

Conservation Committee Report

Volume 25 Issue 10

Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

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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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Drought Watch Remains for 19 Counties, York County Moved to Drought Warning

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced after a meeting of the Commonwealth Drought Task Force that Drought Watch will continue for 19 counties with York County

moved to Drought Warning.

Adams, Berks, Bucks, Cameron, Chester, Clarion, Cumberland, Dauphin, Fayette, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Perry, and Venango counties re-

main on drought watch. York County will be moved to Drought Warning to support the efforts of water suppliers and their customers to conserve water.

For a [map of drought declarations](#) updated daily, see the DEP (continued on page 2)

EPA Announces Selection of Charter Members to the Science Advisory Board and the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Michael S. Regan announced his selections for membership of the Science Advisory Board (SAB) and

Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC). The well-qualified experts selected by Administrator Regan bring a cross-selection of scientific disciplines and the experience needed to provide sound scientific advice to EPA leadership to help advance

the agency's mission.

"Everything we do at EPA must be grounded in the latest and best available science, adhering to the highest standard of scientific integrity,"

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Drought Watch Remains for 19 Counties, York County Moved to Drought Warning (continued)

Residents on drought warning are asked to reduce their individual water use by 10 to 15%, or a reduction of six to nine gallons of water per day.

Varying localized conditions may lead water suppliers or municipalities to ask residents for more stringent conservation actions. See the [list of public water suppliers](#) that have requested or mandated water conservation in their communities.

Ways to Conserve Water at Home

There are many ways to conserve water at home, including:

Run the dishwasher and washing machine less often, and only with full loads.

Shorten the time you let the water run to warm up before showering and take shorter showers. The shower and toilet are the two biggest indoor water guzzlers.

Check for and repair household leaks. For example, a leaking toilet can waste up to 200 gallons of water daily.

Install low-flow plumbing fixtures and aerators on faucets.

Replace older appliances with high-efficiency, front-loading models that use about 30% less water and 40-50% less energy.

You can find more tips on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [website](#).

How DEP Determines Drought Conditions

DEP assesses four indicators from data and information provided by public water suppliers: precipitation, surface water (stream and river) flow, groundwater level, and soil moisture.

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Drought Watch Remains for 19 Counties, York County Moved to Drought Warning (continued)

The DEP Drought Coordinator monitors the indicators in close partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), which maintains gauges in streams and wells in many locations across Pennsylvania.

There are normal ranges for all four indicators. DEP makes drought status recommendations after assessing departures from these ranges for all indicators for periods of 3-12 months. See the [USGS Pennsylvania drought condition monitoring website](#) for a map that's updated daily to show the status of all four indicators for each county.

DEP shares these data and its recommendations with the state and federal agencies and other organizations that make up the Commonwealth Drought Task Force. Declarations are determined by DEP, with the concurrence of the task force.

For more information on how DEP monitors conditions and makes drought status declarations, see the [drought management fact sheet](#).

For more information, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's [website](#).

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

EPA Announces Selection of Charter Members to the Science Advisory Board and the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (continued)

said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan. “The Science Advisory Board and the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee will ensure that EPA continues to receive sound, independent science-based advice. I want to thank those members leaving SAB and CASAC for their outstanding service and welcome the newest members that will apply their widely-respected and trusted expertise to our work to protect public health and our environment.”

The membership solicitation process resulted in 115 nominations for the SAB and eight CASAC nominations to fill the required slot for a member representing State air pollution control agencies. All candidates were evaluated by the Science Advisory Board Staff Office (SABSO) and recommendations were given by SABSO to the Administrator for him to consider for his selections.

EPA also announced today that Dr. Kimberly L. Jones, Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Howard University, has been named chair of the Science Advisory Board. Dr. Jones is the first African-American Chair and first Chair to represent a historically black college or university.

“We were fortunate to have an outstanding group of nominees this year, resulting in the selection of high-caliber scientist and technical experts to join the SAB and CASAC,” **said Thomas Brennan, Director of the SABSO.**

New SAB Members

Chair of the SAB

Dr. Kimberly L. Jones - Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and Professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Howard University.

SAB Members with Dual Appointments to the Chemical Assessment Advisory Committee

Dr. John DiGiovanni - Professor in the Division of Pharmacology and Toxicology, College of Pharmacy at the University of Texas at Austin. He currently holds the Coulter R. Sublett Endowed Chair in Pharmacy. In addition, Dr. DiGiovanni is Director of the Center for Molecular Carcinogenesis and Toxicology and Associate Director for Basic Research in the LiveSTRONG Cancer Institute, Dell Medical School at the University of Texas at Austin.

