

Conservation Committee Report

Volume 21 Issue 4

Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

July 2019



EPA Approves Allegheny County Request To Permanently Eliminate Low-RVP Summer Gasoline Requirement

On June 28, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved the request of the Allegheny County Health Department to [permanently eliminate the low-RVP summer gasoline](#) requirement that routinely increased gasoline prices in Western Pennsylvania by 10 to 15 cents.

not take effect until it is published in the Federal Register.

“This rule demonstrates EPA’s commitment to working with Pennsylvania and local partners for cleaner, healthier air for Allegheny County residents,” said EPA Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio. “We moved as expeditiously as federal regulations allow to

finalize this rule, which puts Allegheny County back on equal footing with neighboring areas.”

The counties surrounding Allegheny no longer have to use low-RVP gasoline based on a request from the Department of Environmental Protection

(continued on page 2)

The permanent elimination will

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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PA Council Of Trout Unlimited Urges PA Congressional Delegation To Reauthorize Federal Mine Reclamation Fee, Program

[The PA Council of Trout Unlimited](#) recently [wrote to all members of Pennsylvania's Congressional Delegation](#) urging them to reauthorize the federal Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fee and Program. The

text of the letter follows--

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited (PATU) and our 14,000 volunteer members, we are writing today to strongly support reauthorization of the Abandoned Mine

Reclamation Fund fee, which finances state-directed, on-the-ground cleanup of our land and waters.

The Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund is supported by a fee on every (continued on page 3)

EPA Approves Allegheny County Request To Permanently Eliminate Low-RVP Summer Gasoline Requirement (continued)

approved by EPA in December.

On June 27, EPA also approved the request of the County Health Department to extend its waiver of the low-RVP gasoline requirement for Allegheny County until July 15 to cover the interim period until notice of the permanent elimination is published.

EPA first waived the low-RVP gasoline requirement on May 29 when the Buckeye Laurel Pipeline failed.

EPA said while testing of the pipeline is now completed, shipments of compliant fuel cannot begin until July 2, at the earliest, and at least 10 days of travel time will be required to resupply the affected terminals, with additional time needed for distribution throughout the area.

[Click Here for a copy of the new waiver.](#)

Source: PA Environment Digest

PA Council Of Trout Unlimited Urges PA Congressional Delegation To Reauthorize Federal Mine Reclamation Fee, Program (continued)

ton of coal currently produced, and these funds are distributed to states dealing with impacts from historic coal mining, including Pennsylvania.

Congressional action is required before 2021 to permit continued collection of this much-needed fee.

We urge you not to delay working with your colleagues on reauthorization legislation.

As Congress discovered in the years preceding reauthorization in 2006, abandoned mine funding is a complex issue that requires time and energy to resolve.

Given the scope of the problem in Pennsylvania, where estimates of the need approach \$15 billion, we urge you to see that funding does not expire before the damage from historic coal mining can be fully addressed.

The scope of the damage to Pennsylvania's natural resources from abandoned coal mines is enormous.

Before 1977, mining companies were not required to address the impacts of their operations on land and water resources, and as a result, the Commonwealth is afflicted with more abandoned mine lands than any other state in the nation.

More than 287,000 acres of mine lands await cleanup, and more than 5,500 miles of waterways are polluted by Abandoned Mine Drainage, or AMD, which has left streams devoid of aquatic life.

Relying on funding from the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund (AMRF), made possible by Title IV of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA), Pennsylvania has made strides in addressing this legacy pollution.

But the job is far from complete.

Over the past four decades, the Commonwealth has received \$1.3 billion from the AMRF and put it to good use. It has reclaimed nearly 25,000 acres of abandoned mine lands, addressed polluted drinking water supplies, dealt with hazardous sites, and restored hundreds of miles of AMD-impaired streams.

According to the IMCC and the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs, for every dollar invested \$1.59 was returned to local economies. With reauthorization we can ensure that this trajectory of success continues.

The mission of Trout Unlimited is to conserve, protect, and restore coldwater fisheries and their watersheds, and in Pennsylvania, there is no better example of this than the work we have done to revive waterways polluted by AMD.

