, disposal, or treatments of all fluids, waste, and soils removed from the sites;

- Restore all well sites with open onsite pits; and

- Assess and remediate all sites with open or closed pits according to the Land Recycling Act or Act 2 standards.

For more information, click [here](#) to view the consent order and agreement.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

DEP Issues \$12.6 Million Penalty to Sunoco, Lifts Suspension Order Following Stringent Compliance Review

Department Collects One of the Largest Civil Penalties in Single Settlement History

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced that it has issued a \$12.6 million civil penalty to Sunoco Pipeline, LLP (Sunoco) for permit violations related to the construction of the Mariner East 2 pipeline project. DEP and Sunoco have entered into a Consent Order and Agreement (COA) memorializing the penalty. As a result of the strict Consent Order and Agreement, which includes a historic civil penalty and a stringent compliance review, DEP has lifted the order suspending DEP-permitted operations.

“Throughout the life of this project, DEP has consistently held this operator to the highest standard possible. A permit suspension is one of the most significant penalties DEP can levy. Our action to suspend the permits associated with this project, and the collection of this penalty, are indicative of the strict oversight that DEP has consistently exercised over this project. Today’s announcement is by no means the end of DEP’s oversight,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “Since the permit suspension over a month ago, Sunoco has demonstrated that it has taken steps to ensure the company will conduct the remaining pipeline construction activities in accordance with the law and permit conditions, and will be allowed to resume. DEP will be monitoring activities closely to ensure that Sunoco is meeting the terms of this agreement and its permits.”

DEP issued an administrative order to Sunoco suspending construction activities related to DEP-permitted operations on January 3, 2018. The order contained detailed facts and findings related to the violations, and 21 specified performance obligations. In response to the January 3 Order, Sunoco submitted an Initial Response on January 12, 2018, as well as two supplemental responses on January 22 and 29, 2018 in response to DEP requests for additional information and clarification. Sunoco also submitted numerous exhibits with additional information required by the Order. These included an extensive revised Operations Plan setting forth additional measures and controls Sunoco will put in place to ensure that all permit conditions will be followed at all times moving forward, as well as additional measures and controls that Sunoco will implement to minimize inadvertent returns and water supply incidents.

After reviewing all submitted materials, and conducting extensive additional inspection activities since the suspension was issued, DEP has approved the submissions as meeting all of the requirements to submit information in the January 3, 2018 Order. Information about the violations as well as Sunoco’s submissions to the Department can be viewed at:

<http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/ProgramIntegration/Pennsylvania-Pipeline-Portal/Pages/Mariner-East-II.aspx>.

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DEP Issues \$12.6 Million Penalty to Sunoco, Lifts Suspension Order Following Stringent Compliance Review (continued)

In addition, the civil penalty resolves the violations that were noted in the January 3, 2018 Order and violations identified through Sunoco's response to the Order. Pursuant to the COA, Sunoco will withdraw its appeal of the January 3, 2018 order, which had been filed on Friday February 2, 2018.

The \$12.6 million penalty will go to the Clean Water Fund and the Dams and Encroachments Fund. The penalty is one of the largest civil penalties collected in a single settlement.

"DEP will continue to monitor and enforce the conditions of the permits, and will take necessary enforcement actions for any future violations," said McDonnell. "If a resident should witness pollution from the pipeline affecting streams or other waterways, then please alert DEP at 1-800-541-2050."

For more information on the Mariner East 2 pipeline please visit the DEP website:

<http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/ProgramIntegration/Pennsylvania-Pipeline-Portal/Pages/Mariner-East-II.aspx>.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Sunoco Satisfies Requirements to Resume Drilling at Chester County Site

Department retains the right to assess further penalties

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced that Sunoco Pipeline, L.P. (Sunoco) has satisfied requirements under the July 24, 2017 Consent Order and Agreement (COA) which suspended horizontal direction drilling at Shoen Road Drill 360 (Shoen Road drill) as part of Sunoco's Mariner East 2 project.

DEP and Sunoco entered into the COA after work at the Shoen Road drill impacted water supplies at locations in West Whiteland and Uwchlan Townships, Chester County. DEP has since reviewed Sunoco's request to restart this drill, including information submitted in support of the request and actions taken in response to the COA. DEP has approved the Water Supply Restoration Plan required under the agreement and finds that Sunoco has satisfied the terms of the COA. Sunoco can commence drilling after providing the required notices to DEP, the Townships, and landowners with water supplies within 450' of the Drill, and receiving written authorization from DEP.

Sunoco is still subject to other enforcement actions and requirements separate from this COA, and must demonstrate that it has given landowners along the pipeline corridor advance notice in accordance with the requirements of the August 9, 2017 [Stipulated Order](#) notice prior to re-starting.

DEP retains the right to assess further penalties on this matter.

For more information on the Mariner East 2 project, including a full copy of the July 24th Consent Order and Agreement, please visit DEP's Pipeline Portal at: <http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/ProgramIntegration/Pennsylvania-Pipeline-Portal/Pages/Mariner-East-II.aspx>

Wolf Administration Releases Guidelines for Maintaining Streams in Your Community Booklet and Posters to Assist Flood Recovery Efforts

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has released a new resource for understanding what landowners can do to work in or adjacent to streams impacted by flooding. The full-color booklet, *Guidelines for Maintaining Streams in Your Community*, is an easy-to-use resource for understanding the DEP regulations that apply when working in Pennsylvania streams.

“With 86,000 miles of streams and rivers in Pennsylvania, DEP receives many inquiries about stream work from municipalities, landowners, businesses, and communities affected by flooding, or by those simply wishing to perform stream restoration to protect property and infrastructure and prevent future flood impacts,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “Our new booklet and accompanying poster, with ‘Red/Yellow/Green Light’ guidance, takes the guesswork out of the most common actions.”

DEP regulates activities in watercourses to protect public health, safety and the environment. Activities that change, expand or diminish the course, current or cross-section of a watercourse are regulated.

The guide is a first step in determining what regulatory requirements may apply before beginning a project. It contains a helpful “green, yellow, and red light” list of potential stream activities to indicate whether permits are likely to be required. The booklet contains additional sections on myths and rules of thumb, and was reviewed by local government officials who typically are the first stop for landowners seeking guidance.

Just a few of the “green light” actions that can be done without DEP notification include removing non-native material, such as litter and construction debris from the stream, banks, and riparian areas; or removing woody debris with the use of hand-held equipment. A typical “yellow light” action, which could require DEP notification and/or an emergency permit, is rebuilding a road or bridge across a stream, or removing gravel bars using heavy equipment. A “red light” action, which definitely requires review and a permit, includes dredging, damming, or redirecting the flow of a stream.

Stream work that is not properly designed and permitted can inadvertently cause conditions to worsen in the next flood event, also impacting downstream neighbors. The booklet is intended to help guide stream work to be done in an environmentally sensitive manner, and in a way that reduces the likelihood of future problems.

The PDF booklet can be downloaded from the DEP website at <http://files.dep.state.pa.us/Newsroom/NewsroomPortalFiles/StreamMaintenanceBooklet.pdf>.

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Wolf Administration Releases Guidelines for Maintaining Streams in Your Community Booklet and Posters to Assist Flood Recovery Efforts (continued)

The posters, which include the cautions and regional contact information, and are suitable for downloading, can be found [here](#). Additional fact sheets, with details on regulations, emergency authorizations, and assistance, can be found [here](#).

“When in doubt, the first step should always be to contact your regional DEP office,” said McDonnell. You can find your DEP Regional Office at <http://www.dep.pa.gov/About/Regional/Pages/default.aspx>.

For more information, contact Megan Lehman, Community Relations Coordinator, DEP North-central Regional Office, at 570-327-3659 or meglehman@pa.gov.

Wolf Administration Urges Caution to Prevent Wildfires

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn called upon Pennsylvania residents to exercise wildfire prevention vigilance throughout a three-month period when major fires are most likely across the state's forests and brush lands.

"Yes, we have had seemingly non-stop rains recently across much of the state, but past springs have shown it just takes a few days of sun and wind to allow brush and forest fire danger to develop quickly," Dunn said. "A mere spark by a careless person can touch off a devastating forest blaze during dry periods when conditions enable wildfires to spread quickly. Most of the reported fires year after year are linked to people; people cause 98 percent of wildfires."