Dr. Rebecca Fry - Distinguished Professor in the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Dr. Fry is also the Carol Remmer Angle Distinguished Professor in Children’s Environmental Health.

Dr. Douglas C. Wolf, D.V.M, Ph.D. - Senior Fellow, Syngenta

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EPA Announces Selection of Charter Members to the Science Advisory Board and the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (continued)

SAB Member with Dual Appointment to the Economic Analysis Committee

Dr. Maximilian Auffhammer - George Pardee Jr. Professor of International Sustainable Development, the Regional Associate Dean in the College of Letters and Science, and the Vice-Chair of the Academic Senate at UC Berkeley.

SAB Member with Dual Appointment to the Environmental Justice Science Committee

Dr. Veronica J. Berrocal - Professor in the Department of Statistics at the University of California Irvine (UCI).

Additional SAB Member

Dr. Yiliang Zhu - Professor and Chief in the Division of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Preventive Medicine University of New Mexico School of Medicine.

New CASAC Member

Mr. Henry (Dirk) Felton - New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)

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

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

DEP To Conduct Air Monitoring Near Mining Project in Western Schuylkill County

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is conducting an air monitoring study near an active mine reclamation project in Western Schuylkill County to evaluate particulate matter in the air. The study will evaluate air quality in the vicinity of the Rausch Creek Generation facility in response to concerns by residents over fly ash, as well as other material generated by excavation and remediation work near the site. A portion of the study site is located in an Environmental Justice (EJ) Area and is subject to enhanced public participation.

“The Department is committed to being transparent with residents about what is in the air they breathe and how we monitor any contaminants that are present near their homes,” said **DEP Secretary Rich Negrin**. “We have made environmental justice a priority in this Administration and the Department will continue to engage with residents in Schuylkill County as we conduct this critically important air monitoring.”

The study will utilize dust fall jars set up at 4-5 separate locations in the area of Rausch Creek to collect 30 days’ worth of samples that will be evaluated for a period of 6 months to 1 year beginning in September 2023. The samples will be analyzed for insoluble materials and then microscopically evaluated to identify the specific particulate collected and where it may have originated. The results will be evaluated against the state-wide air quality standard for settled particulate matter which is 43 T/ MI²/M (tons per square mile/per month).

Because a portion of the area near the facility is considered an EJ area, the Department’s recently adopted EJ Policy calls for enhanced public participation processes – and residents in the local communities requested that the DEP conduct this study. The local communities impacted by the study include: Frailey Township, Porter Township, Tremont Township, Tremont Borough and Good Springs and Donaldson areas.

The Department’s Pottsville District Mining Office is currently reviewing three permit applications by Rausch Creek Land, L.P. to reclaim three sites in Tremont, Hegins and Porter Townships. The work proposed includes strip mining activities with blasting, the reconfiguration of site boundaries and construction of roadways. Rausch Creek is currently approved for coal ash placement, and no proposed changes are under review.

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DEP To Conduct Air Monitoring Near Mining Project in Western Schuylkill County (continued)

The air monitoring study is expected to be complete in 2024. DEP will publish the results at that time and make them available to the public.

For more information, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's [website](#).

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Joseph Minott, Long-Time Executive Director Of Clean Air Council, To Retire At End Of 2023

On October 4, the Philadelphia-based [Clean Air Council](#) announced the retirement of its long-time executive director, Joseph Otis Minott, Esq.

After an accomplished tenure as one of the region's foremost environmentalists, Minott will step down as the Council's leader and chief counsel on December 31, 2023.

Minott joined the Council as a staff attorney in 1982 and has served as the organization's executive director and lead attorney for more than 35 years.

In that time, the Council has achieved precedent-setting legal, policy, and community organizing victories.

Fighting for everyone's right to clean air and a healthy environment, it has grown to become one of Pennsylvania's largest environmental organizations.

"Joe has dedicated his career to the vision and mission of the Clean Air Council. Under his guidance, the Council has been a leading advocate and watchdog organization on pollution, climate, and health issues that affect our communities and the global environment," says Russ Allen, the Council's board president. "Residents and communities of the region have benefited from Joe's expertise. His work has had widespread, national influence."

