

Conservation Committee Report

Volume 25 Issue 5

Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

May 2023



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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ONE OF THE BEST THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT: PLANT A NATIVE TREE!

One of the Best Things You Can Do to Help the Environment: Plant a Native Tree!

With the recent celebrations of Earth Day and Arbor Day, many people have been seeing more information about ways to

help the environment -- perhaps even overloaded with all the information out there.

The impacts of climate change and the threat of invasive species have some people wondering if helping the environment is a losing battle, and some don't know where to start.

We're here to say that it is not a losing battle; and while

there are many ways to help the environment, one of the best things you can do is to plant a native tree! It's no coincidence

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Biden Harris Administration Announces \$4 Billion Through the Investing in America and Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles

Agenda for Clean Port Upgrades to Improve Air Quality and Protect Public Health

EPA announces initial steps to invest new

Inflation Reduction Act resources for zero-emission trucks and port upgrades to reduce pollution and advance environmental justice

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the initial steps in the develop-

ment of programs that will invest \$4 billion from the Inflation Reduction Act in our nation's port infrastructure while reducing air pollution and advancing President Biden's commitment to environmental justice.

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ONE OF THE BEST THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT: PLANT A NATIVE TREE! (CONTINUED)

that the first Earth Day was celebrated on Arbor Day (Arbor Day was later moved to the last Friday in April).

Back in 1970, it was recognized that helping the environment was tied to the importance of planting trees; but now we know so much more about the importance of planting native trees.

Benefits of Planting Native Trees

Planting native trees has many benefits:

- Native trees require less maintenance. Because native trees are already adapted to local soils, climate, and conditions, they require less watering and soil amendments. Once established, they will require little else and will persist through frost and drought.
- Native trees are vital to helping provide clean water. Native trees have deeper roots that hold soil better and reduce stormwater runoff by reducing soil erosion along river and stream banks and absorbing dirty water before it gets into the waterways.
- Native trees are so important in supporting biodiversity. They provide important food and shelter to a variety of insects, birds, and other wildlife. Without native trees and the insects that co-evolved with them, local birds cannot survive.
- Native trees help combat effects of climate change. Native trees help to reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere by sequestering carbon as they grow. Once mature, healthy trees continue to store carbon from the atmosphere in their fibers until they decompose.
- Native trees are important to our health. Besides helping to remove pollutants from the air and providing oxygen, the shade from trees helps to combat rising temperatures, and trees are found to help relieve stress by reducing noise, relaxing the mind, and lowering blood pressure.

What Are the Best Native Trees to Plant in Pennsylvania?

It's well established that native trees are good for us and the environment, but some native trees provide more benefit than others.

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ONE OF THE BEST THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT: PLANT A NATIVE TREE! (CONTINUED)

Here are a few suggestions of native trees to plant that will produce the most environmental benefits in a landscaped setting.

Oak Trees

Oak trees are large, stately trees that are one of the most important sources of food and shelter for a variety of wildlife over a long period of time.

They also support the highest diversity of pollinators.

According to research by Dr. Doug Tallamy (including on his property in southeastern Pennsylvania), native oak trees support more than 500 species of caterpillars, which in turn provide an important food source for birds.

But its not just birds the oak trees support. They provide acorns and shelter that a variety of other wildlife depend on.

Oak trees also absorb high amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) making them an excellent choice to help mitigate climate change.

We recommend planting these fast-growing trees:

- White oak trees (*Quercus alba*) are widespread across Pennsylvania and will do well across the state. The best place to plant them is in sunny and either dry or moist sites.
- Northern red oak trees (*Quercus rubra*) are often planted for shade and can do well in city conditions. The best place to plant them is in sunny, dry sites.

Tree shelters are essential when planting oaks, as deer will forage on them.

Hickory Trees

Hickory trees are also considered important for their ecological benefits. Their ecological value follows closely behind oak trees.

Hickory nuts provide food for a variety of wildlife and the loose bark of the shagbark hickory

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ONE OF THE BEST THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT: PLANT A NATIVE TREE! (CONTINUED)

(*Carya ovata*) can provide a hidden roost for bats and shelter for insects over winter.

Hickory trees also help sequester large amounts of carbon, helping to offset impacts of climate change.

Hickories are susceptible to few forest pests or diseases, making them a low maintenance tree.