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PA Council Of Trout Unlimited Urges PA Congressional Delegation To Reauthorize Federal Mine Reclamation Fee, Program (continued)

In streams that ran bright orange, we are working to improve water quality and give Pennsylvania's native brook trout a chance to flourish.

Working with local partners over the past two decades, we have cleaned up much of the mine drainage in the lower [Kettle Creek watershed](#), and we have welcomed the return of trout to once-polluted Twomile Run and Middle Branch.

In the [West Branch Susquehanna River watershed](#) and elsewhere, we are helping partners plan and implement mine drainage treatment projects. We have provided technical assistance on nearly 200 sites across the state, supporting millions of dollars of remediation projects made possible by grants from the AML trust fund.

There is much more work to do.

According to the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC) and the US Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE), at least 15 years and \$10.5 billion worth of reclamation and remediation nationwide is ahead of us.

Pennsylvania's estimated bill for Priority 1 and Priority 2 inventoried sites alone could top \$4 billion. When taking into account water pollution projects that are needed, the estimated cost could be upwards of \$15 billion for Pennsylvania.

It is imperative that Congress reauthorize fee collection for AMRF before it expires in 2021, and at the same time make a number of reforms to SMCRA to ensure that there is enough federal funding available to finish this important work.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions.

Sincerely,

Greg Malaska

President

PA Council Of Trout Unlimited

Brian Wagner

PA Representative

Trout Unlimited National Leadership Council

[Click Here for a copy of the letter.](#)

Source: PA Environment Digest

Great Lakes State Governors, Canadian Premiers Support Law Enforcement Efforts To Hold Invasive Species Offenders Accountable

On June 14 at their Leadership Summit in Milwaukee, the members of the [Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers](#) announced broadened membership to a powerful instrument that can help investigations of violators of [aquatic invasive species laws](#).

All ten of the region's States and Provinces have now joined the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Regional Cooperative Enforcement Operations.

This MOU facilitates information sharing and cross-jurisdictional investigations and is an essential tool for law enforcement officials to act on AIS and other wildlife offenses.

By encouraging all ten of the region's States and Provinces to join this agreement, the Governors and Premiers have demonstrated their support to further deter illegal possession, sale and transportation of invasive species like [Asian carp](#).

This action is the latest in a series of measures led by the Governors and Premiers to combat invasive species.

These species cost the U.S. and Canada billions of dollars in damages each year, are a burden on the economy, and strain state, provincial and federal budgets.

Previously, the Governors and Premiers identified the 21 "least wanted" non-native species that pose a particularly high risk to the region.

In recent years, the States and Provinces have taken more than 50 separate actions against these fish, plants, and invertebrates.

The Governors and Premiers have also enacted a mutual aid agreement to ensure that the region's States and Provinces can collectively combat an invasion by these or other invasive species.

Regular, regional exercises ensure that officials are prepared.

Aquatic invasive species pose a threat to human health and cause immeasurable ecological damage to native species, with consequences for our region's sport and commercial fisheries, tourism and recreation.

More than 180 nonnative species have been introduced into the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.

Stopping the further spread of these species, and the introduction of new species, is one of the Governors' and Premiers' top priorities.

[Click Here for more information](#) on the Conference's efforts on aquatic invasive species.

[The Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers](#) unites the chief executives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Québec, and Wisconsin.

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Great Lakes State Governors, Canadian Premiers Support Law Enforcement Efforts To Hold Invasive Species Offenders Accountable (continued)

For more information on aquatic invasive species in Pennsylvania, visit the [PA Sea Grant Aquatic Invasive Species](#) webpage, [DCNR's Aquatic Invasive Species](#) webpage, the [Fish and Boat Commission Aquatic Invasive Species](#) webpage and the [Pennsylvania Invasive Species Council](#) webpage.

Source: PA Environment Digest

EPA announces \$300,000 Brownfields grant to Harrisburg \$3.9 million for Pa. Brownfields

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency presented a \$300,000 Brownfields assessment grant to the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Harrisburg.