For more than four decades, Minott has been a dedicated and passionate advocate for the environment and public health.

He led a growing staff of lawyers, organizers, and policy experts in advocating for clean air, clean water, and climate action.

Over the years, Minott's work earned him and the organization a reputation for not being afraid to hold government agencies and fossil fuel companies accountable.

Under Minott's leadership, the Council has been successful in influencing numerous policies and decisions related to protecting air quality and public health while promoting climate solutions and environmental justice.

"It's been an absolute honor to grow this organization and lead this talented staff of advocates and to fight alongside them for people's right to clean air and a healthy environment," says Minott. "Climate change is the most critical issue of our time, and I will continue to support the growing movement calling for climate action."

Visit the [Clean Air Council website](#) for more information on programs, initiatives, upcoming events and how you can get involved.

Source: PA Environment Digest

Shapiro Administration Awarded \$1 Million To Provide Technical Assistance For Large Scale Storage And Regional Carbon Management Hubs

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn announced that the department was awarded \$1 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management (FECM) to provide locally-tailored technical assistance and enhanced stakeholder engagement around carbon management technologies.

Governor Josh Shapiro and his Administration believe that we must reject the false choice between growing our economy and protecting the planet -- we can do both. Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage (CCUS) is one of the tools the Commonwealth is exploring to offset carbon use and mitigate the effects of climate change.

"This funding is critical in furthering efforts to manage carbon capture efforts in Pennsylvania and the Appalachian region," **DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn said.** "DCNR is proud to have one of the 16 projects selected to help advance work in the carbon capture space. Work to reduce the effects of climate change is key in preserving our natural resources for future generations."

The Pennsylvania Geological Survey (PAGS) within DCNR is partnering with the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey (WVGES) and Battelle Memorial Institute to accelerate the deployment of carbon management in Pennsylvania and West Virginia by reducing barriers to entry to carbon storage project opportunities.

The project will develop a conceptual geologic model of the [Rome trough area \(PDF\)](#) in the Central Appalachian basin, focusing on a first, second and third mile-plus understanding of the subsurface, which will help inform future carbon capture efforts.

Other expected outcomes include:

- Building on current collaborative relationships and the regional knowledge base resulting from two decades of regional characterization efforts with DOE and
- Framing and focus efforts to address data needs not currently being tackled through other proposed efforts for the greater Appalachian region;
- Aggregating the most pertinent geologic and geospatial datasets to construct a free, public-facing Web-Based Tool with comprehensive datasets and information needed to inform UIC injection permitting efforts. No such tool is currently available for Pennsylvania or West Virginia.

Funding for the project will also support three interns from underserved communities within the study region, as well as public outreach and stakeholder engagement on carbon capture resources in the Commonwealth.

"Our goal is to ensure the communities within the region have the necessary information and data to better understand how carbon capture utilization and storage projects provide benefits, both environmentally and through creating new workforce opportunities," **State Geologist Gale Blackmer said.** "We remain committed to being positive stewards of our natural resources and implementing a portfolio of technical approaches to address carbon emissions from power, industry, and other sectors of the economy."

DCNR is dedicated to supporting responsible development of carbon capture resources in the Commonwealth. The agency announced it is seeking a new \$6 million cores storage facility for the state's collection of subsurface core samples and drill cuttings, which are critical tools for understanding how Pennsylvania's geology would be able to support carbon capture and sequestration efforts.

The mission of the [DCNR Bureau of Geological Survey](#) is to research the state's geologic resources and topography; map the surface and underground rocks and geologic structures across the state; and make their findings available through publications and outreach.

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Shapiro Administration Awarded \$1 Million To Provide Technical Assistance For Large Scale Storage And Regional Carbon Management Hubs (continued)

DCNR has been engaged on the topic of carbon capture utilization and storage for nearly 20 years. During this time, work by the Geological Survey to further understanding of the state's geologic resources has included:

- Assessments of numerous underground geologic resources that have potential to serve as reservoirs where carbon dioxide could be safely stored;
- Case study evaluations of existing oil fields where CO₂-enhanced recovery efforts may be employed; and
- Participation in multi-state coalitions to guide seamless consideration of geologic storage options across state lines and throughout the Appalachian and Mid-Atlantic region of the United States.