The best place to plant them is in a sunny location with well-drained, moist soils.

Tree shelters are essential when planting hickories, as deer will forage on them.

Additional Resources on Planting Natives

Planting native trees is best for the environment. While there are many more native trees that you can plant, we highlighted a few that have the most benefits.

The benefits of planting native species go beyond trees. There are other native plants, shrubs, and grasses that are also important to biodiversity if you can't plant a tree.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' website provides additional information about [landscaping with native trees and plants](#).

Note: When you purchase a tree from a nursery, ask the grower if they know the seed origin of the tree. Trees with a local seed origin or those from slightly south of your planting location are more likely to be genetically adapted to the current and future climate.

The department also recently published a blog about [bringing biodiversity back to your lawn](#) if planting a tree doesn't seem reasonable for your space.

If you don't have a place to plant anything, you can still help support native tree plantings across the state by donating to the [Keystone Tree Fund](#).

Biden Harris Administration Announces \$4 Billion Through the Investing in America and Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles (continued)

The actions are part of the Biden Administration's broader efforts to rebuild our nation's infrastructure, a key pillar of President Biden's Investing in America agenda.

EPA is now seeking public input to inform the development of two new programs. The Clean Ports Program will invest \$3 billion in technologies to reduce harmful air and climate pollutants at U.S. ports and create a zero-emission shipping future. The Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicle Program will invest an additional \$1 billion to reduce vehicle emissions and better protect the health of the people living and working near ports, schools, and other truck routes.

"Thanks to President Biden's historic investments in America, we are transforming our nation's infrastructure for the better, all while protecting the health of underserved communities that are too often overburdened by pollution," **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "With \$4 billion in funding for clean ports and clean transportation from the Inflation Reduction Act, we can deliver cleaner air and healthier communities, support good-paying jobs, and strengthen local economies."

Administrator Regan announced the funding and request for information with U.S. Senator Jon Ossoff (GA) while touring the Port of Savannah in Georgia, where EPA has previously awarded the Georgia Ports Authority over \$9 million in Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) funds to reduce diesel emissions and improve air quality by upgrading and replacing older freight trucks, cargo handling equipment, and marine engines with cleaner models. EPA's new Clean Ports and Heavy-Duty Vehicle programs will go a step further to reduce emissions and improve community air quality through electrification and other zero-emissions technologies while strengthening the clean energy supply chain. This investment is the latest in a string of transformative programs and projects made possible by the Biden-Harris Administration.

"I continue working to upgrade Georgia's port infrastructure and establish Georgia as the national leader in advanced energy technology," said **Senator Ossoff (GA)**. "I thank President Biden and Administrator Regan for their attention to Georgia's ports and their support for Georgia's economic development and environmental quality."

The Clean Ports Program builds on EPA's existing Ports Initiative and will transform port infrastructure while boosting investments for zero-emission port equipment and technology that reduces climate and air pollutants and improves air quality at ports and surrounding communities. The Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicle Program provides funding to offset the costs of replacing heavy-duty commercial vehicles with zero-emission vehicles, deploy infrastructure needed to charge, fuel, and maintain these zero-emission vehicles, and develop and train the necessary workforce. Together, these programs will invest unprecedented resources in solutions that protect people and the planet while supporting the creation of good-paying jobs and economic prosperity in communities across the country.

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Biden Harris Administration Announces \$4 Billion Through the Investing in America and Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles (continued)

They also advance President Biden's Justice40 Initiative to direct 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments to disadvantaged communities.

These programs are made possible by President Biden's Investing in America agenda, to rebuild the nation's infrastructure, create a manufacturing and innovation boom powered by good-paying jobs, and build a clean-energy economy to combat climate change and make our communities more resilient. The Port of Savannah is the latest stop on the Biden-Harris Administration's Investing in America tour to highlight how the President's agenda is creating opportunities in communities across the country and growing the American economy from the bottom up and middle-out.

Through responses to this Request for Information (RFI) EPA is looking to improve the Agency's understanding of zero-emission trucks and port equipment as well as their associated charging and fueling infrastructure requirements. EPA is especially interested in comments detailing the availability, market price, and performance of zero-emission trucks, zero-emission port equipment, electric charging and other fueling infrastructure needs for zero-emission technologies, and to what degree the content and components of these systems are manufactured in the United States. This information will enable EPA to effectively design programs to expeditiously fund currently available zero-emission technologies and consider appropriate ways to accommodate technologies available in the near term.