Harrisburg is one of the nine communities in Pennsylvania, and a total of 149 communities nationwide, selected to receive 151 grant awards totaling \$64,623,553 in EPA Brownfields funding. These funds will aid under-served and economically disadvantaged communities in opportunity zones and other parts of the country in assessing and cleaning up abandoned industrial and commercial properties.

“I congratulate the Harrisburg Redevelopment Authority, and its partners, for their outstanding efforts in brownfields redevelopment and am glad to support further progress,” said **EPA Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio**, “The grant awarded today is another step forward in bringing critical investment for revitalization in the city, and in its Opportunity Zones.”

The Redevelopment Authority (HRA) will conduct environmental site assessments and complete cleanup plans for sites potentially contaminated by petroleum or hazardous substances. Grant funds also will be used to develop an area-wide plan for two new areas, identify sites to add to the existing site inventory, and conduct community outreach activities. HRA will target activities in the Derry Street Transit-Oriented Development Area and the Cameron Street Corridor.

These efforts build on the results of 2017 brownfields grant to HRA to develop an area-plan for South Allison Hill neighborhood's Industrial Park HRA focused on five catalyst sites along key commercial transportation areas. This effort resulted in an inventory of brownfields sites and a plan for assessing them.

Grants awarded by EPA's Brownfield Program provide communities across the country with an opportunity to transform contaminated sites into community assets that attract jobs and achieve broader economic development outcomes while taking advantage of existing infrastructure. For example, Brownfields grants have been shown to:

- **Increase Local Tax Revenue:** A study of 48 brownfields sites found that an estimated \$29 million to \$97 million in additional local tax revenue was generated in a single year after cleanup. This is two to seven times more than the \$12.4 million EPA contributed to the cleanup of these sites.
- **Increase Residential Property Values:** Another study found that property values of homes near revitalized brownfields sites increased between 5 and 15% following cleanup.

Background

A brownfield is a property for which the expansion, redevelopment or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant. There are estimated to be more than 450,000 brownfields in the U.S. As of May 2019, under the EPA Brownfields Program 30,153 properties have been assessed, and 86,131 acres of idle land have been made ready for productive use.

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**EPA announces \$300,000 Brownfields grant to Harrisburg \$3.9 million for Pa. Brownfields
(continued)**

In addition, communities have been able to use Brownfields grants to leverage 150,120 jobs and more than \$28 billion of public and private funding.

In 2018 Congress reauthorized the statutory authority for the Brownfields Program. The reauthorization included changes to the program to expand the list of entities eligible for Brownfields grants, increase the limit of individual Brownfields cleanup grants to \$500,000, and add grant authority for Multipurpose grants. These important changes will help communities address and cleanup more complex brownfield sites.

The 2019 National Brownfields Training Conference will be held on December 11-13 in Los Angeles, California. Offered every two years, this conference is the largest gathering of stakeholders focused on cleaning up and reusing formerly utilized commercial and industrial properties. EPA cosponsors this event with the International City/County Management Association.

For a list of all of the grants selected for funding: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicants-selected-fy19-brownfields-multipurpose-assessment-and-cleanup-grants>

For the booklet "Brownfields: Properties with New Purpose, Improving Local Economies in Communities with Brownfield Sites": https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-06/documents/bf_booklet.pdf

For more on the Brownfields Grants: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding>

For more on EPA's Brownfields Program: <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

More on the 2019 Brownfields Conference: <https://www.brownfields2019.org>

Source: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

2019 Seedlings For Schools Program Experiences Huge Response To New Pollinator Garden Option

In spring 2019, the Game Commission's [Howard Nursery](#) introduced a new program for teachers in Pennsylvania-- mix of [25 native pollinator-friendly seedlings](#) were packaged for teachers to order and plant a pollinator garden on their school premises, free of charge.

The response was huge and unexpected according to Brian Stone, manager of Howard Nursery. "We communicated that the pollinator garden bundles were available on a first-come, first-served basis, and by the end of the first day, we were at capacity!"

Sixty-seven schools throughout the state received pollinator garden bundles in this inaugural year.

"The declining pollinator problem is a critical environmental issue that is getting a lot of attention," said Stone. "Pollinators are essential to the transference of pollen from one plant to another which ensures the continuance of crops we rely on for food."