Source: Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$330 Million WIFIA Loan to Reduce Air Emissions from Wastewater Treatment Plants in Missouri

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan totaling \$330 million to the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District (MSD Project Clear) in Missouri. This funding will help reduce air emissions by 90%, support energy efficiency, and meet regulatory compliance by constructing new biosolids processing facilities. Since its creation, EPA's WIFIA program has announced \$19 billion in financing to support 112 projects totaling over \$40 billion that are strengthening drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure while creating over 60,000 jobs.

"The Biden-Harris Administration continues to make historic investments in upgrading America's critical local water infrastructure," said **EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "With these unprecedented resources, Missouri's MSD Project Clear has the federal support it needs to reduce air emissions, protect a vital water resource, and create jobs in St. Louis."

The MSD Project Clear Solids Management Upgrades project will reduce air emissions and ensure continued compliance with regulations. While MSD Project Clear's existing biosolids treatment facilities, built in the 1970s, continue to meet or exceed all air quality standards, they rely on outdated technology. With EPA's WIFIA loan, newly constructed biosolids processing facilities will have emissions controls that drastically reduce pollutants and air emissions by 90% using modern, energy-efficient equipment that requires less fuel to operate. MSD Project Clear will also construct odor control systems to reduce the impact of unpleasant smells on neighboring communities with environmental justice concerns.

"The Solids Management Upgrades project is about more than infrastructure improvements – it's a long-term investment in the health and well-being of our community," said **Brian Hoelscher, MSD Project Clear Executive Director & CEO**. "WIFIA's cost-effective loans are one way we are able to complete these vital improvements while upholding our commitment to be good stewards of public funds."

MSD Project Clear will save approximately \$86 million by financing with a WIFIA loan. Investing in their infrastructure will create approximately 3,000 jobs.

Learn more about EPA's [WIFIA Program](#) and water infrastructure investments under the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#).

Background

Established by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, the [WIFIA program](#) is a federal loan program administered by EPA. The WIFIA program's aim is to accelerate investment in the nation's water infrastructure by providing long-term,

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Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$330 Million WIFIA Loan to Reduce Air Emissions from Wastewater Treatment Plants in Missouri (continued)

low-cost supplemental credit assistance for regionally and nationally significant projects. The WIFIA program has an active pipeline of pending applications for projects that will result in billions of dollars in water infrastructure investment and thousands of jobs.

EPA recently made the 7th round of WIFIA financing available and is currently accepting letters of interest for WIFIA and SWIFIA loans. A available through WIFIA, and \$1 billion is available through SWIFIA, which is a loan program exclusively for State infrastructure financing authority borrowers. EPA is currently accepting letters of interest for WIFIA and SWIFIA loans. Learn more about [submitting a letter of interest for a WIFIA loan](#).

In addition to WIFIA loans, there are many federal funding resources available for communities and utilities to improve vital water and wastewater resources. President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is a once-in-a-generation investment in our nation's infrastructure and competitiveness. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a historic \$50 billion investment in upgrading critical water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure.

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

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

Shapiro Administration Awards \$38.76 Million in Grants for Environmental Restoration Projects

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced \$38.76 million in funding for six environmental restoration projects of abandoned mine lands in the first of three rounds of the 2023 [Abandoned Mine Lands and Acid Mine Drainage \(AML/AMD\) Grant Program](#). These projects focus on reclaiming abandoned mine land, decreasing abandoned mine drainage, and treating AMD through the construction, operation, and/or maintenance of an AMD treatment facility.

The AML/AMD Grant Program began in the fall of 2022 as a single round with three application rounds planned for 2023 and at least \$96 million in funding available through the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

The program prioritizes serious human health and safety problems that are a result of abandoned coal mines, as well as treating AMD to continue restoration efforts under the AMD Set-Aside Program. By focusing on operation and maintenance needs or upgrades of AMD treatment systems, the program helps to prevent the loss of restored streams and creates significant water quality improvements that go toward watershed restoration.

The following projects will be awarded under the 2023 AML/AMD Grant Program:

Cambria County:

North Portage (Little Conemaugh) AMDTP Design (GA) - A reimbursable grant to design and implement Phase I of the Little Conemaugh AMD Treatment Facility as recommended in the Super 7 Report and the Little Conemaugh HUP. The Sonman and Hughes, pre-1977, mine discharges will be addressed in Phase 1.

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Shapiro Administration Awards \$38.76 Million in Grants for Environmental Restoration Projects (continued)

Krayn (GA) - A reimbursable grant to design and permit the removal and reclamation of a large refuse pile and haul road, along with the demolition of five abandoned structures and the reclamation of two clogged stream areas caused by a pre-1930s era abandoned coal mining operation.