The deadline to submit input is June 5, 2023.

Additional Background:

Ports are critical for commerce, a keystone for economic growth, and play a significant role in the goods movement supply chain. EPA's Ports Initiative provides tools and assistance to help accelerate adoption of cleaner technologies, clean air planning practices such as emissions inventories, and community engagement to address diesel emissions at ports across the country. The Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Program funds grants that protect human health and improve air quality by reducing harmful emissions from diesel engines, including low- and zero-emission port projects such as cleaner freight trucks; crane and yard tractor upgrades; ferry and tugboat replacements; and shore power installations.

Building on the DERA and Ports Initiative programs, EPA is developing the new \$1 billion Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicle Program and \$3 billion Clean Ports Program in the Inflation Reduction Act to further accelerate emissions reductions at ports and other transportation facilities.

For further information: EPA Press Office (press@epa.gov)

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

DCNR Highlights How Governor Shapiro's Budget Would Help With Infrastructure Needs At Bald Eagle State Park In Centre County

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn visited Bald Eagle State Park in Centre County to call attention to the park's infrastructure needs and how Governor Josh Shapiro's proposed budget would address outdated facilities and public safety preparedness across the state.

The Governor's budget would provide \$112 million to maintain and improve infrastructure in parks and forests, which would be the single largest investment in decades. In addition, the budget proposes \$2.8 million to support operating needs for the management and safety of our public lands.

"A campground upgrade and projects focused on public health underway at Bald Eagle are among the many improvements that are being made to provide visitors modern facilities and full-service camping," Secretary Dunn said. "These types of infrastructure projects are essential to meeting visitor expectations and providing for their safety, and the money in the Governor's budget is critical in addressing infrastructure needs of our state forests and state parks throughout Pennsylvania."

The 5,900-acre Bald Eagle State Park is a gateway to the Pennsylvania Wilds in the northcentral region of the state with about half a million visitors annually. A large lake laps the flanks of Bald Eagle Mountain, which is surrounded by forests, fields, and wetlands. With two campgrounds, boating, fishing, swimming, the Nature Inn, and diverse habitats that are excellent for wildlife watching, the park is great for daytrips and family vacations year-round.

Bald Eagle State Park has \$18.5 million in infrastructure needs including upgrading the sewage treatment plant, replacing water main pumps, modernizing the campground showerhouse, providing larger sites in the campground with utilities for RVs, and maintenance of the [exterior of the Nature Inn](#) at Bald Eagle. *Opens In A New Window.*

"Improved facilities will make this park more energy efficient, which is great for the environment and also saves money over the long run," DCNR Deputy Secretary Mike Walsh said.

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DCNR Highlights How Governor Shapiro's Budget Would Help With Infrastructure Needs At Bald Eagle State Park In Centre County (continued)

DCNR has a documented need of more than \$1.4 billion for infrastructure repairs and improvements. Issues such as addressing wear and tear, extreme weather and climate change impacts, and a high demand for outdoor recreation require investments, which also allow incorporation of sustainable design and energy efficiency.

"Bald Eagle State Park, one of the largest in the state, has been of enormous benefit to the local economy. It provides for a wide range of recreational activities and has become an important resource for migratory birds and waterfowl," said Mark Ott, Howard Fire Co Swiftwater Rescue Tech, EMT and Fire Police Captain. "The Howard Fire Company has benefited from the park as a location to hold our annual Punkin Chunkin Fall Festival. In addition, the company uses park facilities for water and ice rescue training for the County Swiftwater Rescue Team. The park gets heavy use and needs repairs, upgrades, and refreshing, as is the case for most of our state parks. It behooves us to keep these jewels shining for future generations."

Outdoor recreation contributes nearly \$14 billion to Pennsylvania's economy, accounting for 152,000 jobs. For every dollar invested in state parks, \$12.41 returns to the Commonwealth.

DCNR manages 124 state parks, 2.2 million acres of state forest lands, and is tasked with conserving and sustaining Pennsylvania's natural resources for present and future generations' use and enjoyment.

Find more information about [Bald Eagle State Park](#) on the DCNR website. Check DCNR's [Calendar of Events](#) for happenings on public lands.

Source: PA DCNR

DEP To Host Public Meeting Regarding Proposed Waste Transfer Station in Luzerne County

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will host a public meeting to answer questions from residents regarding the proposed Northeast Waste Transfer Station (NEWT) in Hazleton, Luzerne County. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, May 31st from 6-9 PM at the Hazle Township Volunteer Fire and Rescue building located at 1113 N. Church St, Hazle Township, PA 18202. Representatives from the department and NEWT will be on hand to provide an overview of the permitting process and the project itself, and answer questions.

The proposed municipal waste transfer facility is to be located near 455 East Broad Street (State Route 93), Hazleton, PA. The facility would accept municipal solid waste (MSW) and construction and demolition (C&D) waste that is anticipated to primarily originate from Luzerne County and its neighboring communities. The proposed maximum daily waste acceptance is 700 tons/day and the proposed operating hours are from 6:00 AM – 4 PM Monday through Saturday. North East Waste Systems, LLC applied to DEP for a municipal solid waste transfer station permit in February of 2023. The permit application was deemed administratively complete in April of 2023. The public comment period for the application is open and will end on June 7, 2023.

The permit application is available for public review at the DEP Northeast Regional Office (NERO) located at 2 Public Square, Wilkes-Barre and a copy of the application can also be viewed on DEP NERO website: <https://www.dep.pa.gov/About/Regional/Northeast-Regional-Office/Community%20Information/Pages/Northeast-Waste-Transfer-Station.aspx>. Those wishing to view the application in person can do so at NERO during regular business hours of 8:00 AM – 4 PM Monday through Friday and can schedule an appointment by calling 570-826-2511. Those who wish to submit written comments can send them to either Colleen Connolly, Regional Communications Manager at coconnolly@pa.gov or Roger Bellas, Program Manager, at rbellas@pa.gov.

A portion of Hazleton City near the proposed transfer station is considered an Environmental Justice (EJ) area by the department. According to DEP's currently adopted EJ Policy, the project will have an enhanced public participation processes appropriate to the project scale.

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DEP To Host Public Meeting Regarding Proposed Waste Transfer Station in Luzerne County (continued)

An interpreter will be on hand at the meeting to accommodate Spanish-speaking residents.

The Department requests that individuals wishing to ask questions at the upcoming public meeting to register with Colleen Connolly at: coconnolly@pa.gov. Requests to participate will be accepted up to the day of the meeting. Individuals that wish to ask questions will be limited to 3 questions plus a follow-up so that all individuals have the opportunity to ask questions. Individuals attending the meeting will have the opportunity to ask question if they so desire; however, individuals who preregister will be given priority on the agenda.

Persons with a disability who wish to participate and require an auxiliary aid, service or other accommodation should contact Colleen Connolly at: coconnolly@pa.gov or the Pennsylvania Hamilton Relay Service at (800) 654-5984 (TDD) to discuss how the Department can meet their needs.

For more information on the Pennsylvania [Department of Environmental Protection](#), please visit the website or follow DEP on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

EPA Honors National Leader in the Fight Against Asthma Disparities During Asthma Awareness Month in May

Wisconsin Asthma Program recognized as national model for work to enhance indoor air quality for people with asthma

Each May during Asthma Awareness Month, EPA highlights asthma awareness and recognizes leading asthma management programs for their work enhancing the quality of life for individuals with asthma.

“Growing up with respiratory challenges in North Carolina, I know all too well the struggle that millions of Americans suffer daily. Asthma is an issue that impacts the entire country, and children of families living in underserved communities overburdened by pollution are disproportionately impacted,” **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan.** “That’s why I am so proud of the work EPA is doing to support real solutions, giving hope to those who battle asthma. Thanks to programs like the **Wisconsin Department of Health Services’ Asthma Program**, we are leading in innovation and making significant progress to protect public health.”

Asthma Awareness

Asthma affects more than 25 million Americans, including six million children, and disproportionately affects certain racial and ethnic groups. Fortunately, people can control their asthma symptoms and improve their health with three simple steps:

- 1. Identify and avoid indoor environmental asthma triggers.** Dust mites, secondhand smoke, mold, pests, pet dander and other allergens and contaminants in homes, schools and other indoor spaces can trigger asthma attacks. Work with your health care provider to identify and avoid your personal indoor asthma triggers.
- 2. Pay attention to outdoor air quality.** Ozone and particle pollution can cause or worsen asthma attacks. Check local air quality conditions at AirNow and download the Air Quality Index app for your smartphone.
- 3. Create an asthma action plan.** This will help you monitor your asthma and take steps to reduce exposure to your personal triggers. Ask a health care provider to assist you in creating your plan.

National Environmental Leadership Award in Asthma Management

Each May, through the National Environmental Leadership Award in Asthma Management, EPA recognizes leading asthma management programs for their in-home interventions. The 2023 winner is the **Wisconsin Department of Health Services’ Asthma Program.**

Wisconsin’s program provides leadership and coordination for asthma care and service delivery statewide. Its activities focus on disproportionately affected populations, including children, persons with low income, and racial and ethnic minorities. It is distinguished by its strong partnerships with community organizations and innovative projects to improve health, including the

EPA Honors National Leader in the Fight Against Asthma Disparities During Asthma Awareness Month in May (continued)

Asthma-Safe Homes program.

EPA works year-round to promote understanding of asthma triggers, as a part of comprehensive asthma management, through research, education and outreach. With support from EPA, more communities are deploying approaches to improve the lives of people with asthma, especially in minority and low-income communities.

Visit EPA's [Asthma webpage](#) to learn more about asthma and environmental triggers, and read about the 2023 National Environmental Leadership Award winner.

For further information: EPA Press Office (press@epa.gov)

Source: U.S. EPA

DEP To Receive Comments and Host In-Person Hearing on Air Quality Permit Application for Chester Facility, Delaware County

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced it will receive public comments and host an in-person public hearing regarding a plan approval application for Reasonable Available Control Technology (RACT III) requirements for Covanta Delaware Valley, LP, a waste to energy facility in the City of Chester, Delaware County.

The public is invited to participate in this process through a public comment period and in-person public hearing. The public hearing will be held on Wednesday, May 17, 2023 beginning at 6:30 PM at Chester City Hall (Chester City municipal building), 1 E 4th St. Chester, PA 19013. Individuals wishing to provide testimony must contact the DEP Regional Communications Manager Stephanie Berardi at sberardi@pa.gov or 484-250-5808 to register at least 24 hours prior to the hearing. Additional information will be provided to testifiers upon registration.

DEP is accepting written public comments on this application, which may be submitted to RA-EPSEROAQpubcom@pa.gov or mailed to the Southeast Regional Office, Air Quality Program, 2 E. Main St. Norristown, PA 19401 until close of business on Saturday, May 27, 2023. To assist with mail routing, it is requested that mailed comments contain the following on the envelope: "Comments on Covanta Delaware Valley." All comments, whether received in writing or spoken at the hearing, carry equal weight and consideration before DEP.

Covanta Delaware Valley, LP is a permitted waste-to-energy facility that has filed an application for a Plan Approval to install equipment that would reduce the amount of the pollutant nitrogen oxides (NOx) emitted from the facilities six (6) waste combustors to meet the new federal and state standards for air pollution. These permits are required under the federal Clean Air Act for any large or major source of air pollution. It does not authorize any increase in air emissions of regulated pollutants above the previously approved levels. More information can be found on DEP's [Covanta Delaware Valley Community page](#).

For more information on the [Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection](#), please visit the website or follow DEP on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

EPA Proposes to Establish First-Time Clean Water Act Protections for Over 250 Tribes

EPA's proposed baseline water quality standards would usher in new Clean Water Act protections for Tribal Nation waterways

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced proposed federal baseline water quality standards for waterbodies on Indian reservations that do not have Clean Water Act standards, ensuring protections for over half a million people living on Indian reservations as well as critical aquatic ecosystems.

Fifty years ago, Congress established a goal in the Clean Water Act (CWA) that waters should support fishing and swimming wherever attainable. All states and 47 Tribes have established standards consistent with that goal. However, the majority of U.S. Tribes with Indian reservations lack such water quality standards. This proposal would extend the same framework of water quality protection that currently exists for most other waters of the United States to waters of over 250 Tribes and is the result of decades of coordination and partnership with Tribes.

"President Biden has made it clear; all people deserve access to clean, safe water. Today's proposal is a monumental step forward in our work with Tribal governments to ensure precious water resources are protected," said **EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "Establishing federal baseline water quality standards, and implementing them in consultation with Tribal governments, will help support Tribes' interests in protecting and improving waters that are essential to thriving communities, vibrant ecosystems, and sustainable economic growth."

If finalized, this proposal would safeguard water quality on Indian reservations until Tribes are able to adopt their own CWA standards for their water bodies. EPA estimates this proposed water quality standard will increase protections for 76,000 miles of rivers and streams and 1.9 million acres of lakes, reservoirs, and other open surface waters within Indian reservations, protecting aquatic life and the health of over half-a-million residents living within reservation boundaries.

Water quality standards define the goals for the condition of a water body by (1) designating its uses, such as fishing and swimming, (2) establishing maximum levels (or water quality "criteria") for pollutants that protect those uses, and (3) outlining policies that protect water quality from degradation. The proposed baseline WQS would provide a common set of designated uses, criteria, and antidegradation policies for Tribal waters, with certain built-in flexibilities to enable EPA to tailor the standards where needed to best protect local circumstances.

This proposal carries out the commitments to honor the federal trust responsibility and protect Tribal water resources outlined in EPA's 2021 action plan, [*Strengthening the Nation-to-Nation Relationship with Tribes to Secure a Sustainable Water Future*](#). It also delivers on the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to uphold the United States' treaty and trust responsibilities to the 574 federally recognized Tribes.

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EPA Proposes to Establish First-Time Clean Water Act Protections for Over 250 Tribes (continued)

“The National Tribal Water Council fully supports federal baseline WQS for all of Indian country not already covered by tribal WQS (TWQS),” **said Ken Norton, Chairman for the National Tribal Water Council.** “While the Council advocates for tribal environmental self-determination through TWQS, we endorse EPA’s proposed rule that discharges the federal government’s trust responsibility to tribes by filling longstanding regulatory gaps in Indian country, using standards that support the unique traditional and cultural uses indigenous peoples make of aquatic ecosystems.”

“We, the tribal representatives of the National Tribal Caucus, are charged with identifying and addressing regional and national environmental issues that affect Tribal Nations and Alaskan Native Villages,” **said Gerald Wagner, National Tribal Caucus Chairman.** “As one of the four elements of life, it is critical that Tribes and Alaskan Native Villages are provided a reasonable means to protect their water resources and ensure the protection of tribal environmental health, aquatic ecosystems, and tribal beneficial use waters. We recognize that the national baseline water quality standards is one important step in ensuring the gap is closed for impaired waters to be protected, while providing the opportunity for Tribes to gain status toward establishing their own water quality standards. The National Tribal Caucus welcomes this unique start in recognizing the importance of water quality in the livelihood of tribal communities and we hope to see further meaningful advancements that integrate tribal identities.”

“The Navajo Nation has water quality standards that were approved under both the Navajo and federal Clean Water Acts and are supported by EPA,” **said Yolanda Barney, Environmental Department Manager, Surface and Ground Water Protection Department, Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency.** “It is imperative that EPA continue to support tribal efforts to protect tribal waters. Working with neighboring states Arizona, New Mexico and Utah as well as EPA, the Navajo Nation ensures that its waters are protected from pollution to the greatest extent possible.”

“The promulgation of Tribal Baseline WQS is necessary to protect tribes without federal standards from transboundary pollution released from off-reservation polluters and addresses EPA’s duty to fill the regulatory water quality protection gaps in Indian country,” **said Michael Bolt, Vice-Chair of the National Tribal Water Council and Water Quality Section Supervisor, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.**

“The Poarch Band of Creek Indians, the only federally recognized Tribe in Alabama, has developed a robust surface water quality-monitoring program throughout the last decade,” **said Stephanie A. Bryan, Tribal Chair and CEO, Poarch Band of Creek Indians.**

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EPA Proposes to Establish First-Time Clean Water Act Protections for Over 250 Tribes (continued)

This program has helped our Tribe defend its lands and waters, but we also recognize not all Tribes have had this same opportunity. The Poarch Band of Creek Indians support any attempt to develop National Water Quality Standards to help Tribes safely preserve and protect their water rights now and into the future.”

“I appreciate that EPA recognizes that most tribes do not have WQS in place. This baseline will provide protection for fish, wildlife and tribal communities that depend on clean water,” **said Russell N. Hepfer, Vice Chairman, Lower Elwha Tribal Community.** “Each tribe is unique, most not having the programs or funding to ensure the baseline is met. Moving forward, EPA should consult with and support tribes with funding for implementation and enforcement.”

The Agency will accept comments on this proposal for 90 days. EPA will also hold two online public hearings on this proposal. [Learn more about the proposed rule and public hearings.](#)

Background [Water Quality Standards \(WQS\)](#) define the water quality goals for a waterbody and provide a regulatory basis for many actions under the CWA, including developing water quality-

effluent limits in National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for point-sources; performing [Clean Water Act \(CWA\) section 401](#) certifications of federal licenses and permits; and reporting on water quality conditions and designated uses attainment.

For further information: EPA Press Office (press@epa.gov)

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

EPA Reaffirms Commitment to Supporting Small Businesses During National Small Business Week

This week, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) celebrated [National Small Business Week](#), paying tribute to the 33.1 million American small businesses that employ almost half of the private-sector workforce. In observance of National Small Business Week, EPA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) hosted a series of events that included small business contracting training and a vendor engagement event that connected small businesses with EPA program officials and large prime contractors.

"EPA has long recognized the vital role small businesses play in powering the country's economy," **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "As an Agency, we will continue to champion small businesses, supporting their growth and resiliency as we work to carry out the Agency's human health and environmental protection mission."

The highlight of the week's activities was the EPA Administrator's 33rd Annual Small Business Program Awards Ceremony, held on May 4, 2023. The ceremony honored exemplary EPA employees and program offices, as well as industry and state partners who contributed to EPA's small business championship in Fiscal Year 2022.

The keynote speaker at the ceremony was Liz Sheetz, Chief Marketing Officer of Tunheim Partners, Inc., the recipient of this year's Administrator's Award for Outstanding Accomplishments by a women-owned small business.

A complete list of the award recipients can be found at the end of this press release.

Outstanding Direct Procurement Program Achievement

Office of Mission Support:

- Holly Fenderson
- Chi Tran
- Sarah Burke
- Quoc Bui
- Marcus Banks
- Emily McLeod
- Jennifer Cranford
- Dawn Roman Brown
- Ryan Rodriguez

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EPA Reaffirms Commitment to Supporting Small Businesses During National Small Business Week (continued)

- John Liertz

Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention:

- Deon Moore
- Cathleen Stewart
- LaTangila Edwards
- John Pates
- Sheila Brown
- Isaac Francois

Outstanding Accomplishments by a Small Business Contractor

- Microvi Biotech, Inc.

Outstanding Accomplishments by a Women-Owned Small Business Contractor

- Tunheim Partners, Inc.

Outstanding Accomplishments by a HUBZone Small Business Contractor

- Nuka Research and Planning Group, LLC

Outstanding Accomplishments by a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Contractor

- Logzone, Inc.

Outstanding Accomplishments by a Group in Support of Small Businesses Impacted by EPA Regulations

Region 3:

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EPA Reaffirms Commitment to Supporting Small Businesses During National Small Business Week (continued)

- Kellee Haye
- John Robb
- Sella Burchette
- Nathaniel Work

Award for Outstanding Accomplishments by a State Small Business Environmental Assistance Provider in Providing Technical Environmental Assistance to the Small Business Community

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's SBEAP
Recognition of Team Effort:

- Christine Hoefler
- Kaitlin Urso

OSDBU Director's Awards for Exceeding at Least Four of the Five Small and Socioeconomic Business Goals

- Office of Inspector General
- Office of Mission Support
- Office of Research and Development

Crystal Duck Awards

- *Larry Douchand*
Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation
Office of Land and Emergency Management

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EPA Reaffirms Commitment to Supporting Small Businesses During National Small Business Week (continued)

- *Keith Johnson*
Air and Radiation Division
Region 7
- *Pamela Legare*
Office of Acquisition Solutions
Office of Mission Support

- *Chris Robbins*
Office of Research and Development

For further information: EPA Press Office (press@epa.gov)

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

Lackawanna State Park Swimming Pool To Be Closed For 2023 Summer Season

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) announced that the swimming pool at Lackawanna State Park will be closed for the 2023 summer season.

The lining of the swimming pool will be replaced with an enhanced plaster to extend the life of the pool. Lifeguards hired to work at Lackawanna State Park will be sent to Frances Slocum State Park to assist with seasonal needs.

DCNR encourages park visitors to enjoy the many other outdoor recreation opportunities the park offers including hiking, camping, wildlife watching and boating.

The 1,445-acre Lackawanna State Park is in northeastern Pennsylvania, ten miles north of Scranton.

The centerpiece of the park, the 198-acre Lackawanna Lake, is surrounded by picnic areas and multi-use trails winding through forest. Boating, camping, fishing, mountain biking, and swimming are popular recreation activities.

[Swimming](#) is permitted at 35 state parks. Swimming beaches are open and free to the public from before Memorial Day to after Labor Day, unless otherwise posted.

Those looking to swim at parks near Lackawanna are encouraged to visit Frances Slocum, Goldsboro, Promised Land, and Tobyhanna state parks. Visitors should check with those parks for hours of operation this season.

Visit DCNR's website for more information about [Lackawanna State Park](#). Check out DCNR's [Calendar of Events](#) for events on public lands.

Source : The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Work To Begin For Key Infrastructure Improvements To Leonard Harrison State Park On May 15

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) announced that construction is set to begin on key infrastructure improvements at Leonard Harrison State Park this month.

“We are pleased to get this long-awaited infrastructure improvement project underway at Leonard Harrison,” **State Parks Director John Hallas said**. “Projects of this nature help keep our wonderful state parks system safe and enjoyable for all visitors. We appreciate the patience of the public as work is done to improve the park and are excited for what’s in store for the future.”

The large scope of the project will cause temporary closures of the main day-use and parking areas, including the spectacular overlook area starting on May 15, 2023. The closure is anticipated to last for the summer, with the goal of full access to the 585-acre park in time for the fall foliage season starting early September.

Work will include making improvements to the park entrance, pedestrian walkways and expanded parking areas. An electric vehicle (EV) charging area in the new parking lot with space for four electric vehicles as part of a [statewide initiative](#) to support EV infrastructure in state parks and forests.

Additionally, there will be new walkways for pedestrians from the parking area to a newly renovated Leonard Harrison State Park Visitor Center, which includes exhibit hall, a PA Wilds Conservation Shop and outdoor seating.

The Leonard Harrison Turkey Path will remain open that connects the park to the Pine Creek Rail Trail. The campground will also remain open, with existing reservations being honored.

Site conditions may be noisy and dusty while contractors are performing the work, therefore campers with existing reservations will be offered an opportunity to cancel or transfer reservations. and no further reservations will be taken during this closure timeframe.

During this construction project, DCNR is asking park visitors to avoid active construction areas and visit other local State Parks.

Colton Point State Park on the western rim of the Pa Grand Canyon has five overlook areas and is a great alternative spot to enjoy spectacular views of the Pine Creek Gorge.

Another alternative local attraction is Hills Creek State Park, where visitors can enjoy the 137-acre lake, public beach, hiking trails and concessions this summer season.

Relocation of the existing PA Wilds Conservation Shop mobile unit to Hills Creek from Leonard Harrison has also occurred to serve visitors to the region during the summer season.

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Work To Begin For Key Infrastructure Improvements To Leonard Harrison State Park On May 15 (continued)

Construction is set to begin as DCNR is working to address its \$1.4 billion infrastructure needs. Governor Josh Shapiro's proposed budget would address outdated facilities and public safety preparedness across the state.

The Governor's budget would provide \$112 million to maintain and improve infrastructure in parks and forests, which would be the single largest investment in decades. In addition, the budget proposes \$2.8 million to support operating needs for the management and safety of our public lands.

"We are pleased to begin work on this existing project and are eager to get working on other infrastructure needs across our 124-state park system," **DCNR Deputy Secretary John Norbeck said**. "Just like at Leonard Harrison, our state parks and forests contain not only natural areas, but many roads, bridges and structures. Much of that infrastructure was built more than 50 years ago and we are working to address those critical needs."

If you have questions, or need any additional information, please contact the Leonard Harrison State Park Office weekdays from 8am to 4pm; telephone 570-724-3061.

Find out more information about [Leonard Harrison State Park](#) on DCNR's website. Check out [DCNR's Calendar of Events](#) for events on public lands. For information on other state parks in the [PA Wilds region](#), visit the PA Wilds website..

Source: The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)