The Game Commission's Howard Nursery administers the Seedlings for School program as well as the new Pollinator Garden program.

[The Wildlife for Everyone Foundation](#) raises funds to help subsidize these programs which are available at no cost to all students in Pennsylvania.

"Interest in constructing pollinator gardens has grown as individuals recognize the value in creating habitat for these pollinating insects and other animals," adds Stone.

An additional benefit of the [Pollinator Garden \(and Seedlings for Schools\) programs](#) is the inclusion of a Teacher Resource Guide that includes information on the importance of trees and plants in our lives and their role in providing food and habitat for wildlife.

The addition of pollinator garden curriculum addresses the existing environmental problem, types of plants that attract various kinds of insects and how to construct an effective garden.

[The Teacher Resource Guide](#) contains activities with educational standard correlations and student sheets that are sent with the bundles and available online.

The goal of the Seedlings for Schools and Pollinator Garden programs is to offer youth hands-on educational opportunities that engage them with nature.

In addition to creating an awareness of the natural world, these experiences serve to instill in youth a newfound ownership of their environment and an appreciation for conservation practices that will impact their future actions.

The Wildlife for Everyone Foundation pursues grant opportunities and seeks private donations to raise money to ensure these programs continue.

To make a donation, visit the [Wildlife for Everyone Foundation](#) website or call the Foundation office at 814-238-8138.

Source: PA Environment Digest

Mosquito Samples Tests Positive for West Nile Virus

The following is a list of the new mosquito/bird positives:

Beaver - Center Twp

Delaware - Upper Darby Twp

Philadelphia - Philadelphia City

DEP and County staff will respond as needed to these findings.

These infected samples represent the first 2019 detection of WNV in the Commonwealth.

AIR QUALITY IN PENNSYLVANIA: HOW TO BE AIR AWARE

Air Quality in Pennsylvania: How to be Air Aware

When planning an outdoor activity, would you make plans without first checking the weather forecast? Is it going to be sunny or cloudy? Is there a chance of precipitation? Will it be warm or cold? Most would probably check the daily weather forecast and plan accordingly.

A warm, sunny day may appear to be perfect for being outdoors, but it's what you don't see that could cause problems, especially for certain portions of the population. The air we breathe contains gas and fine particle contaminants that cannot be seen by the naked eye. These pollutants are found in haze, smoke, and dust—and yes, sometimes in air that looks clean. The pollutants can cause a variety of health problems for some people.

Now with warmer weather upon us, chances are you will be spending more time outdoors. And there is another daily forecast that you might want to check. That would be the Air Quality Index—[Opens In A New Window](#) or AQI.

Local air quality affects how you live and breathe. And the AQI tells you how clean or polluted the air really is. It focuses on health effects that you may experience within a few hours or days after breathing polluted air. Like the weather, it can change from day to day or even hour to hour. The AQI uses color-coding to signify conditions:

Green is good

Yellow is moderate

Orange is unhealthy for sensitive groups

Red is unhealthy

Air pollution comes from many different sources. There are stationary sources such as factories and power plants; mobile sources such as cars, buses, planes, trucks, and trains; and naturally occurring sources such as windblown dust. All these contribute to air pollution. Some fine particle pollutants are released directly into the atmosphere while others, like ozone, are formed in the air by chemical reactions. [Fine particle pollution](#)[Opens In A New Window](#) has been linked to heart attacks, asthma attacks, and the development of chronic bronchitis. [Ozone, even at low levels, can aggravate respiratory diseases](#)[Opens In A New Window](#). This leads to increased use of medication, more visits to health care providers, admissions to emergency rooms and hospitals, and even premature death.

AIR QUALITY IN PENNSYLVANIA: HOW TO BE AIR AWARE (CONTINUED)

Children are at higher risk because they spend more time outdoors and their developing lungs are prone to damage. Older adults are at higher risk because they have a higher chance of pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular diseases, and as they get older, their bodies are less able to deal with such hazards. Other risk factors include family history of heart disease or stroke, high blood pressure, activity levels and socioeconomic factors such as limited access to medical care and proper nutrition.