Lackawanna County:

Century Logistics Center (GA) - A reimbursable grant to remove mine spoil piles, backfill abandoned coal mine pits, and excavate dangerous highwalls. The Clark underground mine complex will be excavated and backfilled to achieve a final contour to support the future construction of the Century Logistics Center.

Luzerne County:

Nanticoke Creek Watershed Restoration (GA) – A reimbursable grant to reclaim nearly 15,000 linear feet of channel. Natural stream design best management practices will be used.

Northumberland County:

Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area Waterline (GA) – A reimbursable grant to construct a waterline to provide adequate water quantity and quality to Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area an all-terrain vehicle recreational area.

Somerset County:

Shade Creek - Central City Development (GA) – A reimbursable grant to complete an Active Treatment Plant Development Plan for five AMD discharges impacting Shade Creek to include the collection of historical water quality and flows, mine pool mapping, mine pool drilling and monitoring, plant site selection, discharge conveyance plan, estimated design and construction costs, and a sludge disposal plan.

Shapiro Administration Awards \$38.76 Million in Grants for Environmental Restoration Projects (continued)

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, please visit the [website](#).

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Shapiro Administration Invests \$52.5 Million In Recreation And Conservation Projects Across The Commonwealth

As part of the investment, the City of Bethlehem will receive \$500,000 to connect the South Bethlehem Greenway to the Saucon Rail Trail and create 14 miles of contiguous trail in the Lehigh Valley region

In the 2023-24 bipartisan budget, Governor Shapiro advocated for \$112 million to improve state parks and forests, spur economic growth in the outdoor recreation industry, and make Pennsylvania the largest state to open an Office of Outdoor Recreation

In Bethlehem, Governor Josh Shapiro and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DNCR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn announced a \$52.5 million investment for more than 225 recreation and conservation projects across Pennsylvania that will create new recreational opportunities, conserve natural resources, and help revitalize local communities.

“Our Commonwealth has incredible outdoor spaces – and for me, there’s no better place to be than on a Pennsylvania trail. So today, I’m proud to announce that the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, led by Secretary Cindy Dunn, has awarded more than \$52 million to over 225 local projects across the Commonwealth that will help communities like Bethlehem connect more trails, improve more parks, and help more Pennsylvanians just enjoy their time outside,” **said Governor Josh Shapiro**. “Our local parks and natural spaces are hometown treasures in our neighborhoods -- in urban cities and rural towns alike. Communities across Pennsylvania should know that my Administration is ready to work with you to protect and invest in your local treasures.”

Investments are being made in a variety of proposals, including:

- 23 trail projects
- Protecting nearly 6,835 acres of open space
- 13 projects for river conservation
- 13 community and watershed forestry projects
- 99 projects to develop or rehabilitate recreation, park and conservation areas and facilities

[DCNR recently announced nearly \\$1.4 million in funding](#) for 10 ATV and snowmobile facilities and trails projects.

Visit the DCNR website for a [complete list of grants awarded by county \(PDF\)](#).

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Shapiro Administration Invests \$52.5 Million In Recreation And Conservation Projects Across The Commonwealth (continued)

“These projects will fund critical improvements to local parks, river access and trails across the Commonwealth, which will bring outdoor recreation amenities closer to home and improve access in our communities,” **DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn said**. “We are here today in Bethlehem to highlight the importance of trails in DCNR’s strategic goals. Trails boost quality of life, and the role trails play as connectors is key in increasing Pennsylvania’s economic competitiveness. I thank the City of Bethlehem for prioritizing access to trails and being an example that investing in trails is key in spurring revitalization efforts and economic growth in our communities.”

As part of this investment, Bethlehem is receiving a \$500,000 grant to help with land acquisition that will connect the South Bethlehem Greenway to the Saucon Rail Trail.

This connection would create 14 miles of contiguous trail in the region and close one of the state’s [Top 10 Trail Gaps](#), while also improving a [robust trail network](#) in the Lehigh Valley.

“The South Bethlehem Greenway is a meeting place on the southside where people frequently walk, run, bike, and come together as a community,” **said Bethlehem Mayor J. William Reynolds**. “Investments in recreation and conservation projects of these types are key in improving the city for residents and as a destination for visitors. We thank DCNR for continued support of this project and our park revitalization efforts in the city.”