DCNR statistics show nearly 85 percent of Pennsylvania's wildfires occur in March, April, and May, before the greening of state woodlands and brushy areas. Named for rapid spread through dormant, dry vegetation, under windy conditions, wildfires often scorch 7,000 or more acres of state and private woodlands.

March marks the start of a "sometimes very dangerous three months," Dunn said. "That is why Governor Tom Wolf this year has proclaimed March 4-10 as [Wildfire Prevention Week \(PDF\)](#).

In 2017, Pennsylvania experienced a relatively mild fire season, with 531 reported wildfires affecting 1,644 acres. In 2016, however, Bureau of Forestry personnel and volunteer firefighters battled more than 850 reported field, brush, and forest fires that scorched more than 12,000 acres across the state.

"When state residents and forest visitors are careless with burning trash, campfires, and smoking, volunteer firefighters often pay the price, answering call after call in spring woodlands that are ripe for damaging, life-threatening wildfires," Dunn said. "Common sense limits the threat of wildfires."

Anglers, campers, and other state forest visitors are reminded open fires are prohibited on state forestland from March 1 to May 25, and when the fire danger is listed as high, very high, or extreme, unless authorized by district foresters.

Communities in heavily wooded areas are urged to follow wildfire prevention and suppression methods of the Pennsylvania Firewise Community Program to safeguard life and property.

DCNR's Bureau of Forestry is responsible for prevention and suppression of wildfires on the 17 million acres of state and private woodlands and brush lands. The bureau maintains a fire-detection system, and works with fire wardens and volunteer fire departments to ensure they are trained in the latest advances in fire prevention and suppression.

For more information on Wildfire Prevention Week activities, contact local district foresters; call the Bureau of Forestry at (717) 787-2925; or visit www.dcnr.pa.gov (select "Communities" then "Wildfire").

Source: The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

DEP Issues Permits for the Construction of the Proposed Berks County Natural Gas Power Generation Facility

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced it has issued to Birdsboro Power LLC, DTE Midstream Appalachia, LLC, and the Reading Area Water Authority the permits necessary for the construction of a 450 mega-watt natural gas fired Birdsboro Power electrical generation facility, on the site of the former Birdsboro Army Tank Foundry/Armorcast facility.

Those permits cover the construction of the main power generation facility, an electric transmission line to convey generated power, a pipeline to supply the facility with water and a pipeline to convey natural gas to the facility, which is also regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

“The permit applications for a project of this magnitude require the DEP staff and the Berks County Conservation District to dedicate a great amount of time and effort to the review process,” said Joe Adams, DEP South-central Regional Director. “After a thorough and rigorous technical review, it has been determined that the applications meet the stringent regulatory requirements necessary to enable this project to move forward.”

The permits and modification issued today include:

Chapter 105 – Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permits: Required for proposed activities located in, along, across or projecting into a watercourse, floodway or body of water, including wetlands. For this project, the majority of the proposed activities are associated with crossings of wetlands, streams and floodways.

Chapter 102 – Erosion & Sediment Control General Permit (ESCGP-2): Required for earth disturbances associated with oil and gas exploration, production, processing or treatment operations or transmission facilities when earth disturbance is five acres or greater.

Chapter 102 – Modification to a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction General Permit (PAG-02): Required for construction-related earth disturbances of one acre or more.

Safe Drinking Water Permits – Required for the upgrades to the existing Reading Area Water Authority booster pumping station and construction of the transmission main to extend service to the facility.

DEP conducted a public hearing in November 2017 and considered all public comments during the review process.

DEP also issued state water quality certification to DTE for the proposed natural gas transmission pipeline as part of DTE’s application to FERC for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity.

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DEP Issues Permits for the Construction of the Proposed Berks County Natural Gas Power Generation Facility (continued)

DEP had previously issued an Air Quality Plan Approval for this facility in March 2016, and extended it in September 2017. The plan approval contains terms and conditions to ensure that the sources are constructed and operated in compliance with applicable requirements in the Air Pollution Control Act, the Federal Clean Air Act and regulations adopted under the Federal Clean Air Act. The Berks County Conservation District had also previously issued a NPDES PAG-02 for the construction of the power plant in December 2015.

For more information visit

<http://www.dep.pa.gov/About/Regional/SouthcentralRegion/Community%20Information/Pages/Birdsboro-Power-Plant.aspx>

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)