But wait, there is good news! Air quality in the United States has improved in recent years. From 1970 to 2017, total national emissions of the six common pollutants has dropped an average of 73 percent! Here in Pennsylvania there have been remarkable drops in stationary source air pollution since 1990*:

Nitrogen oxides (NOx) down 83%

Particulate Matter (both 10 microns (PM10) and 2.5 microns (PM2.5)) down 31%

Sulfur Dioxide (SOx) down 93%

Volatile Organic Chemicals (VOCs) down 60%

*Data obtained from Pennsylvania's annual stationary source emission inventory data.

But even though conditions have steadily improved, there are still many people who are exposed to high levels of pollution because of where they live and/or their vulnerability due to their health conditions. There are steps they can take to protect their health:

Monitor the [Air Quality Index](#)[Opens In A New Window](#).

Know when and where air pollution may be bad.

Schedule outdoor activities at times when the air quality is better. In the summer, this may be in the morning.

Limit outdoor activities when pollutants are forecasted to be high.

Use an air conditioner to help filter the air coming into the home.

There are some commonsense tips that you can incorporate into your daily routine that will help reduce air pollution.

Take public transit, bicycle, walk, or run.

AIR QUALITY IN PENNSYLVANIA: HOW TO BE AIR AWARE (CONTINUED)

If you do drive, carpool and combine errands into one trip.

Don't "top-off" your gas tank and tighten the gas cap. Spillage adds two tons of air pollution daily.

Get the junk out of your trunk! An extra 100 pounds reduces gas mileage by up to 2%.

Avoid aggressive driving. Speeding, rapid acceleration, and hard braking can reduce gas mileage by 33% at highway speeds.

Slow down & save. Each 5 MPH that you drive over 60 MPH reduces fuel economy by up to 5%.

Turn it off! Idling your car or truck wastes gas & pollutes the air.

Install a programmable thermostat in your home – no lower than 78 in summer.

Use ENERGY STAR appliances that are more energy efficient.

Start your BBQ with an electric probe or use a gas grill. Lighter fluid vaporizes quickly and adds VOCs to the air

Postpone mowing the lawn until late in the day, or better yet, use an electric or manual mower.

Use "spill-proof" gasoline containers.

Refrain from using household sprays and oil-based paints.

Ditch disposables! Use reusable coffee mugs, silverware, napkins, plates, straws, bags instead. It takes fossil fuels to make disposable goods. After use, they end up in a landfill or gets incinerated which causes air pollution.

So, check the daily AQI to know what conditions are expected to be like, take precautionary steps to prevent health-related issues, and follow simple commonsense tips to decrease air pollution. By following these three simple steps, you can ensure better health for yourself, and others.

Source: By: Ashley Schalleur - Environmental Protection Compliance Specialist, Southeast Regional Office (SERO), Jillian Gallagher - Air Quality Environmental Group Manager, SERO, and John Repetz - Community Relations Coordinator, Southcentral Regional Office (SCRO)

Wolf Administration Announces Expansion of Program Supplying Free Sunscreen at State Park Beaches Throughout Pennsylvania

Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn and Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine announced expansion of a program offering visitors free sunscreen at state park beaches and swimming pools throughout Pennsylvania.

"We are extremely grateful that the Department of Health and its Division of Cancer Prevention and Control have partnered with us to support and expand this important project," Dunn said, speaking at a Gifford Pinchot State Park beach. "In promoting outdoor activity, we're aware over 8,500 Americans are diagnosed with skin cancer each day, and these dispensers should prove invaluable to visitors to our lakes, beaches, and pools who may overlook sunscreen when packing for a day's outing."

Beginning in summer 2017, DCNR'S Bureau of State Parks began supplying free sunscreen at Fuller Lake in Pine Grove Furnace State Park, Cumberland County, and at the swimming pool at Codorus State Park in York County. The program now has been expanded to nine state parks.

"We want people to get outside and enjoy the wonderful swimming areas that Pennsylvania state parks offer, all while practicing safe habits," Dr. Levine said. "The free sunscreen offered at state parks allows park visitors to protect themselves from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Sunscreen with SPF 30, or higher, with broad spectrum coverage can help protect the skin from dangerous sunburns and decrease the chances of developing serious health conditions."