DCNR has closed five major trail gaps since identifying its Top 10 Trail Gaps in 2014. Two have been added by the [Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee](#), which assess trail needs based on the agency’s list of [priority trail gaps](#).

DCNR’s [Top 10 Trail Gaps](#) and priority trail gaps list were developed to prioritize strategic investments.

“It’s thanks to strong local, state, and federal collaboration that we’ll close the trail’s gap and get this important project done—and with it, grow our economy and foster community right here in our backyards,” **said Congresswoman Susan Wild (PA-07)**. “I’m very proud to have secured a \$2.7 million federal investment in the Bethlehem Greenway Trail, and I’ll continue to work alongside the Commonwealth and the City of Bethlehem to make this resource a reality for our community.”

“The South Bethlehem Greenway has been a ribbon of connectivity in our community for 20 years,” **said Rep. Steve Samuelson**. “Thank you, Governor Shapiro, for this critical funding to enable the Greenway and the Saucon Rail Trail to connect for 20 miles.”

The grants are administered by the DCNR’s Bureau of [Recreation and Conservation and Community Conservation Partnerships Program \(C2P2\)](#).

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Shapiro Administration Invests \$52.5 Million In Recreation And Conservation Projects Across The Commonwealth (continued)

Funding comes from the Keystone Fund, which is generated from a portion of the realty transfer tax; the Environmental Stewardship Fund; the ATV/Snowmobile Fund generated through fees for licenses; and federal monies.

Pennsylvania's 124 state parks attract 40 million visitors annually, and outdoor recreation adds \$14 billion annually to Pennsylvania's economy and supports 150,000 jobs.

Governor Shapiro advocated for \$112 million in the 2023-24 budget to improve our parks and forests and create a new Office of Outdoor Recreation to connect Pennsylvania's natural resources and parks with local businesses and put Pennsylvania on the map as a leader in outdoor recreation.

For more information on the fall grant round or to apply, visit the DCNR [Grants Customer Service Portal](#). Visit DCNR's [website](#) for more information about the agency and check out DCNR's [Calendar of Events](#) for events on public lands.

Source: Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DNCR)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces Largest Ever Clean-up under EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to Address Milwaukee Area of Concern

Thanks to President Biden's Investing in America Agenda, new funding agreement between EPA and partners will invest an estimated \$450 million to cleanup of nearly two million cubic yards of contaminated sediments

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced funding for the largest cleanup project to ever be implemented under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the Great Lakes Legacy Act, thanks to historic resources from President Biden's Investing in America Agenda. Under a new project agreement between EPA and five non-federal sponsors, an estimated investment of \$450 million will go toward the cleanup of nearly two million cubic yards of contaminated sediments from the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern.

This long-awaited cleanup will greatly advance the environmental, community, and economic revitalization of Milwaukee-area communities and will help lead to the ultimate removal of the Milwaukee Estuary from the list of 25 remaining U.S. Areas of Concern (AOCs) — highly environmentally degraded areas found across the Great Lakes basin.

EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan announced this effort alongside U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (WI) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin at Discovery World, a science and technology museum on the shore of Lake Michigan. Administrator Regan and Senator Baldwin joined project partners, state and local officials, community leaders and students from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee's School of Freshwater Sciences for the event.

"President Biden's historic Investments in America continue to boost our efforts to restore and protect our treasured waters and the communities of the Great Lakes basin," **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan.** "Today, we're building on this progress to restore this economic engine with our partners in Wisconsin as we work to clean up the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern for good. Together, these investments will support cleanup of 610 Olympic-sized swimming pools of contaminated sediments from Milwaukee Harbor and the three rivers in the urban Milwaukee area."

"Protecting the Great Lakes is not just an environmental goal for Wisconsin communities, it's an economic imperative for the Badger State. I've been proud to support the Great Lake Restoration Initiative, which has transformed our fight to protect and restore our greatest freshwater resources, accelerating cleanup efforts to reverse decades of legacy pollution," **said Senator Tammy Baldwin.** "Today's funding announcement puts us on a path to expedite cleaning up the Milwaukee Estuary, ensuring that generations to come can reap the health, economic, and environmental benefits of a safer, more sustainable Lake Michigan watershed."

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Biden-Harris Administration Announces Largest Ever Clean-up under EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to Address Milwaukee Area of Concern (continued)

“Every Wisconsinite deserves access to safe, clean drinking water, but for far too long communities that surround the Milwaukee Estuary have been impacted by water pollutants and dangerous contaminants,” **said Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers.** “This groundbreaking \$450 million investment from the Biden Administration will accelerate our efforts to remediate the Milwaukee Estuary so we can remove it from the list of Areas of Concern, revitalize the local economy, and ensure clean water for Milwaukee and the greater region.”

“With this important funding through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative - an effort I have long championed - President Biden's Investing in America agenda is helping make Milwaukee a better place to live, work, and visit,” **said Congresswoman Gwen Moore.** “Nearly four decades after being designated as an Area of Concern, the EPA and local stakeholders can now move forward to permanently address this public health threat, protect Lake Michigan, and again allow Milwaukeeans and visitors to our city to enjoy these waters.”

The new project agreement reflects a partnership between EPA and five non-federal sponsors, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, We Energies, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the City of Milwaukee, and Milwaukee County Parks, to complete the cleanup of harbor and river sediments contaminated with PCBs, petroleum compounds, and heavy metals, including mercury, lead and chromium, in the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern. These five partners will contribute more than \$170 million to implement the project — the largest non-federal sponsor contribution to a Great Lakes Legacy Act cleanup. EPA will contribute an estimated \$275 million in funds from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to cover the approximately \$450 million project, with final project cost estimates to be determined following the bidding and procurement process.

“This is a once in a generation opportunity to remove contamination that has gone un-addressed for more than 150 years,” **said EPA Region 5 Administrator and Great Lakes National Program Manager Debra Shore.** “By cleaning and opening up this waterway, EPA and our partners will restore ecosystems, increase opportunities for recreation and community and economic revitalization.”

Many decades of industrial activity throughout this predominantly urbanized watershed have resulted in significant pollution accumulation in the Milwaukee Estuary AOC, especially in sediments found at the bottom of Milwaukee harbor and the Milwaukee, Menomonee, and Kinnickinnic Rivers. Addressing these contaminated sediments will lead to improved water quality, healthier fish and wildlife, and improved recreational opportunities, in addition to community revitalization.

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Biden-Harris Administration Announces Largest Ever Clean-up under EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to Address Milwaukee Area of Concern (continued)

In February 2022, President Biden and EPA Administrator Regan announced a [\\$1 billion investment](#) from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to significantly accelerate cleanup and restoration of the Great Lakes. EPA projected that the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding, combined with funds from annual Great Lakes Restoration Initiative appropriations and funding from other sources will enable the agency and its partners to bring work to completion at 22 of the 25 remaining AOCs, with Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding directly supporting 11 of these sites, including the Milwaukee Estuary AOC.

Here's what our partners are saying about this historic agreement:

"The State of Wisconsin is thrilled that all five project partners have signed the historic Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern (AOC) project agreement. To help address the extensive contamination in the area, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Environmental Protection Agency, together with over 20 partner organizations, formed the Waterway Restoration Partnership. I am grateful for their collaboration and am encouraged that the historical investments by the partners will result in a cleaner environment for all future generations to enjoy in Milwaukee," **said Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Secretary Adam N. Payne.**

"The City of Milwaukee is extremely proud to collaborate with our partners at the US EPA," **said Mayor Cavalier Johnson.** "The cooperation between Federal, State, and local partners is unprecedented and will lead to cleaner beaches, restored habitat, and contamination being removed from our waterways. The goal of swimmable and fishable waterways in our sights."

"Milwaukee County Parks is excited to continue our successful GLLA partnership as we enter the next phases of this landmark clean-up effort," **said Guy Smith, Executive Director of Milwaukee County Parks.** "Remediation will improve over 30 acres of floodplain and support the larger effort to restore habitat and delist the Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern. This work will help ensure safe enjoyment of our waterways and parkland within the Milwaukee River Greenway, one the most loved and highly used recreational areas in the County!"

"Today's announcement is historic and shows action by President Biden to protect public health, provide jobs, and help protect Lake Michigan," **said Kevin Shafer, Executive Director of Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District.** "Now that hard work begins by removing contaminated sediments, improving habitat, and making the Milwaukee region a safer, cleaner place to live. We owe many people our warmest and sincere gratitude for getting us this far. We will deliver!"