Exposure to ultraviolet radiation can cause numerous health effects such as skin cancer, cataracts and eye cancer. Types of skin cancer include basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer.

Melanoma is one of the most common cancers in Pennsylvania, with nearly 3,700 new cases in 2016. One in 40 Pennsylvanians are at risk of developing melanoma in their lifetime. While nearly 90 percent of people who develop melanoma survive, in 2016, 388 people died from this cancer.

Melanomas often resemble moles, and some even develop from moles. This is why it is so important to constantly monitor your body and be aware of any changes. If you have a mole that seems abnormal or is changing, have it looked at by a physician. Melanoma that is recognized and treated early is almost always curable. If not detected early, it can spread and be fatal.

Feedback from Pine Grove Furnace and Codorus state parks encouraged DCNR to expand by adding three additional parks in 2018 to what began as a pilot program. New parks offering sunscreen were Bald Eagle (beach), Centre County; Gifford Pinchot (beach), York County, and Nockamixon (swimming pool), Bucks County. With continuing positive feedback, four parks were added: Little Buffalo, Perry County; Laurel Hill, Somerset County; Presque Isle, Erie County, and Caledonia, Franklin County.

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The Bureau of State Parks noted the sunscreen dispenser program has the potential of reaching 500,000 Pennsylvanians at its nine parks. All nine locations are within counties reporting a high incidence of melanoma, a life-threatening form of skin cancer.

For the third year, all park costs are again covered by the Department of Health's Cancer Fund, which is federally funded. Each park is receiving close to \$750 worth of equipment to participate.

Throughout the summer season, state park staff will oversee and maintain sunscreen dispensers. Two pole-mounted, battery-operated dispensers, supplying 30+ SPF BrightGuard sunscreen applications, will be positioned at each park.

Sunscreen ingredients are listed on sides of the tamperproof units by the company, which has provided educational training for park staff. Experts say daily application of a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or higher can aid in prevention of skin cancer.

At season's end, the Bureau of State Parks again will evaluate the program to determine if further expansion is warranted. It also is pursuing opportunities to collaborate with local health organizations for future expansion of the program.

Source: PA DCNR

Wolf Administration Highlights Need for Green Infrastructure Funds at Dedication of Two Major Improvements to Delaware & Lehigh Trail in Bucks County

The Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn and Transportation Secretary Leslie S. Richards joined Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor and Bureau of State Parks officials in the dedication of two major improvements to the D&L Trail, noting the need for Restore Pennsylvania to help address additional green infrastructure needs in the state.

“Today’s dedication is a justified salute to all who worked so long to make positive things happen along this trail,” Dunn said. “Projects of this scope do not come cheap, but DCNR is committed to closing major existing trail gaps, and bringing the joy of hiking, biking and walking close to people’s homes. Restore Pennsylvania would supply needed funds to address these infrastructure needs.”

When completed, the D&L Trail will be the the longest multi-use trail in Pennsylvania. In 2012, an economic impact analysis completed by the Rails to Trails Conservancy estimated the total user-spending generated because of the D&L Trail at over \$19 million annually.

“Projects like this show how state and local agencies can work together to make needed improvements that connect various modes of transportation,” said Secretary Richards. “These improvements connect communities by expanding people’s options for getting where they need to go.”

Restore Pennsylvania is a statewide plan to aggressively address the commonwealth's vital infrastructure needs. Funded through a commonsense severance tax, Restore Pennsylvania is the only plan that will help make Pennsylvania a leader in the 21st century.

Identified by trail supporters as the recently completed “CSX Tunnel” and “Tyburn Road Connector” projects, the improvements overseen by PennDOT and DCNR close two major gaps in Pennsylvania’s statewide trail network, while facilitating safe pedestrian and bicyclist travel along the D&L trail and through Delaware Canal State Park.

Traveling south from Wilkes-Barre, Luzerne County, to Bristol in lower Bucks County, the D&L Trail eventually will cover 165 miles. With completion of the tunnel and connector projects, trail supporters note hikers and bikers are just short of having access to 70 miles of contiguous trail in Bucks and Lehigh counties.

“These improvements address long- standing gaps that impact connectivity of the Delaware Canal Towpath, D&L Trail , East Coast Greenway and Philadelphia’s Circuit Trail,” said Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Executive Director Elissa Garofalo. “So many partners were involved in various ways -- the PA Environmental Council, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, East Coast Greenway, DCNR, Bucks County and others. In the end, it was PennDOT funds and construction management for the CSX passageway, and the DVRPC, D&L and DCNR for Tyburn Road.”

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Wolf Administration Highlights Need for Green Infrastructure Funds at Dedication of Two Major Improvements to Delaware & Lehigh Trail in Bucks County (continued)

To learn more, visit the [Restore Pennsylvania web page](#).

For details on the D&L Trail, visit the [Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor website-Opens In A New Window](#).

Source: PA DCNR

Wolf Administration Joins in Honoring Mid State Trail as Pennsylvania's 2019 Trail of the Year

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn joined Mid State Trail Association members and other hiking enthusiasts in celebrating the designation of the Mid State Trail as Pennsylvania's 2019 Trail of the Year.

The Mid State Trail is Pennsylvania's longest trail. Its 327 miles traverse some of Pennsylvania's most remote and scenic areas, and stretch from the Maryland to New York borders.

"Drawn by the natural beauty that captures the essence of Pennsylvania's wild places, thousands of hiking enthusiasts take to the Mid State each year, regardless of the season," Dunn told trail supporters gathered at Raymond B. Winter State Park. "In their quest for everything from gentle rail-trail travel to rigorous rocky climbs, these travelers are an economic boon to the many small business communities near the trail."

Improved by DCNR investments totalling almost \$1.5 million, the trail saw a major three-phase project completed in 2015 on the Union-Centre county line. Work included: rehabilitation work on an old railroad bridge spanning Penns Creek; lining of the Poe Paddy Tunnel; and re-surfacing of the trail approaching both the bridge and tunnel. Earlier, \$178,800 financed Yellow Creek Bridge construction in Bedford County.

Hiking enthusiasts say the Mid State Trail's sheer length offers more challenges to hikers than any other trail in the state. Sometimes-difficult hiking takes travelers through isolated forests and past historic sites, vistas, waterfalls and natural springs.

"As an all-volunteer organization, we rely upon and value the co-operation and partnership we get from the DCNR professionals at its Bureau of State Parks and Bureau of Forestry," said Mid State Trail Association President Ed Lawrence. "Our goal is to maintain the Mid State Trail as a sustainable recreational resource for the entire community, one that provides a natural pathway today and into the future."

Pennsylvania is a leader in trail development, providing its citizens and visitors with more than 12,000 miles of trails across the commonwealth, from gentle pathways threading through miles of preserved greenways, to remote, rugged trails scaling the state's mountains.

Each year, the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee designates a Trail of the Year to help build enthusiasm and support for both large and small trails, and raise public awareness about the value of Pennsylvania's trail network.

The Mid State Trail was created to foster simple, natural experiences that foster a greater respect for nature and a will to protect for future generations. Largely on public land, the trail passes through eight state parks; five state forests; eight state forest Natural Areas; four state forest Wild Areas; four state forest picnic areas; two Scout camps and one roadside rest.

The Mid State Trail is divided into four distinct regions. Traveling from the south, hikers pass through the Everett Region, State College Region, Woolrich Region, and Tioga Region. The trail's main route, marked by rectangular, orange blazes, also features several long side trails.

Wolf Administration Joins in Honoring Mid State Trail as Pennsylvania's 2019 Trail of the Year (continued)

The Mid State Trail Association was formed in 1982 to guide the Mid State Trail's continued growth and protect its future. The association engages many local volunteers who construct and maintain only foot paths.

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee is charged with implementing the recommendations of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan to develop a statewide land and water trail network to facilitate recreation, transportation, and healthy lifestyles. The 20-member DCNR-appointed committee represents both motorized and non-motorized trail users and advises the commonwealth on use of state and federal trail funding.

Source: The **PA** Department of Conservation and Natural Resources