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Biden-Harris Administration Announces Largest Ever Clean-up under EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative to Address Milwaukee Area of Concern (continued)

"We are pleased to support this historic effort to clean up the Milwaukee Estuary. Our work to remediate nearly 45,000 cubic yards of impacted sediment from the bottom of the Milwaukee River is an important first step in restoring our waterways," **said Liz Stueck-Mullane, WEC Energy Group Vice President.** "This coalition is making a positive impact and our participation is a part of our commitment to a bright, sustainable future."

"THE WORK TO CLEAN UP OUR WATERWAYS IS COMPLICATED BUT IMPORTANT. This funding will provide the much needed funding and leverage to change the course of history," **said David Frazer, a member of the Community Advisory Council.** "As a small group who serves as the voice of the community in the process of cleaning up Milwaukee's Area of Concern, we are looking forward to continuing to create and facilitate conversation between the community and the regulatory authorities in charge of completing this work, ensuring the community's concerns and ideas are recognized and prioritized going forward."

Learn more information about the [Milwaukee Estuary Area of Concern](#).

Learn more information about the [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#).

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

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

EPA Honors Home Builders and Raters for Providing Healthier Indoor Air

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is recognizing 10 home builders and four home raters with the [2023 Indoor airPLUS Leader Awards](#). These annual awards celebrate market-leading organizations that champion safer, healthier and more comfortable indoor environments through participation in and promotion of the Indoor airPLUS program, which offers enhanced indoor air quality protections to new home buyers.

In addition, EPA has selected two [Indoor airPLUS](#) partners to receive the Leader of the Year Award for their outstanding commitment and program performance. The 2023 Leaders of the Year are **Beazer Homes** in the builder category and **EnergyLogic Inc.** in the rater category.

“Congratulations to all 14 of the 2023 Indoor airPLUS Leader Award winners,” said **Joseph Goffman, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator of EPA's Office of Air and Radiation**. “Thanks to their hard work and dedication, every Indoor airPLUS home built and certified delivers a healthier living environment and fosters healthier communities from the inside out. Because of their achievements, more Americans can look forward to breathing easier in healthy, energy-efficient, and comfortable homes.”

The 2023 Indoor airPLUS Leader of the Year Award winners are:

Builder: Beazer Homes' dedication to the Indoor airPLUS program is evident across its building and marketing processes. Beazer offers educational videos on Indoor airPLUS, empowering homeowners and builders with valuable insights into creating healthier living environments. EPA is impressed by how Beazer puts energy efficiency and improved indoor air quality at the forefront of its mission.

Rater: EnergyLogic Inc. of Berthoud, Colorado, emphasizes air quality education, equipping homeowners and builders with knowledge to ensure superior indoor environments. Its dedication extends to providing innovative air quality solutions tailored to the unique challenges faced in Colorado, reaffirming its role as a trusted partner in enhancing indoor air quality for all.

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EPA Honors Home Builders and Raters for Providing Healthier Indoor Air (continued)

The 2023 Indoor airPLUS Leader Award winners are:

Builders:

Beazer Homes, National

C&B Custom Homes, Inc., Cottonwood, AZ

Charis Homes, LLC, North Canton, OH

Fulton Homes, Tempe, AZ

Mandalay Homes, Prescott, AZ

Markel Homes, Boulder, CO

Meritage Homes, National

Providence Homes, Jacksonville, FL

TC Legend Homes, Bellingham, WA

Thrive Home Builders, Denver, CO

Raters

EnergyLogic Inc., Berthoud, CO

Integral Building + Design, New Paltz, NY

JKP Energy Inspections, Gilbert, AZ

Steven Winter Associates, Inc., Norwalk, CT

Indoor airPLUS is a voluntary partnership and labeling program that helps new home builders improve the quality of indoor air and meet the growing consumer preference for homes with improved indoor air quality.

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EPA Honors Home Builders and Raters for Providing Healthier Indoor Air (continued)

Indoor airPLUS homes are healthier by design. These design approaches include mold and moisture control; radon resistance; pest management; improved heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning systems; proper combustion venting; healthier building materials; and homeowner education. Indoor airPLUS-labeled homes can reduce the likelihood of health problems like disease transmission, heart disease, cancer, asthma, allergies, respiratory issues, headaches and more.

Find more information on:

[Indoor airPLUS](#)

[Indoor airPLUS Leader Awards](#)

[Finding an Indoor airPLUS builder or rater in your area](#)

[Joining the Indoor airPLUS program](#)

For further information: EPA Press Office (presss@pa.gov)

Source: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency