

Issue #1,070 Harrisburg, PA February 3, 2025

PA Environment Digest Blog **Twitter Feed**

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Grants & Awards **LATEST NewsClips**

PA Environment Digest will not publish on any platform until Feb. 10.

101 New Stories - REAL Environmental & Conservation Leadership In PA

Here are 101 new stories in the ***PA Environment Digest*** about individuals, groups, local governments, farmers, businesses, watershed groups and many more working all across Pennsylvania to restore and protect the environment and show others the beauty that surrounds us.

Thank you for your leadership!

-- Gov. Shapiro Proposes 'Lightning' Energy Plan To Increase & Diversify Energy Generation; Reduce Climate Changing Pollution; Lower Energy Costs; Create Jobs [PaEN]
-- Gov. Shapiro: What Industry Leaders, Lawmakers, Consumer Advocates Are Saying About The Governor's Commonsense Energy Plan
-- Gov. Shapiro Reaches Agreement With PJM To Prevent Unnecessary Price Hikes And Save Consumers Over $21 Billion On Utility Bills [PaEN]
-- 30 Stakeholder Comments Received By PUC On Adequacy Of Electricity Supplies In Pennsylvania; Increasing Natural Gas Power Plant Reliability To 90-95% Would Mean No Imminent Capacity Problem [PaEN]

-- PA Senate Republicans Reintroduce Bills To Eliminate State Appeals Of Pipeline Permits; Limit Grounds For Appeal Of Any DEP Permits; Punish Communities For Protecting Their Constituents Against Shale Gas Drilling Impacts [PaEN] [A Warning]
-- PA Republican Senator To Introduce Bill Suspending State Taxes On Natural Gas Producers; Cut DEP Permit Fees; End Drilling Moratorium On DCNR Lands; Exempt Coal-Fired Power

Plants From EPA Regulations [PaEN] [A Warning]
-- Senate Republicans Pass Bill Authorizing An Authority To Take Over Permitting Large-Scale Energy Projects; Eliminating Public Comment; Waiving Any Regulation; Providing Immunity From Prosecution; Barbers Reviewing Permits? [PaEN - 2024] [A Warning]
-- Republicans On PA Senate Environmental Committee Report Out Bills To Eliminate Carbon Pollution Reduction Program Covering Power Plants, Establish Independent Energy Office [PaEN] [A Warning]

-- PA Senate Republican Leader: 'Every Consumer Of Electricity In This Commonwealth Is Going To Pay More;' 'What You're Going To Face Is Going To Be Really Unpleasant' [PaEN] [A Warning]
-- PA House Republicans Introduce Bill Creating An Energy Advocate With Power To Veto Any Action By Any State Agency That Harms Energy Reliability, Affordability [PaEN- 2024] [A Warning]
-- PA House Republicans Announce Energy Package, Including An Energy Advocate Within DEP To Veto Any Action That Would Impact PA's Energy Portfolio And An Independent Energy Office With The Same Power [PaEN - 2024] [A Warning]
-- White House: President Launches Initiative To Eliminate 10 Regulations For Every New Regulation Issued; Cost Of New Regulations Must Be 'Significantly' Less Than Zero [PaEN] [A Warning]
-- WSJ: US Imposes 10% Tariff On Canadian Oil, Gas, 25% On Other Products [PDF of Article] [United Refining In Warren Uses 70,000 Barrels Of Canadian Oil A Day] [A Warning]

-- Range Resources And MarkWest Liberty Midstream File Legal Challenges To The 2,500 Foot Shale Gas Facility Setback Ordinance Adopted By Cecil Township, Washington County [PaEN]
-- The Energy Age Blog: Range Resources & MarkWest Liberty Midstream File Legal Challenges Against 2,500 Foot Shale Gas Setback Ordinance In Cecil Twp., Washington County
-- PUC: Calendar Year 2024 Act 13 Drilling Impact Fees To Remain Same As 2023; Dramatic Decline In Financial Support From Shale Gas Industry Continues [PaEN]
-- DEP Releases 2 Contracts For Bidding In Next Round Of Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging: 12 Wells In Kinzua State Park, McKean County, 18 Wells In Warren County [PaEN]
-- Rep. Vitali Introduces Bill To Restore DEP Authority To Increase Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging Bonds To Prevent Hundreds Of New Well Abandonments A Year [PaEN]

-- The Energy Age Blog: EQT Should Plug These Abandoned Conventional Wells In Peters Twp., Washington County Before Fracking From Mingo Well Pad
-- Conventional Oil & Gas Industry Compliance With 2022 DEP Methane Reduction Regulation Put On Hold Pending Outcome Of Litigation [PaEN]
-- DEP Invites Comments At March 5 Hearing On Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit For Hazleton Generation Natural Gas Power Plant In Luzerne County [PaEN]
-- Citizens Voice: Lawmakers Raise Concerns Over Proposed UGI Natural Gas Rate Hike
-- NYT: Oil, Gas Companies Embrace New President, But Not 'Drill, Baby, Drill' [No Plans To Increase Production Unless Prices Rise Significantly]

-- Inquirer: President Wants US To Be 'Leading' Producer Of Non-Fuel Minerals; Here's How

PA Could Help; Rare Earth Elements Could Be More Important Than Expansion Of Fracking [PDF of Article]
-- ABC27: Could Three Mile Island Restart Be At Risk Due To Federal Funding Freeze?
-- LancasterOnline: Activist Urges Lancaster County Commissioners To Fight Three Mile Island Opening
-- LancasterOnline: Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant Owner Defends Safety Record And Planning Of Restart
-- Reuters: Talen Goes To Court Over FERC's Amazon Co-Located Data Center Rejection

-- Pittsburgh Business Times: PennEnvironment Warns Of Environmental, Cost Impact Of A.I. Buildout
-- ABC27: Could Three Mile Island Restart Be At Risk Due To Federal Funding Freeze?
-- Reuters: Talen Goes To Court Over FERC's Amazon Co-Located Data Center Rejection
-- Beaver Times: Two Years Ago: Remember Norfolk Southern Train Derailment
-- The Allegheny Front: 2 Years After Norfolk Southern Train Derailment Some Residents Worry About Liver Disease

-- WESA: PA Cong. Deluzio Calls On Vance To Push Rail Safety On Eve Of Norfolk Southern Derailment Anniversary
-- TribLive: PA Cong. Deluzio Pushes Rail Safety Bill With Visit To Tarentum, Allegheny County
-- TribLive Editorial: Railway Safety Is Worth Congressional Action
-- TribLive/AP: Norfolk Southern And East Palestine Announce $22 Million Settlement After 2023 Derailment
-- Utility Dive: PA Cryptocurrency Miner Stronghold-Scrubgrass Reclamation To Pay $1.4 Million To Settle Charges It Violated PJM Market Rules

-- Commonwealth Financing Authority Announces $16 Million In Act 13 Funding For Watershed Restoration, Flood Mitigation, Recreation; Small Water & Sewer Application Period Opening [PaEN]
-- Appalachian Region Independent Power Producers Assn. Now Accepting Mine Reclamation Grant Applications [PaEN]
-- DEP Chesapeake Bay Healthy Waters Newsletter Highlights Nearly 16,700 BMPs In 2024; Grant Opportunities; County Clean Water Projects [PaEN]
-- Rodale Institute Accepting Applications For The Good Farmer Award [PaEN]
-- Sponsorship Opportunities Available For Penn State ACAP Ag Conservation Conference April 1-3 In Harrisburg [PaEN]

-- Save The Date! May 13-15 DCNR Watershed Forestry Summit [PaEN]
-- Lancaster Clean Water Partners News: Focus On Cover Crops; 75 Years Of Conservation; MS4 Stormwater Listening Session
-- Penn State Extension To Hold Feb. 21 In-Person Volunteer Live Staking Workshop In Cumberland County [PaEN]
-- Interfaith Partners For The Chesapeake Bay Hosts 3-Part Online Faithful Green Leaders Training Starting March 11 [PaEN]

-- Penn State Extension Water Cooler Talk Feb. 26 Quality Of PA Roadside Springs Webinar [PaEN]

-- Altoona Mirror: Rain Garden Projects Get Logan Township Approval In Blair
-- The Allegheny Front - Reid Frazier: Nearly $1 Million Federal Stormwater Climate Grant In Allegheny County Environmental Justice Communities
-- Reminder: Call For Presentations: Penn State Extension Dive Deeper Summit For Water Educators Sept. 25 In Harrisburg
-- Lehigh Valley Wildlands Conservancy Highlights Upcoming Programs; Stream Team Volunteer Training; Much More
-- Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Now Accepting Registrations For Summer Nature Camps For Students Grades 1-6

-- First Community Foundation Partnership: 90+ Scholarships Available For Students In Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Mifflin, Northumberland, Sullivan, Snyder, Tioga, Union Counties
-- Tribune-Democrat: Educator John Frederick Aims To Separate Fact From Fiction At Climate-Change Lecture In Cresson
-- TribLive: Conservative Group Objects To Slippery Rock University STEM Program's Minority Recruitment
-- DEP Announces Winners Of Student Radon Poster Contest, Encourages Pennsylvanians To Test For Radon [PaEN]
-- Environmental Health News: New Administration Withdraws Proposed Limits On PFAS 'Forever Chemicals' In Industrial Wastewater

-- Environmental Quality Board Invites Comments On 96 Stream Water Quality Redesignations In 29 Counties; Virtual Hearing March 13 [PaEN]
-- House Energy Committee To Hold Feb. 4 Hearing On Bill Establishing $156 Million Federally-Funded Solar For All Program [PaEN]
-- E&ENews/Politico: EPA Freezes Federal Solar For All Program Funding Until Further Notice [PA Was Due To Receive $156 Million]
-- 10 Government Entities In Centre County Approve Solar Energy Purchase Agreement To Save Local Taxpayers $4.4 Million Over 15 Years [PaEN]
-- Post-Gazette Guest Essay: Transformational Investments In Renewables, Energy Efficiency Are Designed To Lower Energy Costs For Pennsylvania Consumers - By Molly Parzen, Conservation Voters Of PA

-- Post-Gazette - Anya Litvak: Beech Hollow 215 MW Solar, 100MW Battery Energy Project On Waste Coal Pile In Washington County Has Been Abandoned Due To Uncertainties Over Reclamation Of Waste Pile
-- Inquirer: Escalating Demand And Diminished Supply Has Spiked PUC Concern About The Future Ability Of State's Electric Grid
-- Pennsylvania Solar Center Now Accepting Nominations For 2025 Lodestar Awards [PaEN]
-- Pittsburgh Business Times: GE Vernova Investing $10 Million In Findlay Twp. Facility, Will Create 270 Jobs To Support Solar Energy Battery Storage

-- Kleinman Center For Energy Policy Blog: Rising Toward A Cleaner Future: PA's Carbon Capture And Storage Ladder For Industrial Decarbonization

-- PittsburghUnionProgress.com: New Administration Order Canceling Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Leaves Some PA Sites In Limbo
-- PA Capital-Star: PA Senate Moves Bill To Reinstate Utility Cutoff Protections, But Disputes Remain
-- PUC PA OneCall Damage Prevention Committee Announced $240,575 In Penalties For Underground Utility Violations
-- DEP Proposes To Add Nockamixon TCE Contamination To PA Priority List Of Hazardous Sites, Starts Process To Cleanup Contamination At The Source
-- Courier Times: Nockamixon Superfund Site Added To DEP's Priority Cleanup List; Here's What Happens Next

-- Scranton Times: DEP To Assume Oversight Of Waverly Twp. Superfund Site In Lackawanna County
-- Post-Gazette: 2 Pittsburghers Pitched In To Help People Impacted By California Wildfires
-- MyChesCo.com: Chester County Reports Preservation Of Over 1,240 Acres In 2024
-- Republican Herald: Scout Reservation Land In Schuylkill County Now Permanently Protected
-- Beaver Times - Brian Whipkey: Hunters Gain Access To 2,000 More Acres Of State Game Lands

-- Apply Now! PA Master Naturalist Volunteer Spring Training Offered In Adams, Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Dauphin, Indiana, Montour, Philadelphia, Somerset Counties [PaEN]
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-- City & State PA: PA Tourism Marketing Efforts Get Long-Overdue Upgrade
-- York Daily Record: Lebanon DA Charged Both Snowmobilers With Animal Cruelty In Running Down Fox

-- PennLive: Lebanon County Man Charged With Animal Cruelty After Trying To Run Over A Fox With A Snowmobile; Unclear With 17-Year Also Involved Was Charged
-- York Daily Record: The Hellbender, PA's Official State Amphibian, Is Proposed For Endangered Species Status
-- Fish & Boat Commission Recruiting New Class Of Waterways Conservation Officer Trainees
-- Dept. Of Agriculture Confirms First 2025 Case Of Bird Flu In Domestic Poultry In Pennsylvania
-- Post-Gazette - Mary Ann Thomas: PA Confirms First 2025 Bird Flu Case In Commercial Chicken Flock

-- Chesapeake Bay Journal: Bird Flu Raises Concerns About Poultry, Wildfowl In Chesapeake Region
-- Bristol Twp. Environmental Advisory Committee Bird Town Spotlight: The American Bittern [PaEN]
-- Williamsport Sun: It's The Perfect Time Of Year For Some Winter Birding

Visit the PA Environment Digest website to learn more.

REAL Leadership:
-- 101 New Stories - REAL Environmental & Conservation Leadership In PA
-- 104 New Stories - REAL Environmental & Conservation Leadership In PA
-- 128 New Stories - REAL Environmental & Conservation Leadership In PA
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-- 5,895 Stories In 2024 - Environmental & Conservation Leadership In PA
-- 4,258 Stories In 2023 - Environmental & Conservation Leadership PA
-- 3,190 Stories In 2022 - Environmental & Conservation Leadership In PA
[Posted: February 1, 2025]

Stories You May Have Missed Last Week: PA Environment & Energy Articles & NewsClips By Topic

PA Environment Digest Puts Links To The Best Environment & Energy Articles and NewsClips From Last Week Here By Topic--



-- 2.3.25 - PA Environment Digest - All Articles & NewsClips From This Issue By Topic

Other Handy Groups Of Articles & NewsClips From This Week--

-- 101 New Stories - REAL Environmental & Conservation Leadership In PA [PaEN]

-- Environment & Energy Educational Opportunities For Students & Adults [PaEN]

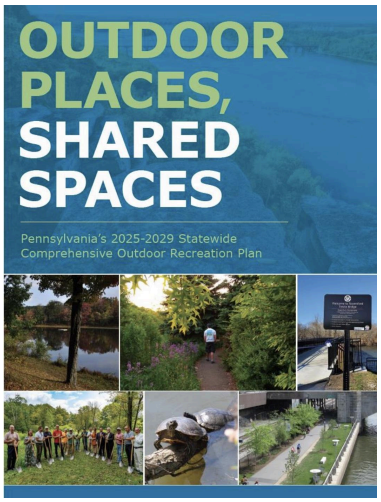
-- Top 10 Stories: Harrisburg/PA Politics Reported By Local News Media Last Week [PaEN]

Are You Telling Your Story? Send articles, comments to: PaEnviroDigest@gmail.com.

CLICK HERE to View or Print the February 3 PA Environment Digest.

[Posted: February 1, 2025]

DCNR Invites Public Comments To Help Shape A Bold Vision For Outdoor Recreation In PA; 5 Webinars Start Feb. 3



On January 31, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn announced a series of webinars and an open opportunity for people to share their thoughts on ways to improve and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation in Pennsylvania.

The public will be able to comment on a draft of the 2025-2029 Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) from February 3 through March 3.

An online public input form is available on DCNR's website, and webinars on the five priority areas for the 2025-2029 SCORP will be conducted during this period.

"This plan is critical for the future of outdoor recreation in Pennsylvania, and I encourage those interested to share perspectives to help us design more people-focused initiatives for the future," **Secretary Dunn said.** "Outdoor recreation delivers huge benefits for all of us – from driving local economies, to helping us lead healthy, active lifestyles. We all need outdoor recreation in our lives, and this plan makes recommendations on how we can make it accessible to everyone."

Webinar Dates

Priority areas in the five-year plan and their related webinar dates will be held from Noon to 12:30 p.m.--

-- **February 3:** Promoting Community and Economic Development – Click Here to Register
-- **February 5:** Advancing Health and Wellness – Click Here to Register
-- **February 10:** Supporting Equity and Inclusion – Click Here to Register
-- **February 12:** Addressing Infrastructure and Maintenance – Click Here to Register
-- **February 18:** Progressing on Sustainability and Climate Change – Click Here to Register

Background

There were multiple surveys that informed the draft plan, including a Penn State Lion Poll from a web-panel survey of more than 1,000 adult Pennsylvanians, a public survey, and a recreation providers survey.

One of the key findings — out of more than 8,000 responses — revealed Pennsylvanians' strong connection between outdoor recreation and mental well-being.

Every five years, states must develop a comprehensive outdoor recreation plan to guide

policies, programs, and investments while remaining eligible for federal funding.

SCORP enables Pennsylvania to remain eligible for federal grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which has provided more than $216 million since 1965 to fund projects including: parks and historic sites; forest, river, and wildlife habitat conservation; and access to recreation, hunting, and fishing.

The 2020-24 SCORP Plan – Recreation for All – focused on 20 recommendations and 70 action steps for meeting the outdoor recreation needs of all Pennsylvanians.

Pennsylvania's outdoor recreation industry contributes $19 billion to the Commonwealth's economy, represents 2 percent of its GDP, and supports more than 68,000 jobs that provide $9 billion in wages and salaries.

Visit DCNR's PA Outdoor Recreation Plan webpage to learn more about Pennsylvania's Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Click Here for DCNR's announcement.

Visit Explore PA Trails and Get Outdoors PA for recreation areas near you.

Visit the PA Parks & Forests Foundation's Events webpage and DCNR's Calendar of Events for activities happening near you.

For more information on state parks and forests and recreation in Pennsylvania, visit DCNR's website.

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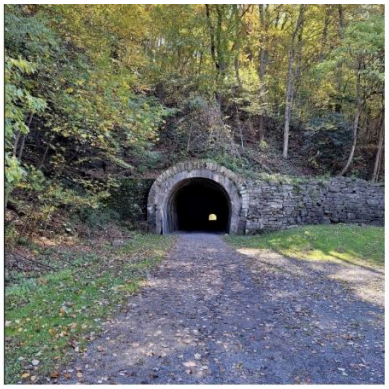
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[Posted: January 31, 2025]

DCNR: Path Of The Flood Trail In Cambria County Named 2025 Pennsylvania Trail Of The Year






On January 30, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources announced the Path of the Flood Trail in Cambria County, a 14-mile journey through history and nature, has been named Pennsylvania's 2025 Trail of the Year.

Tracing the historic route of the devastating 1889 Johnstown Flood, this scenic trail attracts visitors from across the globe with its blend of natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and historical landmarks, including the first railroad tunnel in the United States—the Staple Bend Tunnel.

"In naming the Path of the Flood Trail as the 2025 Trail of the Year, we honor its unique role in preserving history while providing a vibrant space for recreation and community engagement," **said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn**. "This trail is a destination, inviting visitors from across the nation and the world to experience the history of the 1889 Johnstown Flood while enjoying outdoor activities in a stunning natural setting. We hope this designation will bring even more visitors to explore the trail, supporting local businesses and fostering economic, environmental, and social benefits for the region."

The Path of the Flood Trail is composed of crushed stone and pavement, making it accessible for a variety of activities, including biking, hiking, running, birdwatching, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing.

Its historical significance is further elevated by its inclusion in the 9/11 Memorial Trail, a corridor connecting national sites of remembrance.

Development and maintenance of the trail are a collaborative effort led by the Cambria County Conservation & Recreation Authority (CCCRA) and the National Park Service, with support from local businesses and volunteers.

The trail attracts approximately 80,000 visitors annually, including international tourists, and has become an economic driver for the region, spurring the growth of new businesses and providing a platform for community events.

One such event, the Path of the Flood Historic Races, draws nearly 1,000 participants

each year, further boosting tourism and local engagement.

"The Path of the Flood Trail's recognition as Pennsylvania's 2025 Trail of the Year is a testament to the partnership between many individuals and organizations dedicated to preserving this rich, historical trail," **said Cliff Kitner, Executive Director of the CCCRA**. "We are honored and excited to continue sharing this unique journey with all who visit."

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee selects the Trail of the Year annually to raise awareness of the state's extensive trail network and its value to residents and visitors.

With more than 14,000 miles of trails, Pennsylvania continues to lead the nation in trail development.

DCNR's goal is to have a trail within 10 minutes of every Pennsylvanian, with significant investments being made to close priority trail gaps across the Commonwealth.

In the past two years, the Shapiro Administration has closed four of the state's Top 10 Trail Gaps.

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee is charged with implementing the recommendations of the Pennsylvania Trails Strategic Plan to develop a statewide land and water trail network to facilitate recreation, transportation, and healthy lifestyles for all.

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.

Visit the CCCRA webpage for more information about the trail.

Click Here for DCNR's announcement.

Visit Explore PA Trails and Get Outdoors PA for recreation areas near you.

Visit the PA Parks & Forests Foundation's Events webpage and DCNR's Calendar of Events for activities happening near you.

For more information on state parks and forests and recreation in Pennsylvania, visit DCNR's website.

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[Posted: January 30, 2025]

Range Resources And MarkWest Liberty Midstream File Legal Challenges To The 2,500 Foot Shale Gas Facility Setback Ordinance Adopted By Cecil Township, Washington County



On January 12, Cecil Township Supervisor Cindy Fisher announced in a Facebook post Range Resources Appalachia LLC and MarkWest Liberty Midstream have filed two different legal challenges to the shale gas facility setback ordinance adopted by the Township in November.

The ordinance establishes setbacks from shale gas well pads of 2,500 feet from homes and businesses as "protected structures" and 5,000 feet from schools and hospitals.

The 25-page ordinance also gives property owners the ability to waive the setback, however, all property owners within the 2,500 foot setback must agree to a waiver.

The setbacks for schools and hospitals cannot be waived under the ordinance.

Well pads must also be located not less than 1,000 feet from any residential lot line.

The ordinance also includes provisions requiring an environmental impact analysis to "describe, identify and analyze all environmental aspects of the site and of neighboring properties that may be affected by the proposed operations or the ultimate use proposed to be conducted on the site."

The ordinance also sets requirements for other oil and gas development facilities "which employ the use of compressors, motors or engines as part of the operations and/or produce air-contaminant emissions or offensive odors, subsurface facilities, including horizontal drilling

facilities, gathering system facilities and production facilities."

Click Here for a copy of the ordinance.

Click Here for a more detailed summary of the ordinance.

Range Resources Challenge

Range Resources Appalachia LLC, a shale gas drilling company active in the Township, filed a Substantive Validity Challenge to the ordinance that will be heard by the Township Zoning Hearing Board.

Click Here for a copy of the Range Resources Challenge.

The challenge is not based on a specific shale gas well pad or other development.

At a January 20 meeting of the Zoning Hearing Board on the Range challenge, an attorney for Range Resources summarized the challenge saying, "The challenge is a substantive validity challenge, and the question is merely whether or not the ordinance excludes oil and gas development within Cecil Township, or what we believe to be a legitimate use, which is the oil and gas development? That's full stop. That's it. It's a constitutional challenge, and whether someone is annoyed, has displeasure with regard to existing gas and well pads are really completely irrelevant."

Supervisor Fisher said in her Facebook post, "Range's claim is that our ordinance is "exclusionary". What is the definition of exclusionary - the use of zoning ordinances to exclude certain types of land uses from a given community."

She noted, "Range notified the township that they are starting 5 NEW wells at the Conor Samuel well pad (Grange Road) in January and 5 NEW wells at the Bernard Schultz pad (Rt 980 and Galati) in March. Call me crazy, but that seems to be the opposite of "exclusionary"."

Zoning Hearing Board Jan. 20 Meeting

On January 20, the Cecil Township Zoning Hearing Board began the consideration of the Range Resources challenge to the setback ordinance.

The Board meeting focused on preliminary issues like requests to be parties of the case and standing.

The Board conditionally approved all parties requesting to be parties to the case, subject to later challenges by Range Resources.

Range Resources called for the recusal of Board chair Kara Shirdon from the case for allegedly being biased.

Kara Shirdon did recuse herself from the case.

The solicitor for Cecil Township also announced the Township will be offering a motion to dismiss the Range Resources challenge saying there are legal issues of standing and "ripeness" of the challenge.

The Board solicitor laid out a proposed schedule for considering the various issues.

On February 17, the Board expects Range Resources to present its challenge with witnesses.

The Township and other parties participating in the case will have the opportunity to rebut the challenge at the following scheduled meeting.

Click Here for a video of the Board meeting.

MarkWest Liberty Midstream Challenge

MarkWest Liberty Midstream, owner of natural gas processing plants and related pipeline facilities, filed a Procedural Validity Challenge in Washington County Court of Common Pleas.

Click Here for a copy of the MarkWest Challenge.

"Markwest filed a challenge claiming that the township did not follow all the procedural steps when we were working through the ordinance update process," said Supervisor Fisher.

"For example, one of their claims is that we didn't properly advertise the updated ordinance. For those of you that have been following this process you know that we went above and beyond to hold hearings on multiple nights over a nine month period.

"We advertised every ordinance change and took two public votes (one to move the ordinance forward and one to formally adopt the ordinance)," explained Supervisor Fisher.

"I want to reassure you that the Township Board of Supervisors expected these things to happen and is prepared to defend the ordinance that we voted to put into place," said Supervisor Fisher.

*(**Photos: top-** Range Resources Augustine Drill Pad in Cecil Township; Augustine Drill Pad showing scale of operation; **bottom-** Map of Shale gas wells (red dots), conventional oil and gas wells (blue/green dots) in Cecil Township (DEP Oil & Gas Program); 523 feet from nearest house; Well pad gas flare from bedroom window near Augustine well pad (WTAE). Other photos Courtesy of The Energy Age Blog.)*

Resource Links:

-- Cecil Township Supervisors In Washington County Adopt 2,500 Setback From Shale Gas Well Pads From Homes, Businesses, 5,000 Foot Setback From Hospitals, Schools [PaEN]

-- Cecil Township, Washington County Posts Proposed Ordinance Increasing Setbacks From Shale Gas Well Pads Of 2,500 Feet From Homes, Businesses; 5,000 Feet From Schools, Hospitals; Nov. 4 Hearing, Meeting Set [PaEN]

-- Cecil Township Supervisors Direct Solicitor To Prepare Ordinance Increasing Setbacks From Shale Gas Well Pads By At Least 2,500 Feet; Another Hearing, Vote Expected Nov. 4 [Hearing Summary] [PaEN]

-- PA Senate Republicans Reintroduce Bills To Eliminate State Appeals Of Pipeline Permits; Limit Grounds For Appeal Of Any DEP Permits; Punish Communities For Protecting Their Constituents Against Shale Gas Drilling Impacts [PaEN]

PA Oil & Gas Industry Public Notice Dashboards:

-- PA Oil & Gas Industrial Facilities: Permit Notices, Opportunities To Comment - February 1 [PaEN]

-- DEP Posted 89 Pages Of Permit-Related Notices In February 1 PA Bulletin [PaEN]

Related Articles This Week - Natural Gas:

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PUC: Calendar Year 2024 Act 13 Drilling Impact Fees To Remain Same As 2023; Dramatic Decline In Financial Support From Shale Gas Industry Continues

Impact Fee

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Impact Fee Revenues	$200.4	$146.3	$234.4	$278.9	$179.6	$163.8
Growth Rate	-20.4%	-27.0%	60.2%	19.0%	-35.6%	-8.8%
Wells Subject to Fee	10,155	10,576	10,995	11,454	11,829	12,050
Growth Rate	6.2%	4.1%	4.0%	4.2%	3.3%	1.9%
Avg. Fee per Well	$19,734	$13,833	$21,322	$24,348	$15,186	$13,593
Growth Rate	-25.1%	-29.9%	54.1%	14.2%	-37.6%	-10.5%

Notes: Fee revenues in millions of dollars. Growth rates are year-over-year.
Source: Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. All data for 2024 estimated by the IFO.

The Public Utility Commission published notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin setting Calendar Year 2024 Act 13 Drilling Impact Fees based on a formula set in law. The fees will be the same as in 2023. The fees will be--

Year of Well	Horizontal	Vertical—Producing
Year 1	$51,800	$10,400
Year 2	$40,200	$8,000
Year 3	$34,500	$6,900
Year 4—10	$17,200	$3,400
Year 11—15	$5,600	N/A

Dramatic Decline In Support By Shale Gas Industry

The decline of shale gas drilling caused by generally lower natural gas prices have resulted in a dramatic decline in revenue from the Act 13 drilling impact fee.

The Independent Fiscal Office estimates Act 13 fee revenue from 2024 fees are estimated to be $163.8 million, down from $179.6 million in 2023 and down from the record $278.9 million in 2022. Read more here.

That's a drop of $214.4 million in shale gas industry support since 2022.

This decline in revenue leaves significant holes in state, county and municipal budgets around the state.

A report last September by the Pittsburgh-based Allegheny Institute for Public Policy published a policy brief on the steep decline in revenues from the Act 13 shale gas impact fees going to counties and municipalities saying they need to "begin lowering their expectations" on support from the shale gas industry. Read more here.

Gas Infrastructure Continues To Grow

Shale gas infrastructure continues to grow all across Pennsylvania-- more wells, more gas and wastewater pipelines, compressor stations, natural gas processing facilities, water withdrawals and other facilities.

Most need to be inspected and regulated by DEP and the PUC, some aren't regulated.

There were 735 new shale gas wells drilled in 2023 and 2024, bringing the total number of shale gas wells subject to the Act 13 impact fee to 12,050, according to the Independent Fiscal Office.

Visit the PUC Act 13 Impact Fee webpage for more information on the fee and disbursements.

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[Posted: January 31, 2025]

PA Republican Senator To Introduce Bill Suspending State Taxes On Natural Gas Producers; Cut DEP Permit Fees; End Drilling Moratorium On DCNR Lands; Exempt Coal-Fired Power Plants From EPA Regulations

On January 27, Sen. Doug Mastriano (R-Franklin) announced he would be reintroducing the PA Energy Independence Act to suspend state taxes on natural gas producers, cut DEP permit fees, end the drilling moratorium on DCNR lands, exempt coal-fired power plants from EPA regulations and make other changes.

"In the near future, I plan to re-introduce legislation to stabilize energy costs for Pennsylvanians and protect against economic and international volatility in the long term," said Sen. Mastriano.

"With our abundant resources, Pennsylvania should be largely immune to energy cost volatility. Cumbersome taxes, regulations, and restrictions are handicapping the potential of our energy sector.

"Many companies simply choose to invest in more energy friendly states like Texas and West Virginia.

"To make matters worse, Pennsylvania's insistence to participate in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) which is projected to raise energy consumer costs by $2 billion over nine years and lead to the closure of at least five power plants.

"Natural gas and coal currently account for over 60% of Pennsylvania's electricity generation.

"I am proposing the "PA Energy Independence Act" to utilize our unique natural resources and finally cement Pennsylvania as a premier energy powerhouse," said Sen. Mastriano.

He said the legislation would--

Natural Gas and Drilling

-- Immediate suspension of the Corporate Net Income Tax and Personal Income Tax for natural gas producers

-- Reduce DEP's gas permit fees to pre-2020 levels (200% cut from current fees) [permit fees fund DEP's Oil & Gas Regulation Program]

-- End the moratorium on new leases on state lands by directing DCNR to initiate an approval process for new leasing opportunities

Coal-Powered Plants

-- Exempt Pennsylvania from plant-closing EPA regulations such as the Wastewater Rule and the Cross State Air Pollution Rule

-- Intrastate Coal/Natural Gas Use Provision: establish a provision to clearly state that any environmental regulation of coal and natural gas that is extracted and used in Pennsylvania can only be exclusively regulated by the Commonwealth, not by the Federal government.

Regulations and Permits

-- Require a report from DEP to the General Assembly on all current rules and regulations affecting the natural gas and coal industries and the respective economic impact

-- Require legislative approval for any new regulations affecting the natural gas and coal industries

-- Improve transparency in the permit review process and expedite approvals

Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative

-- Immediate suspension of Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI

Click Here for a copy of Sen. Mastriano's announcement.

Sen. Mastriano introduced similar legislation in 2022 as Senate Bill 1219 that never got out of Committee.

Resource Link:

-- PA Senate Republicans Reintroduce Bills To Eliminate State Appeals Of Pipeline Permits; Limit Grounds For Appeal Of Any DEP Permits; Punish Communities For Protecting Their Constituents Against Shale Gas Drilling Impacts [PaEN]

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[Posted: January 28, 2025]

Conventional Oil & Gas Industry Compliance With 2022 DEP Methane Reduction Regulation Put On Hold Pending Outcome Of Litigation

On January 28, the Department of Environmental Protection said compliance with a 2022 state Air Quality regulation to reduce methane emissions from oil and gas facilities was put on hold for the conventional oil and gas industry as a result of an agreement to stay a legal challenge to the regulations in Commonwealth Court.

DEP spokesperson Neil Shader said a key compliance reporting requirement is "on hold for the conventional operators until the litigation concludes."



"The Commonwealth Court has granted a joint motion [between the industry and DEP] to stay the litigation proceedings while the parties explore settlement options," explained Shader.

During the process of adopting the 2022 regulations, DEP estimated conventional oil and gas facilities would account for 80 percent of the total methane emission reductions expected under the regulations which covered both conventional and unconventional shale gas facilities. Read more here.

Groups representing the conventional oil and gas industry filed a lawsuit in Commonwealth Court in December 2022 in an attempt to block implementation of DEP's regulation. Read more here.

The regulations were adopted to comply with US Environmental Protection Agency requirements which do not distinguish between conventional and unconventional shale gas oil and gas facilities.

At one point, EPA threatened to impose the sanction of withhold federal highway funds from Pennsylvania until the regulation was adopted. Read more here.

Both conventional and unconventional shale gas oil and gas facility owners were required to file a compliance report by June 1, 2024 to cover calendar year 2023 as required by 25 Pa Code 129140(k)(1).

This was actually an extension of the original reporting deadline which was December 2, 2023 that was intended to cover calendar year 2022 information. This first report was eliminated by DEP under its "enforcement discretion" in a January 24, 2024 PA Bulletin notice.

Conventional facility owners were required to report information on their wells and specific types of equipment, including storage tanks, pneumatic controllers, diaphragm pumps, reciprocating compressors, closed venting systems and other control devices.

Click Here for a copy of DEP's suggested Excel reporting template.

Air emissions for the facilities were submitted separately to DEP's Air Quality Emission Inventory.

As a result of a Right To Know request, DEP said as of January 21, 2025 only 27 conventional well facility owners out of an estimated 4,719 owners who were required to submit reports did submit those reports-- less than 1%.

Of those 27, DEP's Air Quality Emission Inventory [select conventional gas well as facility type and 2023] includes methane and VOC emissions reported by only four companies with conventional facilities-- Blackhawk Energy, LLC; Consol PA Coal Co. LLC; Diversified Production, LLC; and Iron Cumberland LLC.

Together they reported only 1,901 tons of methane and 204.3 tons of VOCs in 2023.

In contrast, 112 of the 130 unconventional shale gas facility owners required to submit compliance reports did comply-- 86%-- 18 shale gas owners have still not submitted reports or contacted DEP.

Of those 112, 63 unconventional shale gas companies reported emissions in DEP's Air Quality Emission Inventory [select unconventional gas well as facility type and 2023] which shows methane emissions of 47,486.2 tons and VOC emissions of 2,393.1 tons.

DEP expected up to a 175,788 ton reduction of methane from conventional sources [Read more here.] and a 45,278 ton reduction in methane from unconventional shale gas sources [Read more here], according to the Regulatory Analysis Forms for the regulations.

DEP estimated total 2020 methane emissions from conventional sources to be 365,103 tons and 102,297 tons from unconventional shale gas sources, according to the Regulatory

Analysis Forms.

Visit DEP's Annual Reporting For Oil & Natural Gas Sources webpage for more information on reporting requirements.

New Oil & Gas Methane Emissions Rule

At a December 12 meeting of DCED's PA Grade Crude [Oil] Development Advisory Council, DEP's Air Quality Program briefed the conventional oil and gas industry about a new program DEP was developing to comply with a new EPA methane reduction rule. Read more here.

The EPA rule again does not differentiate between conventional and unconventional shale gas wells.

Conventional well owners again claimed they could not comply with that rule either saying, "A very large proportion, perhaps as high as 95% of Pennsylvania conventional gas wells and Pennsylvania conventional oil wells and oil/gas wells which are constructed with a production string of casing, are purposely constructed as to allow the release of methane which methane may not be a steady flow and are constructed that way by regulation."

There was no discussion of the "hold" on conventional oil and gas industry compliance with the 2022 regulation and what it might mean for conventional compliance with any new methane regulations. Read more here.

Click Here for DEP's presentation on the new EPA methane rule.

Non-Compliance In Conventional Industry

A December 2022 DEP compliance report found conventional oil and gas well owners have a "culture of non-compliance" that is an "acceptable norm." Read more here.

DEP reported last year--

-- 86% of conventional well owners failed to submit annual production and waste generation reports [Read more here]

-- 89% failed to submit annual well integrity reports [Read more here]

Conventional oil and gas well owners also continue to illegally dump production wastewater on dirt and paved roads in conventional drilling areas, according to citizens who monitor the practice. Read more here.

In 2024, DEP issued a record 860 new or continued violations to conventional well owners for abandoning and not plugging their wells, many more than the 512 violations it issued in 2023. Read more here.

With this record, it is clear the culture of non-compliance needs to be taken into account by DEP in any program meant to regulate the conventional oil and gas industry.

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On January 31, the Department of Environmental Protection began releasing the next round of contracts for bidding on BidExpress.com to plug conventional oil and gas wells under the federally-funded well plugging program.

Two contracts were released so far--

-- McKean County, Hamlin Township: 12 orphan gas wells in and near Kinzua Bridge State Park. Mandatory pre-bid meeting February 13. Click Here for bid document.

-- Warren County, Mead Township: 19 abandoned, orphan oil wells. Mandatory pre-bid meeting February 12. Click Here for bid document.

Visit the BidExpress.com website for the latest information and any updates to the bid packages.

*(**Maps:** McKean County and Warren County wells in bid contracts.)*

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[Posted: January 31, 2025]

Rep. Vitali Introduces Bill To Restore DEP Authority To Increase Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging Bonds To Prevent Hundreds Of New Well Abandonments A Year



On January 27, Rep. Greg Vitali (D-Delaware) introduced House Bill 364 which would restore the Environmental Quality Board's authority to increase conventional oil and gas well plugging bonds to help prevent hundreds of new well abandonments a year.

The bill, however, does not repeal the provision in existing law that exempts wells drilled before April 18, 1985 (which is most conventional wells) from having to submit any plugging bonds.

The bill includes a provision directing DEP to study conventional well abandonment and its costs and make recommendations on alternative financial assurance mechanisms and their applicability to pre April 18, 1985 conventional wells.

The ability to increase bonding amounts, along with aggressive use of administrative and enforcement tools, could help stem the tide of the now routine conventional well abandonment.

In fact, a spokesperson for the conventional operators-- Arthur Stewart, head of Cameron Energy and representing the PA Grade Crude Oil Coalition-- told the House Environmental Committee at an April 24 hearing--

"If I were in the shoes of the head of the DEP, I would go after the scofflaws, and I would take their money." Read more here.

In 2024, DEP issued 860 new or continued violations to conventional oil and gas well owners for abandoning and not plugging their wells. [Read more here] In 2023, DEP issued 512 violations to conventional well owners for abandonment.

[There were also a record number of shale gas well abandonment violations in 2024-- 47 violations were issued or continued to 12 shale gas well owners. [Read more here] In 2023, DEP issued or continued 20 violations to 10 shale gas well owners for abandoning and not plugging their wells. Read more here.

[But, that isn't the submit of this legislation and the Environmental Quality Board has the authority to increase bond amounts for shale gas wells, but so far has not.]

In April 2023, the House Environmental Committee held a hearing on conventional oil and gas well abandonment and the need to find ways to address this growing problem.

The conventional industry opposed any reinstatement of the Environmental Quality Board's authority to increase bond amounts. Read more here.

Similar legislation was introduced in 2023-- House Bill 962-- and was reported out of Committee, but saw no further action in the House.

Rep. Greg Vitali (D-Delaware) serves as Majority Chair of the House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection Committee and can be contacted by calling 717-787-7647 or sending email to: gvitali@pahouse.net.

Background

As part of the July 2022 budget settlement, the General Assembly passed and Gov. Wolf signed into law legislation that took away the authority of DEP to review the adequacy of conventional oil and gas well plugging bonding amounts for 10 years. Read more here.

The legislation was designed to head off a rulemaking petition from the Sierra Club, Clean Air Council and other groups accepted for study by the Environmental Quality Board in November 2021 to increase the well plugging bonding amounts for both conventional oil and gas and unconventional shale gas drillers to what it now costs taxpayers to plug a well when operators walk away from their obligations. Read more here.

The Post-Gazette calculated DEP has about $15 per well on hand in well plugging bonds to plug all the active conventional wells-- somewhere over 90,545.

DEP reported in December that between 2017 and 2021, conventional operators abandoned without plugging 2,246 wells-- 561 a year, on average. Read more here.

Under the new federally-funded conventional well plugging program, Pennsylvania is set to receive nearly $400 million over the next 15 years. DEP said it would plug about 249 wells the first year. Read more here.

You can do the math, we'll never catch up, unless changes are made in the practices used by conventional oil and gas operators.

On April 24, the Environmental Defense Fund announced the results of a new study that found 55,000 oil and gas wells owned by operators in Pennsylvania are at high risk of becoming abandoned leaving state taxpayers holding the bag for $3.7 billion in well plugging and cleanup costs.

The overwhelming majority of these wells are conventional oil and gas wells.

"There's all the incentive in the world for those operators to walk away," said Adam Peltz, EDF Senior Attorney for Energy Transition. "If they're bankruptcy-proof, then the state

can't get them and they save all the money unplugging."

The study also found another 51,000 wells owned by solvent operators are at risk of being transferred to new financially unhealthy companies because the net present value of the wells is negative. The state taxpayer liability for these wells is an estimated $3.5 billion.

"Solvent operators are not going to orphan [abandon] the wells because they're solvent. And if you abandon a well and you're solvent, someone's going to come get you," said Peltz. "But what those operators are incentivized to do is transfer the wells down the value chain until they get to a low solvency entity that might then go bankrupt."

Only 11,500 wells were determined to be of no risk of being abandoned in Pennsylvania, according to the EDF study.

There are a total of 117,500 active or idle [inactive] conventional and unconventional oil and gas wells in the state, according to EDF.

The study was based on a review of the net present value of the wells and the relative insolvency and fiscal health of the operators.

Resource Links:

-- House Hearing: Let's Work Together To Make Conventional Oil & Gas Industry Practices Cleaner, Respect Property Rights, Protect Taxpayers And Prevent New Abandoned Wells [PaEN]

-- EDF: Pennsylvania Has 55,000 Oil/Gas Wells At High Risk Of Being Abandoned; 51,000 Wells At Risk Of Being Transferred To Low Solvency Owners; Current Conventional Well Owners Abandon 561 Wells A Year, On Average [PaEN]

-- Rep. Vitali Introduces Bill To Ban Road Dumping Millions Of Gallons Of Conventional Oil & Gas Wastewater, Supported By The Shapiro Administration [PaEN]

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[Posted: January 29, 2025]

PA Oil & Gas Industrial Facilities: Permit Notices, Opportunities To Comment - February 1



The following notices were published in the February 1 PA Bulletin related to oil and gas industry facilities. Many of the notices offer the opportunity for public comments.

-- Snyder Brothers Inc. - 7 Miles Of -- 1-18-Inch Water Pipeline, 1-20-Inch Gas Pipeline, 1-20-Inch Gas Pipeline: DEP issued a Chapter 105 permit for 3 water and gas pipelines in one right-of-way impacting Glade Run and multiple Exceptional Value wetlands located in **East Franklin and North Buffalo Townships, Armstrong County**. Received July 16, Issued Jan. 17. (PA Bulletin, page 1161)

-- **DEP published** notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it will hold a March 5 hearing on a proposed Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit for the Hazleton Generation natural gas power plant in **Hazle Township, Luzerne County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1110) Read more here.

Land Recycling/Brownfield Cleanups
-- CNX Gas Company, LLC - Hunt Club Shale Gas Well Pad: DEP received a Final Report on remediation of soil contaminated with chloride, aluminum, barium, boron, iron, lithium, manganese, selenium, strontium, vanadium, zinc, SPLP chloride to meet the Statewide Health Standard at the pad located in **Richhill Twp., Greene County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1154)
-- Sunoco Inc. - Philadelphia Refinery Sitewide: DEP received a Remedial Investigation Report on remediation of soil and groundwater contaminated with lead, inorganics and fuel oil to meet the Site-Specific Standard for the facility located at 3144 Passyunk Avenue in **Philadelphia**. (PA Bulletin, page 1153)
-- Bellwether District Holdings LLC - Right-of-Way-3 6.22.2023 Release Area: DEP approved a Final Report on remediation of soil contaminated with lead, PAHs and other organics to meet the Statewide Health Standard at a site located at 3144 West Passyunk Avenue in **Philadelphia**. (PA Bulletin, page 1155)

2025 Act 2 Oil & Gas Facility Pollution Cleanups
So far in 2025, DEP received or acted on 6 Act 2 Land Recycling notices related to oil and gas facility site cleanups

Air Quality Permits - Comments
-- **DEP published** notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it will hold a March 5 hearing on a proposed Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit for the Hazleton Generation natural gas power plant in **Hazle Township, Luzerne County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1110) Read more here.
-- **EQM Gathering OPCO, LLC** - Blue Moon Compressor Station: DEP invites comments on a State Only Air Quality Permit covering multiple sources of air pollution at the facility located in **West Pike Run Twp., Washington County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1116)
-- Aria Energy East LLC - Landfill Gas Flare DEP invites comments on a proposed change to an Air Quality Plan Approval to establish a new throughput limit on a flare at a facility located in **Lower Saucon Twp., Northampton County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1117)

Air Quality Permits - Issued
-- National Fuel Gas Supply Corporation - Tamarack Compressor Station: DEP issued a GP-5 Air Quality General Permit renewal covering multiple sources of air pollution at the facility located in **Leidy Twp., Clinton County**. Received Dec. 23, Issued Jan. 15. (PA Bulletin, page 1156)
-- EQM Gathering OPCO, LLC - Cole Farm Compressor Station: DEP issued a GP-5 Air Quality General Permit covering multiple sources of air pollution at the facility located in **Wayne Twp., Greene County**. Received Dec. 6, Issued Jan. 17. (PA Bulletin, page 1156)
-- Perennial CMM PA, LLC - Cumberland Mine Flare: DEP issued a GP-21 Air Quality General Permit covering an enclosed mine flare located in **Wayne Twp., Greene County**. Received Dec. 6, Issued Jan. 17. (PA Bulletin, page 1156)
-- Laurel Mountain Midstream Operating, LLC - Brown Compressor Station: DEP issued a GP-5 Air Quality General Permit covering multiple sources of air pollution at the facility located in **Greene Twp., Greene County**. Received Nov. 25, Issued Jan. 10. (PA Bulletin, page 1156)
-- EQM Gathering OPCO, LLC - Unknown Compressor Station: DEP issued a GP-5 Air Quality General Permit renewal covering multiple sources of air pollution at the facility located in **Richhill Twp., Greene County**. Received Nov. 21, Issued Dec. 20. (PA Bulletin, page 1156)
-- NextEra Renewable Fuels, LLC - Western Berks Landfill Gas Facility: DEP extended the Air Quality Plan Approval for the facility located in **Cumru Twp., Berks County**. Received Jan. 10, Issued Jan. 17. (PA Bulletin, page 1157)
-- Mechanicsburg Terminals DE, LLC - Bulk Petroleum Terminal: DEP issued a State Only Air Quality Permit for the facility located in **Silver Spring Twp., Cumberland County**. Received Sept. 9, Issued Jan. 10. (PA Bulletin, page 1157)

Chapter 105 Encroachment Permits - Comments
-- Chesapeake Appalachia LLC - 2- 16-Inch Water Pipelines: DEP invites comments on a Chapter 105 permit for the construction of two pipelines impacting Sugar Creek and Wallace Run located in **Burlington Twp., Bradford County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1121)

Chapter 105 Permits - Issued

-- Highland Field Services, LLC - 16-Inch Freshwater Pipeline: DEP issued a Chapter 105 permit for the pipeline project impacting Norris Brook (Exceptional Value) and Exceptional Value wetlands located in **Delmar and Middlebury Townships, Tioga County**. Received Oct. 25, Issued Jan. 21. (PA Bulletin, page 1160)
-- Snyder Brothers Inc. - 7 Miles Of -- 1- 18-Inch Water Pipeline, 1-20-Inch Gas Pipeline, 1-20-Inch Gas Pipeline: DEP issued a Chapter 105 permit for 3 water and gas pipelines in one right-of-way impacting Glade Run and multiple Exceptional Value wetlands located in **East Franklin and North Buffalo Townships, Armstrong County**. Received July 16, Issued Jan. 17. (PA Bulletin, page 1161)

Erosion & Sedimentation Permits - Issued
-- Snyder Brothers, Inc. - Unknown Project: DEP issued a Chapter 102 permit for a project impacting Garretts Run located in **Manor Twp., Armstrong County**. Received Oct. 15, Issued Jan. 13. (PA Bulletin, page 1165)
-- Range Resources Appalachia LLC - SJ Exploration Well Site: DEP issued a Chapter 102 permit for a well pad impacting Raccoon Creek located in **Independence Twp., Beaver County**. Received Dec. 19, Issued Jan. 14. (PA Bulletin, page 1165)

Individual NPDES Stormwater Permit
-- Columbia Gas Of PA - Robbins Station 16,600 Foot Pipeline Project: DEP invites comments on Individual NPDES Stormwater Permit, along with incidental mining and waste removal approves, for a project impacting Long Run in **North Huntingdon Twp., Westmoreland County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1104)

Oil & Gas Well Drilling Permits [1.24.25]*
-- Last Week - Permits: DEP issued ZERO conventional and ZERO unconventional
-- Year To Date - Permits: DEP issued 3 conventional and 38 unconventional
-- Year To Date - Wells Drilled: 2 conventional and 26 unconventional
*Weekly Workload Report - 1.24.25
*DEP's Weekly Oil & Gas Program Workload Report - Most Recent

DEP Issued These New Oil & Gas Permits *
*Click Here to find oil and gas well permits recently issued near you

Sign Up! DEP eNotice: The Only Way You'll Know When Applications Come In To DEP
Did you know DEP can send you email notices when permit applications are submitted to DEP in your community?

This is the only way you can get notified of when oil and gas-related permits are submitted to DEP.

You'll also get notice of new technical guidance documents and regulations.
Click Here to sign up for DEP's eNOTICE today!

Act 14 Notices To Municipalities
Many communities and citizens are not aware that a state law passed in 1984 gives them the first chance to comment on Department of Environmental Protection permit applications even before

they are submitted to the agency. Read more here.

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[Posted: January 31, 2025]

White House: President Launches Initiative To Eliminate 10 Regulations For Every New Regulation Issued; Cost Of New Regulations Must Be 'Significantly' Less Than Zero

On January 31, the President signed an executive order to "unleash prosperity through deregulation" by requiring every federal agency to eliminate 10 regulations, rules or guidance documents for every new regulation they adopt.

It requires that for fiscal year 2025, the total incremental cost of all new regulations, including repealed regulations, be significantly less than zero.

There was no information available on where an analysis of what the regulations actually do or a

cost-benefit analysis would be done as part of this initiative.

There also was no public participation or review element mentioned.

Click Here for a White House fact sheet.

Pennsylvania Republicans proposed an arbitrary cap on the number state regulations in 2018 and would have required two regulations be eliminated for every new regulation adopted as if the number of regulations-- rather than what they do, how they do it and who or what they would protect-- is important. Read more here.

NewsClips - New Federal Administration:

-- WSJ: US Imposes 10% Tariff On Canadian Oil, Gas, 25% On Other Products [PDF of Article] [United Refining In Warren Uses 70,000 Barrels Of Canadian Oil A Day]

-- Wall Street Journal: New Federal Administration Memo Orders Agencies To Broadly Pause All Federal Grants, Loans, Financial Assistance Programs Pending Review [PDF of Article]

-- AP: Federal Judge Temporarily Blocks New Administration's Freeze On Federal Grants And Loans

-- AP: President Rescinds Memo Freezing Federal Money After Widespread Confusion; Executive Orders Requiring Funding Review Still In 'Full Force'

-- AP: President Rescinds Funding Freeze But Uncertainty Lives On For Wide Array Of Environmental Programs

-- Financial Times: President Wiped Out Dozens Of Biden's Climate Initiatives In First-Week Blitz

-- Post-Gazette -Ford Turner: Republicans US Sen. McCormick, Cong. Reschenthaler Defend Funding Freeze

-- TribLive Editorial: Government Must Be Reliable To Function

-- TribLive/AP: Wall Street Journal Takes Critical Eye To Start Of President's 2nd Term: 'Remarkably Poor Judgment'

-- Inquirer: Gov. Shapiro Says Federal Funding Freeze Is Creating 'Havoc,' As PA, NJ Officials Scramble

-- TribLive: Federal Funding Comes Through To Replace Roughly 1,000 Lead Water Service Lines In Alle-Kiski Valley [All Federal Disbursements Now Frozen]

-- Inquirer: President Wants US To Be 'Leading' Producer Of Non-Fuel Minerals; Here's How PA Could Help; Rare Earth Elements Could Be More Important Than Expansion Of Fracking [PDF of Article]

-- Washington & Jefferson College: Sweeping Changes Being Made In US Energy Policy By New Federal Administration

-- PittsburghUnionProgress.com: New Administration Order Canceling Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Leaves Some PA Sites In Limbo [Order Froze Disbursements In This And Other Programs]

-- The Allegheny Front - Reid Frazier: Nearly $1 Million Federal Stormwater Climate Grant In Allegheny County Environmental Justice Communities [New Administration Froze Disbursements In This And Other Programs]

-- Environmental Health News: New Administration Withdraws Proposed Limits On PFAS 'Forever Chemicals' In Industrial Wastewater

[Posted: February 1, 2025]

Gov. Shapiro Proposes 'Lightning' Energy Plan To Increase & Diversify Energy

Generation; Reduce Climate Changing Pollution; Lower Energy Costs; Create Jobs



On January 30, Gov. Josh Shapiro announced the "Lightning Plan" -- a comprehensive, all-of-the-above energy plan to secure Pennsylvania's energy future supported by labor and industry leaders, environmental advocates, and consumer groups.

Gov. Shapiro said this "commonsense energy plan" will create jobs, lower costs for consumers, protect Pennsylvania from global instability by building next generation power, and position the Commonwealth to continue to be a national energy leader for decades to come.

"Pennsylvania has long been a national energy leader, from Ben Franklin to today, but right now, we're letting other states outcompete us and we're losing out on jobs, new investment, and innovation – that has to change," **said Gov. Shapiro.** "My energy plan will power Pennsylvania forward by incentivizing the building of next generation energy projects in the Commonwealth.

"We have to meet this moment – and this plan builds on the work my Administration did last year to bring together leaders from the energy industry, organized labor and environmental groups, and consumer advocates to develop a plan for the future.

"I look forward to working with the General Assembly to get this commonsense plan to my desk so that we can lower costs for consumers, create more jobs, and position the Commonwealth to continue to be a national energy leader for decades to come."

Elements Of Lightning Plan

Gov. Shapiro said the plan will "supercharge energy development" in the Commonwealth and help energy projects get built and approved faster than ever before through several strategic initiatives:

-- RESET Energy Facility Siting Board: Pennsylvania needs to streamline the process for building energy projects. Currently, Pennsylvania is one of only 12 states without a state entity to handle siting decisions for key energy projects. The Governor is proposing the Pennsylvania Reliable Energy Siting and Electric Transition (RESET) Board to speed up permitting, reduce red tape, and support the next generation of energy projects in the state.

-- Repurposing EDGE Tax Credit: The Pennsylvania Economic Development for a Growing Economy (PA EDGE) Tax Credit Program, established in 2022, hasn't been used, leaving billions in potential economic development untapped.

The Governor's proposed 2025-26 budget will include key tax credit modifications to revamp the program, including:

-- Reliable Energy Investment Credit: Up to $100 million per facility for three years, focused on adding reliable energy sources to the grid.

-- Regional Clean Hydrogen Tax Credit: Up to $49 million annually for regional hydrogen projects, with lower thresholds to qualify.

-- Sustainable Aviation Fuel: Up to $15 million per year for a taxpayer who makes a $250 million capital investment and creates 400 jobs at a facility to produce sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), like the CNX and KeyState Energy collaboration at Pittsburgh International Airport.

-- PACER (Pennsylvania Climate Emissions Reduction Act): PACER would establish a cap-and-invest program to set Pennsylvania's carbon limit and invest in reducing electricity costs. Under PACER, 70 percent of the revenue generated would be returned to Pennsylvanians as rebates on their electric bills.
-- PRESS (Pennsylvania Reliable Energy Sustainability Standard): PRESS would modernize Pennsylvania's outdated energy standards, incentivizing innovation in nuclear and renewable energy, including battery storage, to remain competitive with other states.
-- Lowering Energy Costs for Rural Communities: The Governor's proposed 2025-26 budget introduces "Community Energy," a proposal that helps rural communities, farmers, and low-income Pennsylvanians jointly share energy resources to lower costs. For example, farmers could use methane digesters to produce energy for their farms, reducing reliance on utility companies and lowering their energy prices.
-- Rebates to Reduce Household Energy Costs: In addition to these initiatives and reimagining the PA EDGE tax credit programs, Pennsylvania must reform Act 129, the law that provides rebates and incentives to buy new energy efficient appliances and other ways to reduce electricity needs over time — which in turn, leads to lower electricity prices. The Governor's proposal will update these energy efficiency standards for the first time in nearly two decades.
-- Funding For New Projects: The Governor's energy plan will provide funding for new projects through an updated Pennsylvania Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) manufacturing tax credit, streamline energy project approvals by creating a state energy siting board to cut red tape, and encourage communities to lower utility bills through shared energy resources. Additionally, the plan increases rebates for energy-efficient appliances to help reduce household energy costs.
-- Cap On PJM Energy Auction Prices: Gov. Shapiro also noted he had reached an agreement with PJM Interconnection on a plan to resolve his recent lawsuit and to save consumers over $21 billion over the next two years. Read more here.

The Governor's announcement builds on the energy plan unveiled by the Governor last March [PACER and PRESS], which will protect and create nearly 15,000 energy jobs, lowering utility bills for households, and taking real action to address carbon pollution.

These initiatives are projected to save Pennsylvania energy customers $664 million by 2040 and generate $11.4 billion in clean, reliable energy investments.

The Governor said independent studies confirm the PACER and PRESS proposals will save Pennsylvanians money on their electricity bills, create energy jobs, and lead to billions in new investment in power plants and energy infrastructure.

This year, during his upcoming budget address, the Governor will again call on the General Assembly to pass legislation that propels Pennsylvania forward as an energy leader.

To Those Who Want To Complain, Do Nothing

Gov. Shapiro had a special message for those politicians who have done nothing on energy issues for years in Harrisburg--

"While I welcome different ideas to the table, suggestions from others, Democrats and Republicans alike, we can no longer afford inaction.

"Simply firing off a press release doesn't actually get people more affordable energy. It doesn't actually put people to work.

"Now is the time for action and doing nothing is no longer an option here in Pennsylvania. There are real consequences to doing nothing.

“If those who propose to complain and do nothing have their way, well, consumers are going to end up paying more for electricity.

“We'll lose the chance to create 15,000 new jobs all across our Commonwealth.

“If folks continue to do nothing, we'll probably experience more pollution and more damage in our communities.

“If legislators choose to do nothing, they're actually choosing to be less competitive. They're choosing to let other states pass us by.

“I get that there are some politicians out there who are just reflexively against anything I'm for. I understand how this business works.

“But, it's time for them to cut it out, to put Pennsylvania first, to make progress, to create jobs, to be hungry and competitive the way I am, and the way I know all of you are.

“Let's channel that spirit of Ben Franklin again. Let's channel that spirit of those coal miners and those who worked in our oil fields.

“Those who came before us, who understood this hunger to be competitive, who had a desire to lead and to win, as I certainly do here in Pennsylvania.

“The spirit of the innovators and the entrepreneurs who are creating new sources of clean energy right now in Pennsylvania. Let's follow their lead.

“My lightning plan will do just that.

“I welcome every side bringing their ideas to the table. But, the time of inaction is over. The time for action is right now.

“Let's get this done, Pennsylvania.”

Bringing People Together

Gov. Shapiro described how the process for developing his energy plan brought people together--

“When Jackson [Morris], from the Natural Resources Defense Council, talked about his friend, he used that word friend, Shawn Steffee, the leader of the Boilermakers [Union].

“Both came to the table to have a conversation about the future of an energy policy in Pennsylvania, because both were motivated to deal with a threat that they saw.

“Follow me on this. The threat that brought Jackson to the table was the threat of dealing with climate change.

“The threat, and Shawn, I hope I can speak for you on this, the threat that brought Shawn to the table was the existential threat facing Boilermakers who were being forced out of their work.

“I gave Shawn my word that I was going to be there for Boilermakers and other trades across Pennsylvania.

“I gave Jackson and others my word. We were going to be there to both create jobs and protect our planet.

“The fact that these gentlemen and others who served on this committee were willing to take a little risk, willing to be open about the threats that they faced and work together to find common ground, that's the Pennsylvania way.

“We need more of that in our politics. At a moment where everything feels so hyper polarized, we're showing how here in Pennsylvania we can come together with common purpose.

“And I truly want to thank the folks who helped lead to this Lightning [Energy] Plan, the people from industry and labor, environmental groups and others who worked with us on this. I'm truly grateful to you.

"And I'm especially grateful to two leaders in my administration who brought everyone together and who kept people at the table talking the whole time. And that's Amanda Warren and Sam Robinson from our team who do extraordinary work. I'm very, very thankful to them."

Comments From Other Participants

Other participants in the announcement had this to say--

"It is long past time that Pennsylvania unites behind an energy strategy that incentivizes growth, creates good paying union jobs, and does so in a way that keeps costs low for people and keeps our kids and grandkids safe and healthy. While many have talked, Governor Shapiro has acted, and by putting his concrete ideas on the table he shows that he is committed to getting something done on energy," **said Gregory Bernarding, Business Manager, Pittsburgh Regional Building and Construction Trades Council**. "Organized labor is excited by the prospect of a plan that creates thousands of good paying union jobs, and we look forward to working with the Governor and partners in the legislature on a plan that solidifies Pennsylvania as the rightful energy powerhouse of the United States."

"I work across over a dozen states, and I can confidently say the Lightning Plan is one of the most ambitious plans we've seen. Pennsylvania is personal to me, and I was honored to work with Governor Shapiro's diverse working group," **said Jackson Morris, Director of State Power Sector Policy, Climate & Energy, Natural Resources Defense Council.** "Bringing together business, labor, environmental, and consumer groups to find common ground was incredibly rewarding. This plan reflects that collaboration and Governor Shapiro's leadership in uniting diverse perspectives to move the state forward."

"Pennsylvania has long benefited from abundant, affordable energy, and Governor Shapiro's energy plan will strengthen that position for the next decade and beyond — at a time when it's more important than ever," s**aid David Dardis, Executive Vice President, Constellation Energy.** "We appreciate the Shapiro Administration's collaboration and willingness to engage with us on the Commonwealth's energy future — something that doesn't happen in every state. This plan strikes the right balance, supporting energy security while preserving the competitive markets that have served Pennsylvania so well."

"It's an honor to stand with Governor Shapiro, Lieutenant Governor Davis, and our partners who share the vision of Southwestern Pennsylvania leading the future of energy. Our economic prosperity depends on energy affordability and grid reliability, and we appreciate the Governor's leadership in this space," **said Stefani Pashman, CEO, Allegheny Conference.** "At this critical moment, a strong state policy framework is essential — not just to create the right conditions for growth, but to signal that Pennsylvania is open for investment. We stand ready to work with the Governor and all elected officials to make this all-of-the-above energy plan a reality."

Click Here for a copy of the Governor's announcement.

Click Here for video of the announcement.

Republican Reactions

Sen. Gene Yaw (R-Lycoming), Majority Chair of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, said in an "X" statement-- "The questionable agreements and feel-good programs being considered as part of the governor's energy plan are nothing but a band-aid for a broken bone. Until he abandons RGGI, it is difficult to take seriously any statement claiming he wants to ease the power deficit PA is facing."

Sen. Kim Ward (R-Westmoreland), President Pro Tempore of the Senate, said in an

"X" statement-- "@GovernorShapiro says he'd "immediately leave RGGI" when/if he signs HIS Pennsylvania carbon tax — but it's STILL just a rebranded carbon tax. If he cared about Pennsylvanians' wallets, he'd drop the utility-hiking #RGGI lawsuit and stop the word charade."

Sen. Joe Pittman (R-Indiana), Senate Republican Leader, said in a statement on the Senate Floor last week-- "Every Consumer Of Electricity In This Commonwealth Is Going To Pay More" and "What You're Going To Face Is Going To Be Really Unpleasant." Read more here.

To address the energy issues, Senate Republicans have passed, introduced or announced legislation to--

-- Establish a new state authority with the power to take over the review of all necessary permits from any state agency for large-scale energy projects, eliminating any public comment, waiving any regulation needed for the project and providing immunity from prosecution for waived regulations. Read more here.

-- **Legislation to take away the right of appeals or punish** local officials who want to protect their constituents from the environmental and health impacts of oil and gas development. Read more here.

-- **Legislation to suspend state taxes on natural gas producers**, cut DEP permit fees which fund the Oil and Gas Regulatory Program, end the drilling moratorium on DCNR lands, exempt coal-fired power plants from EPA regulations. Read more here.

-- **Legislation directing DCED and DEP to identify suitable sites for only one type of energy generation-- natural gas electric projects**. Read more here. [Pennsylvania's electric grid is already dependent on natural gas for 59% of our electricity. Read more here. Estimates are if existing natural gas power plants were as reliable as nuclear and coal, Pennsylvania would not have an imminent electric generation crisis. Read more here.]

Reactions

The **Pennsylvania Environmental Council** issued this statement by John Walliser, Senior Vice President--

"Governor Shapiro's announcement today recognizes the critical importance of ensuring a reliable, affordable, and cleaner supply of energy to power our homes and economy in Pennsylvania.

"The governor has proposed sensible changes needed to responsibly reduce emissions through an 'all of the above' energy strategy that advances clean technologies through targeted tax credits, an updated Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard, improved energy efficiency, distributed energy development, and siting of energy infrastructure.

"These policies will also grow our economy, deliver cost savings to consumers, and diversify power generation, bringing new sources of energy online to make the grid more reliable.

"The status quo is not a solution. We look forward to reviewing these proposals in greater detail and working with the governor, the state legislature, and all stakeholders to move Pennsylvania forward on a pathway to clean, affordable, reliable energy."

EEN Action issued this statement by Carolyn Heckman, Associate Director of Pennsylvania Policy, partner of the **Evangelical Environmental Network**--

"Evangelicals welcome this important step toward a safe and healthy future for all generations and thank Governor Shapiro for his leadership.

"In addition to his recent successful settlement with PJM saving consumers $21 billion

over the next two years, Governor Shapiro is tackling the energy issues and costs that PA residents and their children are facing–now and in the future–with his new Lightning Plan.

"To ensure a holistic abundant life for all (John 10:10), we need more clean, affordable, reliable, and pollution-free energy coming onto the commonwealth's grid.

"Modernizing and diversifying our grid with clean energy will not only better defend our children's health by reducing harmful air pollutants and carbon emissions but is also necessary to reliably meet Pennsylvania's rising energy demands.

"Clean energy solutions like those in the Governor's Lightning Plan are not only smart but popular, too.

"Last year, over 32,000 Pennsylvanians gave their support for an expanded Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard (AEPS), and the included PRESS proposal would do just that.

"The Lightning Plan will deliver economic benefits to Pennsylvania ratepayers, rural and frontline communities, farmers, and workers.

"We look forward to working with Governor Shapiro to continue to improve the plan and make it as strong as possible to defend the lives and health of Pennsylvania's children.

"We urge the legislature to come together around these policies to ensure Pennsylvania remains a leader in our clean energy future."

The Nature Conservancy in Pennsylvania, released the following statement on Gov. Shapiro's Lightning Plan:

"We are encouraged by Governor Shapiro's Lightning Plan proposal, which outlines a pathway for Pennsylvania to accelerate clean energy deployment and pursue decarbonization strategies to reduce emissions while providing for the energy needs of the commonwealth and beyond.

"PACER, PRESS, Community Energy and the Reliable Energy Siting and Electric Transition (RESET) Board all form major components of the Lightning Plan. Taken together, they represent a once-in-a-generation framework to maximize energy outcomes that balance climate, communities and conservation.

"This balance is critical, as Pennsylvania is the largest producer and exporter of electricity in the U.S. as well as home to critical corridors within the Appalachian Range, one of most biodiverse landscapes in the world.

"From The Nature Conservancy's experience working across all 50 states, we know that streamlined energy infrastructure siting processes like the RESET Board component outlined in the Lightning Plan are among the best pathways to accelerate clean energy deployment while ensuring positive outcomes for conservation.

"We look forward to working with the Governor, members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly and stakeholders to set us on a path to balance our need for clean, reliable energy with beneficial conservation results."

The **Environmental Defense Fund** issued this statement in response to Gov. Shapiro's proposed energy plan--

"We applaud Governor Josh Shapiro's announcement of the Lightning Plan, a forward-thinking energy strategy that strengthens Pennsylvania's leadership in the energy sector while prioritizing a cleaner, healthier future for all residents," **said Kate Courtin, Senior Manager for State Climate Policy & Strategy at EDF**. "By bringing together labor, industry, environmental advocates, and consumer groups, Governor Shapiro is creating a collaborative approach that prioritizes innovation, job creation, and pollution reduction."

"Governor Shapiro's plan recognizes that it is time to modernize Pennsylvania's energy framework through strategic initiatives such as PRESS (Pennsylvania Reliable Energy Sustainability Standard) and PACER (Pennsylvania Climate Emissions Reduction Act).

"These policies will help the state diversify its energy mix and deliver reliable, clean, and affordable energy.

"A cap on power sector pollution, as proposed in PACER, can be the backbone of Pennsylvania's transition to next-generation power solutions while reinvesting in communities to lower electricity costs.

"The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) remains a proven and effective approach to implement this type of program as well."

"As Pennsylvania continues to develop policies to accelerate the transition to clean energy and bring more resources on the grid, it is also crucial to prioritize a strong, durable methane rule. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas that accelerates climate change and poses risks to public health," **said John Rutecki, Regulatory and Legislative Manager for Appalachia at Environmental Defense Fund.** "As Governor Shapiro further develops his energy plans, we encourage his administration to start the rulemaking process and convene a diverse coalition, with the purpose of developing a pragmatic rule that significantly reduces methane emissions while fostering economic and job growth. By leveraging this moment to implement comprehensive methane regulations, Pennsylvania can lead by example and demonstrate that environmental responsibility and economic prosperity go hand in hand."

The Environmental Defense Fund looks forward to reviewing more details of the plan and working with the Governor and state leaders to ensure Pennsylvania's energy transition is both sustainable and equitable.

The Lightning Plan is a step toward a cleaner, more reliable energy future, and we urge the General Assembly to act swiftly in support of this vision. Together, we can build a Pennsylvania that leads in energy innovation while protecting our air, water, and climate for generations to come.

Alex Bomstein, Clean Air Council Executive Director, issued the following statement-- "There is much to like in Governor Shapiro's ambitious energy plan, such as its support for renewable energy development and modernizing energy standards.

"At the same time, fossil fuels compete with renewables, and the details of some of these proposals will be critical to ensure they help more than they harm.

"We must take every available action to ensure Pennsylvania doesn't lose out on this opportunity to create jobs, lower energy costs, diversify our energy mix, and cut harmful pollution by boosting cheap and abundant renewables."

The **Better Path Coalition** released this statement on the "Lightning" Energy Plan--

"Natural gas production, data centers, and fossil fuel subsidies are among the features of Governor Josh Shapiro's energy plan that are barely distinguishable from the Trump administration's plan," said **Karen Feridun, Co-founder of the Better Path Coalition.**

"Sometimes, the devil isn't in the details. Two things are impossible to miss - the president is an unabashed climate denier and climate change is already taking a devastating toll on our planet.

"Supporters of Governor Shapiro's Lightning Plan will point to what they consider to be stark differences between his plan and the president's call to "drill, baby, drill," but, in this unprecedented moment, the differences are irrelevant.

"Any plan to continue and even expand fossil fuel production in Pennsylvania is absolutely unacceptable."

"Much of Shapiro's Lightning Plan is a rehash of past economic proposals and a renewed commitment of his loyalty to bad actors like CNX and trade groups that lobby for the fossil fuel industry.

"Conspicuously absent from his plan is an environmental justice component, a facet of his proposal that aligns with the president's attack on equity efforts.

"He can keep repackaging his worn out fossil fuel agenda as much as he likes, but it won't change the facts that fracking continues to do irreparable harm to Pennsylvanians and that, increasingly, the planet is quite literally burning.

"He has reneged on the oath he swore to uphold Pennsylvania's Environmental Rights Amendment and on every promise he made to impacted communities as Attorney General after his Grand Jury investigation of the fracking industry," continued Feridun. "His failure to take aggressive action to buck the federal government, put his constituents first, and transition the state from fossil fuels to renewable energy will be his legacy."

NewsClips:

-- Gov. Shapiro: What Industry Leaders, Lawmakers, Consumer Advocates Are Saying About The Governor's Commonsense Energy Plan

-- AP: Gov. Shapiro Rolls Out Plan To Fast-Track, Subsidize Power Plants, Hydrogen Projects

-- The Center Square: Shapiro's 'Lightning' Energy Plan Lacks Critical Republican Legislative Support

-- Pittsburgh Business Times: Shapiro Proposes Overhaul Of PA's Energy Policies To Spur Economic Growth, Innovation

-- Post-Gazette: Shapiro Outlines 6-Part 'Lightning Plan' To Increase Energy Production, Lower Costs

-- Natural Resources Defense Council Blog: 'Lightning' Energy Plan And PJM Agreement To Cap Electricity Prices Strike In Pennsylvania

Resource Links:

-- PUC Invites Stakeholder Comments On The Issue Of The Adequacy Of Electricity Supplies In Pennsylvania [Background On Electricity Supply Issue] [PaEN]

-- 30 Stakeholder Comments Received By PUC On Adequacy Of Electricity Supplies In Pennsylvania; Increasing Natural Gas Power Plant Reliability To 90-95% Would Mean No Imminent Capacity Problem [PaEN]

Resource Links - Republican Energy Proposals:

-- PA Senate Republicans Reintroduce Bills To Eliminate State Appeals Of Pipeline Permits; Limit Grounds For Appeal Of Any DEP Permits; Punish Communities For Protecting Their Constituents Against Shale Gas Drilling Impacts [PaEN]

-- PA Republican Senator To Introduce Bill Suspending State Taxes On Natural Gas Producers; Cut DEP Permit Fees; End Drilling Moratorium On DCNR Lands; Exempt Coal-Fired Power Plants From EPA Regulations [PaEN]

-- Senate Republicans Pass Bill Authorizing An Authority To Take Over Permitting Large-Scale Energy Projects; Eliminating Public Comment; Waiving Any Regulation; Providing Immunity From Prosecution; Barbers Reviewing Permits? [PaEN - 2024]

-- PA Senate Republican Leader: 'Every Consumer Of Electricity In This Commonwealth Is Going To Pay More;' 'What You're Going To Face Is Going To Be Really Unpleasant' [PaEN]

-- PA House Republicans Introduce Bill Creating An Energy Advocate With Power To Veto Any Action By Any State Agency That Harms Energy Reliability, Affordability [PaEN- 2024]
-- PA House Republicans Announce Energy Package, Including An Energy Advocate Within DEP To Veto Any Action That Would Impact PA's Energy Portfolio And An Independent Energy Office With The Same Power [PaEN - 2024]

PA Oil & Gas Industry Public Notice Dashboards:

-- PA Oil & Gas Industrial Facilities: Permit Notices, Opportunities To Comment - February 1 [PaEN]
-- DEP Posted 89 Pages Of Permit-Related Notices In February 1 PA Bulletin [PaEN]

Related Articles This Week - Natural Gas:

-- PUC: Calendar Year 2024 Act 13 Drilling Impact Fees To Remain Same As 2023; Dramatic Decline In Financial Support From Shale Gas Industry Continues [PaEN]
-- Range Resources And MarkWest Liberty Midstream File Legal Challenges To The 2,500 Foot Shale Gas Facility Setback Ordinance Adopted By Cecil Township, Washington County [PaEN]
-- Conventional Oil & Gas Industry Compliance With 2022 DEP Methane Reduction Regulation Put On Hold Pending Outcome Of Litigation [PaEN]
-- DEP Releases 2 Contracts For Bidding In Next Round Of Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging: 12 Wells In Kinzua State Park, McKean County, 18 Wells In Warren County [PaEN]
-- Rep. Vitali Introduces Bill To Restore DEP Authority To Increase Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging Bonds To Prevent Hundreds Of New Well Abandonments A Year [PaEN]
-- PA Republican Senator To Introduce Bill Suspending State Taxes On Natural Gas Producers; Cut DEP Permit Fees; End Drilling Moratorium On DCNR Lands; Exempt Coal-Fired Power Plants From EPA Regulations [PaEN]
-- DEP Invites Comments At March 5 Hearing On Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit For Hazleton Generation Natural Gas Power Plant In Luzerne County [PaEN]
-- Gov. Shapiro Proposes 'Lightning' Energy Plan To Increase & Diversify Energy Generation; Reduce Climate Changing Pollution; Lower Energy Costs; Create Jobs [PaEN]
-- Gov. Shapiro Reaches Agreement With PJM To Prevent Unnecessary Price Hikes And Save Consumers Over $21 Billion On Utility Bills [PaEN]
-- PA Senate Republican Leader: 'Every Consumer Of Electricity In This Commonwealth Is Going To Pay More;' 'What You're Going To Face Is Going To Be Really Unpleasant' [PaEN]
-- Republicans On PA Senate Environmental Committee Report Out Bills To Eliminate Carbon Pollution Reduction Program Covering Power Plants, Establish Independent Energy Office [PaEN]
-- Inquirer: President Wants US To Be 'Leading' Producer Of Non-Fuel Minerals; Here's How PA Could Help; Rare Earth Elements Could Be More Important Than Expansion Of Fracking [PDF of Article]

NewsClips:

-- The Energy Age Blog: Range Resources & MarkWest Liberty Midstream File Legal Challenges Against 2,500 Foot Shale Gas Setback Ordinance In Cecil Twp., Washington County
-- The Energy Age Blog: EQT Should Plug These Abandoned Conventional Wells In Peters Twp., Washington County Before Fracking From Mingo Well Pad
-- PennLive Guest Essay: Natural Gas Industry Operations [Wastewater Pipelines] Are Strongly Regulated In PA - By Marcellus Shale Gas Coalition [Shale Gas Wastewater Pipelines are NOT regulated by the PUC for construction, operations and safety. Read more here.]

-- Inquirer: President Wants US To Be 'Leading' Producer Of Non-Fuel Minerals; Here's How PA Could Help; Rare Earth Elements Could Be More Important Than Expansion Of Fracking [PDF of Article]
-- NYT: Oil, Gas Companies Embrace New President, But Not 'Drill, Baby, Drill' [No Plans To Increase Production Unless Prices Rise Significantly]
-- US EIA: Electric Power Sector Has Driven Rising PA Natural Gas Consumption Since 2013
-- UGI Gas Division Filed A Request With PUC To Increase Residential Gas Rates By 10.8%
-- Scranton Times: UGI Seeking To Raise Natural Gas Rates 10.8% For Residential Customers
-- Utility Dive: Calpine To Sell 2 PA Gas Power Plants To Avoid Market Power Concerns From Constellation Merger
-- Reuters: Diversified Energy To Buy Permian Basin Oil & Gas Producer Maverick In $1.3 Billion Deal [Diversified Specializes In Buying Old Wells]
-- Bloomberg: US Natural Gas Producers Likely To Gain Asian Market Share [China Buying 50% More US LNG, Cap Price At $10 - Currently $3.89]
-- Bloomberg: Europe's Gas Traders Now Fear Summer More Than Winter
-- Reuters: Venture Global Given FERC OK To Start Up Another Louisiana LNG Gas Export Plant
-- Reuters: US EIA Sees 7% Higher US Wholesale Power Prices In 2025; Residential Increase Of 2%
-- Wall Street Journal: New Federal Administration Memo Orders Agencies To Broadly Pause All Federal Grants, Loans, Financial Assistance Programs Pending Review [PDF of Article]
-- AP: Federal Judge Temporarily Blocks New Administration's Freeze On Federal Grants And Loans
-- AP: President Rescinds Memo Freezing Federal Money After Widespread Confusion; Executive Orders Requiring Funding Review Still In 'Full Force'
-- E&ENews/Politico: EPA Freezes Federal Solar For All Program Funding Until Further Notice [PA Due To Receive $156 Million]
-- Financial Times: President Wiped Out Dozens Of Biden's Climate Initiatives In First-Week Blitz
-- Inquirer: Escalating Demand And Diminished Supply Has Spiked PUC Concern About The Future Ability Of State's Electric Grid
-- Post-Gazette Guest Essay: Transformational Investments In Renewables, Energy Efficiency Are Designed To Lower Energy Costs For Pennsylvania Consumers - By Molly Parzen, Conservation Voters Of PA
[Posted: January 30, 2025]

Gov. Shapiro Reaches Agreement With PJM To Prevent Unnecessary Price Hikes And Save Consumers Over $21 Billion On Utility Bills

On January 28, Gov. Josh Shapiro announced he has reached an agreement with PJM Interconnection on a plan to resolve his recent lawsuit and to save consumers over $21 billion over the next two years.

In December, Governor Josh Shapiro filed a complaint with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) against PJM Interconnection, criticizing flaws in PJM's capacity auction design that threatened to impose significant new price increases.

The agreement will avoid historic price hikes on consumers across all 13 states PJM serves, including Pennsylvania.

Left unaddressed, PJM's next capacity auction scheduled for July 2025 would have resulted in billions in unnecessary energy costs for 65 million people across the region.

The Governor worked with PJM to significantly lower the capacity auction price cap – from over $500/Megawatt-Day to $325/MW-Day – and averting a runaway auction price that would have unnecessarily increased energy bills.

The Commonwealth is a leading producer of energy and the nation's largest exporter of electricity – nearly a century ago, Pennsylvania helped to found PJM, and today still serves as a generation backbone for the region.

At the same time it has led this fight against unnecessary price increases on consumers, the Shapiro Administration is committed to meeting the need for new generation by getting more power projects built in Pennsylvania as part of an "all-of-the-above" energy strategy to create jobs, reduce emissions, and ensure safe, reliable, affordable power for Pennsylvanians for the long term.

"When PJM's next auction was set to result in historic price hikes, I filed a lawsuit to stop this price hike on consumers and defend Pennsylvanians," **said Governor Shapiro**. "PJM did the right thing by listening to my concerns and coming to the table to find a path forward that will save Pennsylvanians billions of dollars on their electricity bills. My Administration will continue to work to ensure safe, reliable, and affordable power for Pennsylvanians for the long term."

PJM operates a capacity market, which means that operators are paid to commit to providing energy in the future.

Over the last several years, demand for energy has risen rapidly but PJM has been slow to allow new power sources onto its grid – and as a result, PJM capacity prices have skyrocketed.

PJM's 2025/26 capacity auction, held in July 2024, resulted in costs of $14.7 billion – an over 800 percent increase from the prior year.

The Governor pushed PJM to reduce their price cap, and a diverse coalition came together support the Governor's message, including four governors, energy and consumer advocates, and the Organization of PJM States (OPSI).

The Shapiro Administration's energy leadership promises to save the PJM region over $21 billion on utility bills in the next two years.

PJM and the Shapiro Administration have agreed to a path forward for the complaint, subject to consultation with PJM members and the PJM Board of Managers.

In order to avoid further delays to the auction schedule, PJM will soon seek a FERC order by proposing a cap and floor mechanism through an FPA section 205 filing with the FERC.

This resolution follows over a year of engagement with PJM. Governor Shapiro continues to repeatedly press for long-term solutions that address increasing costs, urging PJM to:

-- Reopen their closed interconnection queue to get new projects online, like the restart of Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania;

-- Rely on member states to help determine which projects are ready and to speed up project approvals like the Governor has done in Pennsylvania;

-- Implement new best practices established by FERC in order to be better prepared in extreme weather scenarios and ensure affordable, reliable power year-round; and

-- Reform the capacity market to more accurately reflect real world conditions, ensuring grid reliability while saving consumers money on their utility bills.

Click Here for Gov. Shapiro's announcement.

Reactions

Senate Republican Leader Sen. Joe Pittman (R-Indiana) issued this statement on the PJM agreement--

"The governor has touted an agreement this week with PJM, the grid operator for our electricity. This announcement does nothing to make energy less expensive in Pennsylvania.

"The claim of $21 billion in savings is something consumers of electricity will never see materialize because rates will continue to rise even under this agreement."

Click Here for a video of Sen. Pittman's entire Senate Floor remarks.

Click Here for a transcript of Sen. Pittman's remarks.

Natural Resources Defense Council's Jackson Morris, Director of State Power Sector Policy, issued this statement on the agreement--

"Governor Shapiro's historic agreement with PJM protects Pennsylvanians from billions of dollars in electricity price gouging.

"This deal buys Pennsylvania, neighboring states, and PJM time to deal with the real problems – PJM's six year delay connecting new power plants and the risks of blackouts from wintertime gas plant failures.

"We hope the work of the Shapiro administration marks the beginning of a new era of coordination between PJM and the states.

"We look forward to working with all stakeholders to ensure PJM's rules protect consumers, bring new clean, reliable generation online, and deliver a more affordable economy for all."

NewsClips:

-- Utility Dive: PJM Agrees To Lower Price Cap For Upcoming Capacity Auctions

-- Post-Gazette-Ford Turner: Shapiro, PJM Electric Grid Operator Reach Deal As Top PA Regulator Predicts 'Spikes' In Cost

-- WHYY/BillyPenn: PJM Electric Grid Operator Agrees To Shapiro Demand On Power Price Cap

-- The Center Square: New Shapiro Deal Could Dampen Shock Of Anticipated Price Spikes By PJM Electric Grid Operator

-- PA Capital-Star: Shapiro Announces Settlement With PJM To Prevent Billions In Extra Electricity Costs

-- Pittsburgh Business Times: Shapiro Reaches Deal With PJM To Limit Electricity Price Hikes For PA Consumers

Resource Links:

-- Gov. Shapiro Threatens To Pull Pennsylvania Out Of PJM If It Does Not Protect Consumers Against Soaring Power Prices [PaEN]

-- Pennsylvania's Electric Grid Is Dependent On One Fuel To Generate 59% Of Our Electricity; Market Moving To Renewables + Storage [PaEN]

-- PJM Electricity Auction Price 9 Times Higher Than Previous Auction-- $269.92/MW-Day For 2025/26 Delivery Compared To $28.92/MW-Day In 2024-25; Extreme Weather Risk Big Factor [PaEN]

-- PennFuture: Dramatic PJM Electricity Price Increases Due To Forced Outages Of Gas Power

Plants; Huge Backlog Of New Generation Projects; Demand Growth Driven By Data Centers, Cryptocurrency Mining [PaEN]
-- Natural Resources Defense Council: The Cost Of Slow-Walking Clean Energy Can Be Seen In Latest PJM Electricity Prices [PaEN]
-- PJM Interconnection: Extreme Cold Produces PJM Record For Winter Electricity Demand; Maximum Generation Alert Remains In Effect Into Thursday [PaEN]
-- Utility Dive: North American Electric Reliability Corp: Natural Gas Electric Generation Is Threatened This Winter By Ongoing Concerns About Gas Production, Delivery In Extreme Weather Conditions [PaEN]
-- PJM CEO Expresses Concern About Electric Generating Capacity: Higher Prices Have Incentivized Some Generators, But Building Gas Generators Has Slowed, Permitting, Supply Chain Issues Hamper Renewables [PaEN]
-- PUC Invites Stakeholder Comments On The Issue Of The Adequacy Of Electricity Supplies In Pennsylvania [Background On Electricity Supply Issue] [PaEN]
-- 30 Stakeholder Comments Received By PUC On Adequacy Of Electricity Supplies In Pennsylvania; Increasing Natural Gas Power Plant Reliability To 90-95% Would Mean No Imminent Capacity Problem [PaEN]
-- PA Senate Republicans Reintroduce Bills To Eliminate State Appeals Of Pipeline Permits; Limit Grounds For Appeal Of Any DEP Permits; Punish Communities For Protecting Their Constituents Against Shale Gas Drilling Impacts [PaEN]

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-- Post-Gazette Guest Essay: Transformational Investments In Renewables, Energy Efficiency Are Designed To Lower Energy Costs For Pennsylvania Consumers - By Molly Parzen, Conservation Voters Of PA
[Posted: January 28, 2025]

Republicans On PA Senate Environmental Committee Report Out Bills To Eliminate Carbon Pollution Reduction Program Covering Power Plants, Establish Independent Energy Office

On January 27, Republicans on the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee reported out bills to 'abrogate' Pennsylvania's carbon pollution reduction program covering power plants consistent with RGGI and establishing an Independent Energy Office by party-line votes.

Democrats on the Committee opposed the bills.

Senate Bill 186 (Yaw-R-Lycoming) abrogates Pennsylvania's carbon pollution reduction program covering power plants consistent with the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

Sen. Carolyn Comitta (D-Chester), Minority Chair of the Committee, said, "For many years now, you have heard my comments supporting RGGI – and against RGGI abrogation.

"I will not support any measure that is so fundamentally harmful, and ignorant of reality.

"Take a look around. We are in the middle of a climate crisis.

"I will strongly oppose any legislation focused on blocking or diminishing our efforts to address climate change and forge a healthy future for our children and grandchildren."

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Environmental Defense Fund wrote to members of the Committee before the vote saying--

"On behalf of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) and Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), we are writing to express our opposition to Senate Bill 186.

"This legislation, which would abrogate the CO2 Budget Trading Program rulemaking, will be considered by the Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committee today (January 27).

"Pennsylvania needs proactive solutions to meet the growth in energy demand with cleaner generation.

"Other states in the PJM Interconnection footprint are surpassing the Commonwealth in attracting clean energy generation, manufacturing, and investment, as well as achieving better grid diversification, through policies that will ultimately deny our continued status as an energy exporter unless we proactively enact standards to drive decarbonization of our electricity generation.

"Abrogating the CO2 Budget Trading Program, which is not yet even in effect, would be a step backwards.

"The status quo has laid the groundwork for serious reliability and cost concerns with respect to the electric grid. Withdrawing this rulemaking won't solve or abate those problems. In fact, the rulemaking – if implemented – could help with investments in new and cleaner generation, facility conversions, and grid resilience.

"The General Assembly could support and directly engage in those investment decisions.

"The Governor's Task Force, which included diverse stakeholders from environmental, labor, and generation interests, recognized that a market-based cap and investment program like the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RRGI) was the most efficient and flexible approach to reducing emissions while also meeting the needs of consumers and the workforce.

"Our state can exponentially benefit from having a policy pathway that signals Pennsylvania is fully engaged in the energy transition; utilizing a proven policy like RGGI provides that certainty.

"For these reasons, we respectfully ask that you oppose Senate Bill 186."

Senate Bill 187 (Yaw-R-Lycoming) would establish an Independent Energy Office like the Independent Fiscal Office.

Sen. Comitta told the Committee, "DEP already has an Energy Programs Office. We do not need a separate office.

"We definitely should not divert resources from the Alternative Fuels Incentive Fund for it.

"What we should be doing is working within DEP to strengthen what we already have and expanding renewables.

"We can do that right now, but the majority, to date, chooses not to.

"I am opposed. The [Shapiro] administration is opposed.

"I support addressing climate change and cutting our carbon emissions. I do not support setting up a separate office."

Sen. Gene Yaw (R-Lycoming), Majority Chair of the Committee, said in a statement following the Committee meeting, "It may be the start of a new session, but the committee's priorities remain the same.

"We are focused on putting forth commonsense energy policy that recognizes and champions Pennsylvania as an energy producer.

"Each of the bills approved today represent significant steps in ensuring energy reliability, sustainability and affordability for Pennsylvania families and businesses."

"Pennsylvania has one of the most diverse energy portfolios in the United States.

"I believe an Independent Energy Office can streamline our approach to responsible energy policy and ensure a more cohesive strategy for managing our vast natural resources."

The bills were then referred into and out of the Senate Appropriations Committee and are now on the Senate Calendar for action.

Sen. Gene Yaw (R-Lycoming) serves as Majority Chair of the Senate Environmental Committee and can be contacted by calling 717-787-3280 or sending email to: gyaw@pasen.gov. Sen. Carolyn Comitta (D-Chester) serves as Minority Chair and can be contacted by calling 717-787-5709 or sending email to: senatorcomitta@pasenate.com.

Resource Links:

-- Gov. Shapiro's Work Group Concludes A Cap-And-Invest Carbon Pollution Regulation Program Would Be Optimal Approach To Reducing Greenhouse Emissions From Power Plants; Scale Up Solar Energy [PaEN]

-- Shapiro Administration Announces Appeal Of RGGI Rejection To PA Supreme Court To Preserve Authority For Future Governors [PaEN]

-- PA Senate Republicans Reintroduce Bills To Eliminate State Appeals Of Pipeline Permits; Limit Grounds For Appeal Of Any DEP Permits; Punish Communities For Protecting Their Constituents Against Shale Gas Drilling Impacts [PaEN]

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[Posted: January 27, 2025]

DEP Invites Comments At March 5 Hearing On Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit For Hazleton Generation Natural Gas Power Plant In Luzerne County

The Department of Environmental Protection published notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it will hold a March 5 hearing on a proposed Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit for the Hazleton Generation natural gas power plant in Hazle Township, Luzerne County. (PA Bulletin, page 1110)

The hearing will be held at the DEP Northeast Regional Office, 2 Public Square in Wilkes-Barre starting at 10:00 a.m.

To register to speak at the hearing, contact Mark Wejkszner, Program Manager, Air Quality Program, by sending an email to mwejkszner@pa.gov.

Speakers must preregister to testify at the hearing. The last day to preregister to speak at the hearing is March 3

Read the entire PA Bulletin notice for instructions on how to review the permit

application, submit comments and more background information. (PA Bulletin, page 1110)

For more information on environmental programs in Pennsylvania, visit DEP's website. Submit Environmental Complaints; Click Here to sign up for DEP's newsletter; sign up for DEP's eNotice; Like DEP on Facebook, Follow DEP on Twitter and visit DEP's YouTube Channel.

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[Posted: January 31, 2025]

House Energy Committee To Hold Feb. 4 Hearing On Bill Establishing $156 Million Federally-Funded Solar For All Program

The House Energy Committee is scheduled to hold a February 4 hearing on House Bill 362 (Fiedler-D-Philadelphia) authorizing the PA Energy Development Authority to establish a $156 million federally-funded Solar For All Program (sponsor summary).



Pennsylvania is now prohibited from investing the $156 million it was awarded by a provision in the Fiscal Code passed last year with the state budget, so legislation like this must be passed to use the funding. [Read more here.]

The President has also ordered a sweeping review of federal funding for programs like this to see if it is in line with the new administration's objectives. Read more here.

On January 30, E&E NewsPolitico reported the US Environmental Protection Agency sent letters to recipients of the Solar For All Program informing them their grants have been frozen until further notice. Read more here.

The tentative agenda for the hearing includes these presenters-

First Panel

-- Emily Schapira, CEO, Philadelphia Energy Authority

-- (Tentative) **Geoff Bristow**, COO, PA Energy Development Authority

-- (Tentative) Testifier selected by Chairman Causer, should he include one

Second Panel

-- Ian Smith, Director of Residential Consultations, EIS Solar

-- Justin Mason, Pennsylvania Conservative Energy Forum

-- Joanne Tosti-Vasey, Homeowner, Centre County

The hearing will be held in Room B31 Main Capital starting at 10:00 a.m. Click Here to watch online.

Rep. Elizabeth Fiedler (D-Philadelphia) serves as Majority Chair of the House Energy Committee and can be contacted by calling 215-271-9190 or click here to contact. Rep. Martin Causer (R-Cameron) serves as Minority Chair and can be contacted by calling 717-787-5075 or by sending email to: mcauser@pahousegop.com.

***(Photo:** EIS Solar installation in Western Pennsylvania.)*

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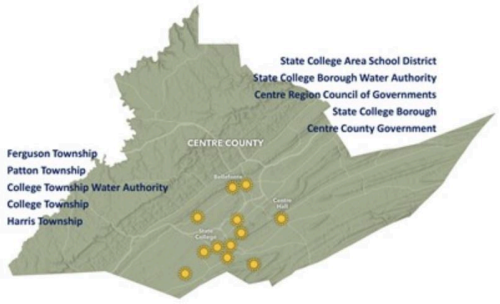
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-- Inquirer: Escalating Demand And Diminished Supply Has Spiked PUC Concern About The Future Ability Of State's Electric Grid
-- Post-Gazette Guest Essay: Transformational Investments In Renewables, Energy Efficiency Are Designed To Lower Energy Costs For Pennsylvania Consumers - By Molly Parzen, Conservation Voters Of PA
[Posted: January 29, 2025]

10 Government Entities In Centre County Approve Solar Energy Purchase Agreement To Save Local Taxpayers $4.4 Million Over 15 Years



On January 30, ten government entities in Centre County announced they have officially entered into a 15-year contract to supply their operations with renewable energy from a nearby solar project.

It is believed that this cooperative solar purchase agreement is the first of its kind in Pennsylvania.

"The ten members of the Centre County solar working group are excited to prove that we can work together to provide affordable Pennsylvania renewable energy. We are addressing budgetary stability and climate action at the same time," **said Peter Buck, Chair of the Centre County Solar Working Group and Director on the State College Area School District's Board.** "This project can serve as a model for other local government officials across Pennsylvania to emulate, and come together to bring future collaborative solar energy purchase agreements to fruition like this one."

The solar array supplying the energy will be located in Walker Township, Centre County and is expected to supply upwards of 80% of the electricity usage needed for the participating government entities, approximately 22 megawatts.

It's also expected to deliver significant savings to local taxpayers by locking into energy rates for the next 15 years, to the tune of nearly $4.4 million for all ten entities.

"For me, and I believe for many folks, solar power is the poster child of climate action," **said Betsy Whitman, Patton Township Supervisor and member of the Solar Power Purchase Agreement Working Group**. "I delight seeing it on home and industrial roofs, on small fields next to interstates, and as agrovoltaic projects complimented by sheep or more shade tolerant crops. It will save us money, reduce our carbon footprint, and add to the electrical grid."

The entities include the county government for Centre County, the Centre Region Council of Governments, the townships of College, Ferguson, Harris, and Patton, State College Borough, the State College Borough Water Authority and College Township Water Authority, and the State College Area School District.

"The ten Centre County decision makers and government entities involved in this effort should pat themselves on the back for this groundbreaking project," **said David Masur, Executive Director for the statewide nonprofit organization PennEnvironment**. "We are hopeful that other government officials across Pennsylvania will follow Centre County's lead and implement similar projects all across the Keystone State."

The number of entities involved in this solar power purchase agreement is likely groundbreaking in Pennsylvania.

While governments collaborating to make collective purchases is commonplace, it is believed that an agreement involving this many government entities for solar power has not happened before in the Commonwealth and perhaps the nation.

Buck said he wants people to see this project as part of Pennsylvania's legacy-- "At a time when our citizens and our kids are calling on us to act on climate change and just get things done, central Pennsylvania's leaders are delivering."

The project's commercial operation date is set for Fall 2026.

Related Articles This Week- Renewables:

-- House Energy Committee To Hold Feb. 4 Hearing On Bill Establishing $156 Million Federally-Funded Solar For All Program [PaEN]

-- 10 Government Entities In Centre County Approve Solar Energy Purchase Agreement To Save Local Taxpayers $4.4 Million Over 15 Years [PaEN]

-- Pennsylvania Solar Center Now Accepting Nominations For 2025 Lodestar Awards [PaEN]

NewsClips:

-- Wall Street Journal: New Federal Administration Memo Orders Agencies To Broadly Pause All Federal Grants, Loans, Financial Assistance Programs Pending Review [PDF of Article]

-- AP: Federal Judge Temporarily Blocks New Administration's Freeze On Federal Grants And Loans

-- AP: President Rescinds Memo Freezing Federal Money After Widespread Confusion; Executive Orders Requiring Funding Review Still In 'Full Force'

-- AP: President Rescinds Funding Freeze But Uncertainty Lives On For Wide Array Of Environmental Programs

-- E&ENews/Politico: EPA Freezes Federal Solar For All Program Funding Until Further Notice [PA Was Due To Receive $156 Million]

-- Post-Gazette Guest Essay: Transformational Investments In Renewables, Energy Efficiency Are Designed To Lower Energy Costs For Pennsylvania Consumers - By Molly Parzen, Conservation Voters Of PA

-- Post-Gazette - Anya Litvak: Beech Hollow 215 MW Solar, 100MW Battery Energy Project On Waste Coal Pile In Washington County Has Been Abandoned Due To Uncertainties Over Reclamation Of Waste Pile

-- WPXI: Proposed Solar Energy Facility In North Sewickley Twp., Beaver County Denied

-- Kleinman Center For Energy Policy Blog: Rising Toward A Cleaner Future: PA's Carbon Capture And Storage Ladder For Industrial Decarbonization

-- Pittsburgh Business Times: GE Vernova Investing $10 Million In Findlay Twp. Facility, Will

Create 270 Jobs To Support Solar Energy Battery Storage
[Posted: January 30, 2025]

Pennsylvania Solar Center Now Accepting Nominations For 2025 Lodestar Awards

The Pennsylvania Solar Center is now accepting nominations for the 2025 Lodestar Awards to recognize the solar energy leadership of businesses, municipalities, farms, solar energy developers or any other organizations. The deadline for nominations is May 15.

Lodestar awardees will benefit from media promotion surrounding the event, as well as the ability to proudly display the award on their website and branding materials.

Click Here to make a nomination.

Visit the PA Solar Center's Lodestar Awards webpage to learn more about the award.

The Pennsylvania Solar Center is a nonpartisan, nonprofit effort to raise the awareness of the benefits of solar energy in Pennsylvania. Click Here to sign up for regular updates.

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-- Pittsburgh Business Times: GE Vernova Investing $10 Million In Findlay Twp. Facility, Will Create 270 Jobs To Support Solar Energy Battery Storage
[Posted: January 28, 2025]

CANCELED: DEP Invites Comments At Feb. 19 Hearing On A Proposed Title V RACT 3

Air Quality Permit For The Cleveland-Cliffs Steel Butler Works In Butler County

[Rescheduled to March 19] The Department of Environmental Protection published notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it will hold a February 19 hearing on the proposed Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit for the Cleveland-Cliffs Steel Butler Works in Butler Township, Butler County. (PA Bulletin, page 1110)

The hearing will be held at DEP's Northwest Regional Office, 230 Chestnut Street in Meadville starting at 10:00 a.m.

Persons wishing to present testimony should register with Matthew Williams, Environmental Group Manager, Air Quality Program, at matwilliam@pa.gov or phone 814-332-6940.

Speakers must pre-register in order to testify at the hearing. Registration to testify will close at 4:00 p.m. on February 12

Read the entire PA Bulletin notice for instructions on how to review the permit, submit comments and for more background information. (PA Bulletin, page 1110)

For more information on environmental programs in Pennsylvania, visit DEP's website. Submit Environmental Complaints; Click Here to sign up for DEP's newsletter; sign up for DEP's eNotice; Like DEP on Facebook, Follow DEP on Twitter and visit DEP's YouTube Channel.

[Posted: January 31, 2025]

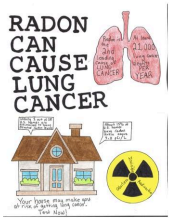
DEP Announces Winners Of Student Radon Poster Contest, Encourages Pennsylvanians To Test For Radon

On January 29, the Department of Environmental Protection announced the winners of the 2025 Pennsylvania Student Radon Poster Contest and continues to encourage Pennsylvanians to test their homes for radon as part of the department's ongoing National Radon Action Month outreach.



#1 First Place Radon is a Spooky Thing

Regan, Grade 7, North Hills Middle School
A Student of Ms. Anita Rodriguez



#2 Second Place Radon Can Cause Lung Cancer

Audrey, Grade 9, Monroe Career and Technical Institute
A Student of Mr. Ross Ruschman



#3 Third Place Test Your Home for Radon

David, Grade 4, Pittston Area Intermediate Center
A Student of Mr. Kyle Wruble

First place in the 2025 Pennsylvania Student Radon Poster Contest went to **Regan Schall**, a seventh-grade student at North Hills Middle School in Pittsburgh, whose poster will be entered into a national student radon poster contest.

Audrey Rau, a ninth-grade student at Monroe Career and Technical Institute in Bartonsville, Monroe County, earned second place.

And **David Culp**, a fourth-grade student at Pittston Area Intermediate Center in Pittston, Luzerne County, earned third place.

"We want to thank all the students who participated in this year's Student Radon Poster Contest," **said DEP Radon Program Manager Bob Lewis**. "We're pleased to include these winning posters as part of our radon educational outreach to Pennsylvanians in 2025."

Winners of the 2025 Pennsylvania Student Radon Poster Contest are also helping DEP educate Pennsylvanians about the importance of testing their homes for the radioactive gas.

Posters were judged by DEP staff on subject matter accuracy and other criteria.

[DEP enters the first-place poster into the National Radon Poster Contest, sponsored by the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors. Cash prizes will be awarded by the American Lung Association (ALA) for the top three winning National posters.]

Visit DEP's Student Radon Poster Contest webpage for more on the contest and past winners.

Radioactive Radon

Radon is an invisible, odorless, radioactive gas that enters homes from the ground as a result of the breakdown of uranium and radium in rocks and soil.

"Around 40 percent of Pennsylvania homes have higher levels of radon gas than federal guidelines consider safe. However, every Pennsylvanian should take radon awareness seriously, as it poses significant potential health risks. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States, second only to smoking," **DEP Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley said**. "What makes radon particularly concerning is that you can't see it, smell it, or taste it. There are no symptoms to alert you to its presence in the home. That is why every Pennsylvanian should ensure their families are safe and test for radon."

Pennsylvania is particularly prone to elevated radon levels, and the only way homeowners can know for certain if they have a radon problem is to test their home.

DEP recommends that all homes, public and private buildings get tested. The best time to test is during the colder months, when homes and buildings are closed and radon is most likely to be trapped and build up to higher levels.

Radon is responsible for an estimated 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year in the U.S., according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and about 40 percent of Pennsylvania homes have radon levels above the EPA action level of 4.0 pCi/L (picocuries per liter).

While radon problems may be more common in some regions, there is potential for any home to have high radon levels.

Radon Test Kits

Radon test kits are also available at many home improvement and hardware stores, as well as from Pennsylvania-certified radon laboratories. Radon test kits typically cost approximately $20-$30.

Completed test kits are sent to a Pennsylvania-certified lab where the sample is analyzed, and the results are sent to the home or building owner.

Homeowners are also able to hire a state-certified radon testing company to do the testing for them.

The public is encouraged to call DEP's Radon Division at 717-783-3594, or the Radon Hotline at 800-237-2366, for help with interpretation of their test results and what follow-up action may be necessary.

Permanent radon mitigation systems typically cost between $800 and $1,200 and require minimal maintenance.

A list of state-certified radon contractors, labs, and testers is available on DEP's website. The list is also available by calling 1-800-23-RADON.

Visit DEP's Radon In The Home webpage to learn more.

Click Here for DEP's announcement.

PA Discovers Radon

Thomas Gerusky, the late Director of the DEP Bureau of Radiation Protection, detailed

the discovery of high levels of radon in homes in Pennsylvania in a 1987 Journal of Environmental Health article that led to the establishment of the first residential radon monitoring, education and remediation effort in the country.

In the late 1970s, PPL Utilities did a study of radon in the homes of its employees that found elevated radon in some homes that was reported to the Bureau of Radiation Protection.

DEP had planned to do a pilot survey to determine home radon levels, but the March 1979 accident at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant changed the Bureau's priorities.

Plans for a survey were again being made in 1984, when DEP received a call in December from the Health Physicist at the Limerick Nuclear Power Plant saying a construction worker at the plant that was still under construction with no radioactive materials, set off radiation alarms going into the plant site.

A survey of the worker's home in Berks County found high levels of radon. At the time, there were no standards of exposure for individuals in the general population.

The family was advised to vacate the residence in a letter signed by the state Secretary of Health and DEP.

The Philadelphia Electric Company and Bechtel, Inc., the owner and contractor for Limerick, assisted the worker in providing living arrangements until remedial action could be taken in the affected home.

DEP did a door-to-door survey of homes in the area and found others with elevated radon levels.

Click Here to read the entire article and find out what happened next.

For more information on environmental programs in Pennsylvania, visit DEP's website. Submit Environmental Complaints; Click Here to sign up for DEP's newsletter; sign up for DEP's eNotice; Like DEP on Facebook, Follow DEP on Twitter and visit DEP's YouTube Channel.

[Posted: January 29, 2025]

Commonwealth Financing Authority Announces $16 Million In Act 13 Funding For Watershed Restoration, Flood Mitigation, Recreation; Small Water & Sewer Application Period Opening



On January 28, the Commonwealth Financing Authority announced the award of $16 million in grants and loans funded by the Act 13 drilling impact fee for watershed restoration, flood mitigation, recreation, sewage and oil and gas well plugging.

"These significant investments are creating safe and healthy communities, and delivering real results for Pennsylvanians," **said DCED Secretary Rick Siger.**

"From funding flood mitigation projects, rehabbing our recreational trails, plugging abandoned wells and restoring watersheds, these are projects that will enhance our community and economy while improving the quality of life for Pennsylvanians."

The funding approved included--

-- Abandoned Mine Drainage Abatement & Treatment Program (AMDATP) – **one project**

approved; $64,482 total funding. The program provides funding for abandoned mine drainage, abatement, and treatment. The Villanova College of Engineering was approved for funding for a research study of the use of shrimp shell and eggshell waste for acid mine drainage in Radnor Township, Delaware County.

-- Watershed Restoration Protection Program (WRPP) – **16 projects approved; $1,482,434 total funding**. The program provides funding for watershed restoration and protection projects. For example, Kingsley Township was approved for $140,000 in funding for the Tionesta Creek Stream Bank Restoration Project in Forest County.

-- Baseline Water Quality Data Program (BWQDP) – **one project approved; $105,594 total funding**. The program provides funding for statewide initiatives to establish baseline water quality data on private water supplies. Doylestown Township in Bucks County was approved for funding for the collection of private water supply samples.

-- Flood Mitigation Program (FMP) – **9 projects approved; $1,038,600 total funding.** The program provides funding for statewide initiatives to assist with flood mitigation projects. For example, Clearfield Borough was approved for $125,000 in funding for the Stinky Run Flood Control Project in Clearfield County.

-- The Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) – **117 projects approved; $13,062,240 total funding**. The program provides funding for the planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks and beautification projects. For example, the City of Williamsport was approved for $80,000 in funding for improvements to Young's Woods Park in Lycoming County.

-- Orphan or Abandoned Well Plugging Program (OAWP) – **one project approved; $70,000 total funding.** The program provides funding for orphan or abandoned well plugging projects. The Well Done Foundation was approved for $70,000 in funding to plug two gas wells both located in Millcreek Township, Erie County.

-- Sewage Facilities Program (SFP) – **three projects approved; $194,926 total funding**. The program provides funding for statewide initiatives for complying with the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act. For example, West Manheim Township in York County was approved for $37,426 for planning costs associated with the update to their Act 537 plan.

A full list of the following approvals is available on the CFA's website.

Visit the CFA's Act 13 Programs webpage for more information on these funding opportunities.

Applications will be accepted annually for these programs from February 1 to May 31. Questions should be directed to 717-787-6245.

New Grant Round Opening

The CFA announced the application period for the PA Small Water and Sewer Program will begin on February 3 and run through April 30, 2025.

Municipalities and Municipal Authorities are eligible to apply for these grants to cover the costs of activities to assist with the construction, improvement, expansion, or rehabilitation or repair of water supply systems, sanitary sewer systems, and storm water system projects.

Visit the Commonwealth Financing Authority webpage for information of other funding opportunities.

Related Articles:

-- Commonwealth Financing Authority Announces $16 Million In Act 13 Funding For Watershed Restoration, Flood Mitigation, Recreation; Small Water & Sewer Application Period

Opening [PaEN]
-- DEP Chesapeake Bay Healthy Waters Newsletter Highlights Nearly 16,700 BMPs In 2024; Grant Opportunities; County Clean Water Projects [PaEN]
-- Rodale Institute Accepting Applications For The Good Farmer Award [PaEN]
-- DEP Begins Accepting Applications For First Round Of Local Abandoned Mine Reclamation Grants March 3 [PaEN]
-- Appalachian Region Independent Power Producers Assn. Now Accepting Mine Reclamation Grant Applications [PaEN]
-- DCNR Now Accepting Applications For Recreation, Land Conservation, Riparian Buffers Thru April 2 [PaEN]
-- Registration Open! Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance June 4-5 Mine Pools As Beneficial Resources Conference At Bucknell University [PaEN]
-- Sponsorship Opportunities Available For Penn State ACAP Ag Conservation Conference April 1-3 In Harrisburg [PaEN]
-- Reminder: Call For Presentations: Penn State Extension Dive Deeper Summit For Water Educators Sept. 25 In Harrisburg
-- Lancaster Clean Water Partners News: Focus On Cover Crops; 75 Years Of Conservation; MS4 Stormwater Listening Session
-- Environmental Quality Board Invites Comments On 96 Stream Water Quality Redesignations In 29 Counties; Virtual Hearing March 13 [PaEN]
-- Penn State Extension To Hold Feb. 21 In-Person Volunteer Live Staking Workshop In Cumberland County [PaEN]
-- Save The Date! May 13-15 DCNR Watershed Forestry Summit [PaEN]
-- Penn State Extension Water Cooler Talk Feb. 26 Quality Of PA Roadside Springs Webinar [PaEN]
-- Inquirer: President Wants US To Be 'Leading' Producer Of Non-Fuel Minerals; Here's How PA Could Help; Rare Earth Elements Could Be More Important Than Expansion Of Fracking [PDF of Article]
-- Interfaith Partners For The Chesapeake Bay Hosts 3-Part Online Faithful Green Leaders Training Starting March 11 [PaEN]
-- Apply Now! PA Master Naturalist Volunteer Spring Training Offered In Adams, Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Dauphin, Indiana, Montour, Philadelphia, Somerset Counties [PaEN]

NewsClips:

-- York Daily Record: The Hellbender, PA's Official State Amphibian, Is Proposed For Endangered Species Status
-- Beaver Times: Beaver County Receives State Grants For Parks, Green Spaces
-- Post-Gazette - Anya Litvak: Billions Have Been Allocated To PA From Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure, Inflation Reduction Acts, New Administration Ordered Halt To Disbursements [Water Infrastructure, Mine Reclamation, Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging, $396 million in RISE PA decarbonization funding]
-- The Allegheny Front - Reid Frazier: Nearly $1 Million Federal Stormwater Climate Grant In Allegheny County Environmental Justice Communities [New Administration Froze Disbursements In This And Other Programs]
-- Delaware RiverKeeper Jan. 31 RiverWatch Video Report
-- Altoona Mirror: Rain Garden Projects Get Logan Township Approval In Blair

[Posted: January 28, 2025]

DEP Chesapeake Bay Healthy Waters Newsletter Highlights Nearly 16,700 BMPs In 2024; Grant Opportunities; County Clean Water Projects



The latest DEP Chesapeake Bay Healthy Waters Newsletter highlights 2024 accomplishments, upcoming Watershed Forestry Summit, upcoming grant opportunities, county clean water projects and much more.

Nearly 16,700 BMPs

The 2024 Chesapeake Bay Best Management Practice (BMP) Progress Year reporting process is nearing completion, with the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Division having finalized its nonpoint source data submissions ahead of EPA's deadline.

Based on the initial submission of all of PA's partners' nonpoint source data, PA is currently reporting nearly 16,700 Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the 2024 Progress Year, which is an increase of more than 2,100 BMPs.

The reported number of BMPs is an estimated figure at this time. Some adjustments may occur during the final validation process.

EPA Recognizes PA's Bay Efforts

In December, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Program recounted Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions' big wins from the year.

They recognized and celebrated Pennsylvania's efforts to delist streams at a rapid pace.

Pennsylvania conservationists are focused on restoring the health of small, local streams that are on the federal Clean Water Act's impaired waters list. Partners within the Commonwealth are working to delist 30 streams impaired by farm runoff by installing BMPs such as streamside trees, stream fencing, and manure storage facilities.

In 2024, five stream segments were delisted and an additional 12 segments were close to joining them.

This effort was largely inspired by work completed in the Turtle Creek watershed, where 12.7 miles were delisted after farmers, local conservation groups, and state leaders joined together to install roughly 1,368 stream-stabilizing structures and 10,927 feet of streambank fencing.

Other Articles

-- Second Annual Clean Water Gathering of State Program and Local County Action Leaders
-- DCNR Celebrates Investment in Trails, Highlights Work to Extend Susquehanna River Walk
-- DCNR Next Round Of Community Conservation Partnership Grants Now Open
-- DEP Awards $19.6 Million to Address Largest Inventory of Abandoned Mines in the Nation
-- U.S. Senators Celebrate Passage of Historic $92 Million Reauthorization of the Chesapeake Bay Program and Other Key Watershed Conservation Measures
-- NRCS-PA Announces Additional Funding Opportunity For Preserved Farms
-- Susquehanna River Basin Commission Announces Award of Over $155,000 to Support 34

Local Watershed Improvement Projects
-- Susquehanna Greenway Mini-Grant Program Awards $40,000 to Recreation, Signage and Education Projects
-- PA State Conservation Commission Wins Natural Resource Award
-- Penn State Extension to Host Feb. 10 Webinar About Restoring and Maintaining Native Grasslands
-- Wetlands Learning Modules Available on DEP's Clean Water Academy
-- WeConservePA to Host Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference April 2-4
-- Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay to Host 2025 Wild and Scenic Film Festival March 5 In Lancaster County

Counties In Action

-- BMP Installation at Two Berks County Equine Operations
-- Heavy Use Area Installation Addresses Resource Concerns at Huntingdon County Farm
-- Lebanon County Conservation District Launches New Free Pre-sidedress Soil Nitrate Testing Program
-- Floodplain Restoration Efforts Address Nutrient Pollution Concerns along York County Rail Trail

Click Here to read the entire Health Waters newsletter.

Visit DEP's Chesapeake Bay Watershed webpage to learn more about cleaning up rivers and streams in Pennsylvania's portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Click Here to sign up for regular updates on Pennsylvania's progress.

How Clean Is Your Stream?

The draft 2024 report has an interactive report viewer that allows you to zoom in to your own address to see if the streams near you are impaired and why.

Click Here to check out your streams. Click Here for a tutorial on using the viewer.

*(**Photos:** Row 1-- Equine farm operations restoration in Berks County; Row 2-- Before and after restoration of Oil Creek, York County.)*

(Reprinted from DEP's latest Chesapeake Bay Program newsletter. Click Here to sign up for your own copy.)

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-- Altoona Mirror: Rain Garden Projects Get Logan Township Approval In Blair
[Posted: January 27, 2025]

Appalachian Region Independent Power Producers Assn. Now Accepting Mine Reclamation Grant Applications

The Appalachian Region Independent Power Producers Association has again partnered with the Eastern and Western Pennsylvania Coalitions for Abandoned Mine Reclamation to offer mine reclamation and treatment grants. Applications are due April 15.

EPCAMR and WPCAMR respectively, to offer competitive awards to watershed and conservancy organizations facilitating abandoned mine drainage (AMD) and/or abandoned mine land (AML) remediation projects in Pennsylvania.

Awards are granted under the guidance and administration of EPCAMR and WPCAMR.

The amount distributed by ARIPPA in 2025 will be $6,000. However, the total grant award could potentially increase depending on contributions from other donors.

Eligible Applicants are environmental organizations with 501(c)(3) non-profit status or conservation districts in Pennsylvania who provide a letter stating the organization supports ARIPPA, including the removal and conversion of coal refuse into alternative energy and the beneficial use of CFB ash for AML/AMD reclamation purposes.

Funding may be used for, but it not limited to, the following:

-- Operations, maintenance, and rehabilitation of AMD treatment systems
-- Stream monitoring equipment purchases
-- Analyses and watershed plans
-- Vegetation management and erosion control
-- Educational purposes to promote AMD/AML reclamation
-- Supplies for trash cleanups
-- Drone purchase and training to use as a tool to promote AMD/AML reclamation

Click Here for all the details.

ARIPPA plants are important contributors in the cleanup of AML sites and the associated air and water pollutants throughout the Appalachian region.

To date, the Pennsylvania facilities alone have remediated more than 250 million tons of coal refuse, improved or restored more than 1,200 miles of streams, and reclaimed more than 7,200 acres of abandoned mine lands in the state.

However, much work remains to address this problem. AML projects in particular are costly and long-term endeavors often taken on by non-profit organizations that operate through grant funds.

According to the Department of Environmental Protection's Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board, the average cost of an AML project is at least $8,000 per acre.

If AMD is present on those lands, the cost could be even higher. The ARIPPA AMD/AML Reclamation Grants are designed to help environmental organizations and conservation districts continue their efforts toward improving our environment.

Click Here for the announcement.

(Reprinted from the latest Abandoned Mine Posts. Click Here to sign up for your own copy.

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[Posted: January 27, 2025]

Environmental Quality Board Invites Comments On 96 Stream Water Quality Redesignations In 29 Counties; Virtual Hearing March 13

The Environmental Quality Board published notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin inviting comments on 96 stream water quality redesignations in 29 counties.

The proposed stream redesignations included in the regulatory package approved by the Board are the result of data submitted by the Fish and Boat Commission and stream evaluations conducted by DEP.

There are 96 streams or stream segments included from Berks, Blair, Cambria, Cameron,

Carbon, Centre, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Crawford, Dauphin, Elk, Forest, Franklin, Indiana, Jefferson, Lehigh, Luzerne, McKean, Mifflin, Monroe, Northampton, Perry, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Tioga, Venango and York counties.

Click Here for EQB background documents on this rulemaking (September 2024 meeting).

Virtual Hearing

The EQB will hold a virtual hearing on the redesignations March 13 starting at 2:00 p.m. Persons wishing to present testimony at a hearing are requested to contact the Environmental Quality Board, P.O. Box 8477, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477, (717) 783-8727, or RA-EPEQB@pa.gov, at least 1 week in advance of the hearing to reserve a time to present testimony.

Members of the public wishing to observe a virtual public hearing without providing testimony are also directed to access the Board's webpage.

Read the entire PA Bulletin notice for more information and instructions on how to submit comments.

Related Articles:

-- Commonwealth Financing Authority Announces $16 Million In Act 13 Funding For Watershed Restoration, Flood Mitigation, Recreation; Small Water & Sewer Application Period Opening [PaEN]

-- DEP Chesapeake Bay Healthy Waters Newsletter Highlights Nearly 16,700 BMPs In 2024; Grant Opportunities; County Clean Water Projects [PaEN]

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[Posted: January 31, 2025]

DEP Invites Comments At March 3 Hearing On An Individual NPDES Stormwater Permit For Route 115 Associates Warehouse Project In Tunkhannock Twp., Monroe County

The Department of Environmental Protection published notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it will hold a March 3 hearing on an Individual NPDES Stormwater Permit for a Route 115 Associates, LLC warehouse project in Tunkhannock Township, Monroe County. (PA Bulletin, page 1167)

The proposed project will impact Tunkhannock Creek (Exceptional Value) and Keiper Run (Exceptional Value).

Representatives from the Department's Waterways and Wetlands Program, the Monroe County Conservation District, and Route 115 Associates, LLC will be in attendance.

The hearing will be held at the Tunkhannock Township Volunteer Fire Hall, located at 1539 Long Pond Road, Long Pond, Monroe County starting at 6:00 p.m.

Individuals wishing to testify at the hearing submit a written notice of intent to Colleen Connolly, Community Relations Coordinator at: coconnolly@pa.gov. The Department will accept requests up to the day of the hearing.

Read the entire PA Bulletin notice for information on how to review the permit, submit comments and other background information. (PA Bulletin, page 1167)

For more information on environmental programs in Pennsylvania, visit DEP's website. Submit Environmental Complaints; Click Here to sign up for DEP's newsletter; sign up for DEP's eNotice; Like DEP on Facebook, Follow DEP on Twitter and visit DEP's YouTube Channel.
Related Articles:
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Opening [PaEN]
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[Posted: January 31, 2025]

Rodale Institute Accepting Applications For The Good Farmer Award



On January 30, the Rodale Institute and DAVINES Group announced the launch of The Good Farmer Award U.S. to recognize beginning farmers implementing ecologically sound agricultural practices, building biodiversity on their farm, and who are fostering resilience, sustainability, and social equity.
The deadline for applications is March 22.
The award builds upon the success of the Italian edition of The Good Farmer Award created by the European Regenerative Organic Center in Parma, Italy, which promotes sustainable agricultural practices and innovation.

The award includes a $10,000 grant and an all-expenses-paid trip to Parma, Italy.
Click Here to submit applications and for all the details.

For more information on programs, initiatives, research, assistance available to farmers, and upcoming events, visit the Rodale Institute website. Upcoming Events. Like them on Facebook. Follow them on Twitter. Check out their YouTube Channel.

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[Posted: January 30, 2025]

Sponsorship Opportunities Available For Penn State ACAP Ag Conservation Conference April 1-3 In Harrisburg



Individuals working in agricultural conservation can dive into professional development opportunities by attending the "ACAP Ag Conservation Con," April 1-3. at Best Western Premier: The Central Hotel and Conference Center, 800 E. Park Drive, Harrisburg.

Event organizers anticipate more than 200 conservation professionals from around the state will attend the second annual conference.

Organizers noted that various levels of event sponsorships are available, which include conference registrations, recognition in the banquet program, exhibit tables and other perks.

The Center for Agricultural Conservation Assistance Training, administered by Penn State Extension, will host the event.

This conference is designed for conservation district employees, agricultural conservation

professionals, and anyone associated with the Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program or other conservation financial assistance programs.

The event is aimed at enhancing skills, expanding knowledge and growing the capacity of the agricultural conservation workforce — both current and future.

Sponsors can set up an exhibit table for Day 1 and Day 2 of the conference. Additionally, the evening of Day 1 will feature a two-hour sponsor social followed by a conservation trivia contest.

Below are details on each level of sponsorship:

-- Bronze ($150) includes one full conference registration and recognition in the banquet program.

-- Silver ($300) includes one full conference registration, recognition in the banquet program and an exhibit table at the sponsor social.

-- Gold ($500) includes two full conference registrations, recognition in the banquet program, an exhibit table at the sponsor social, and logo and URL link recognition on Penn State Extension social media channels, including LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram, which reach more than 6,000 followers.

-- Platinum ($1,000) includes three full conference registrations, recognition in the banquet program, an exhibit table at the sponsor social, logo and URL link recognition on Penn State Extension social media channels, and a social media toolkit with images and URL for the event that can be used to promote sponsorship on the company's social media platforms.

This level also offers company name recognition in Spotify radio ads, recognition in the preconference slides and during breaks, and the opportunity to show a promotional video or PowerPoint slides.

The registration deadline for sponsors is March 9. More information is available on the Penn State Extension Sponsorship webpage.

The Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program is a program of the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission.

Resource Link:

-- Sen. Yaw To Introduce Bill To Use Revenue From Taxing Gambling Skill Games To Support Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program [PaEN]

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[Posted: January 29, 2025]

Penn State Extension To Hold Feb. 21 In-Person Volunteer Live Staking Workshop In Cumberland County

The Penn State Extension will hold an in-person Volunteer Live Staking Workshop on February 21 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Orrs Bridge Road Restoration Site, 1 Stone Spring Lane in Camp Hill, Cumberland County.

Participants will live stake a stretch of the Conodoguinet Creek, a local waterway in need of stream bank stabilization.

Live staking is a low-cost, easy method of adding fast-growing plants to the banks, helping to create more stable soils and improve the health of the creek. This hands-on event

offers both environmental impact and learning opportunities.

What should you bring?

-- Gloves
-- Water bottle
-- Hand pruners (if possible)
-- Waterproof boots or knee-high waders

Who is this for?

-- Anyone interested in learning about easy, low-cost stream restoration techniques
-- -- Master Watershed Stewards seeking hands-on restoration opportunities
Members of watershed associations interested in stream bank stabilization techniques

What will you learn?

-- The benefits of live staking for stream bank stabilization
-- Proper techniques for planting live stakes effectively

Click Here to register and for more information.

Visit the Penn State Extension website to learn more about many other educational opportunities.

Upcoming Extension Events

February 5-- Penn State Extension Woods In Your Backyard Series (Part 4 of 9) - Forest Ecology and Woodlot Management Techniques. 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
February 10-- Penn State Extension Hosts Webinar On Nitrogen - Crop Nutrient And Water Pollutant. Noon to 1:00 p.m.
February 11-- Penn State Extension (6 of 10) Pennsylvania Forests Webinar Seminar Series - Tree Communication. Noon and 7:00 p.m.
February 12-- Penn State Extension Woods In Your Backyard Series (Part 5 of 9) - Providing and Enhancing Wildlife Habitat. 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
February 14-- DCNR, Penn State Extension Meaningful Watershed Education Workshop At Greenwood Furnace State Park, Huntingdon County. 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
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Save The Date! May 13-15 DCNR Watershed Forestry Summit




The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will hold its 2025 Watershed Forestry Summit on May 13-15 at a location to be announced.

A request for proposals (RFP) for sessions/presentations will be released in the coming weeks, as well as registration for the event.

The Conference is an event for all conservation professionals who work with riparian forest buffers and lawn-to-habitat projects.

Practitioners, leaders, funders, and conveners of all experience levels are encouraged to attend and learn more about watershed forestry best management practices and their impacts on the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Watershed and beyond.

The three-day event will consist of one optional field trip day and two conference days. Questions should be directed to: c-stark@pa.gov.

Visit DCNR's Forest Buffers Along Waterways webpage to learn more about riparian buffer initiatives.

(Reprinted from DEP's latest Chesapeake Bay Program newsletter. Click Here to sign up for your own copy.)

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[Posted: January 29, 2025]

Penn State Extension Water Cooler Talk Feb. 26 Quality Of PA Roadside Springs Webinar

The Penn State Extension to host another Water Cooler Talk webinar February 26 on the Quality of Pennsylvania Roadside Springs from Noon to 1:00 p.m.

Discover the surprising truth about roadside springs in Pennsylvania during our upcoming Water Cooler Talk.

Often perceived as pristine drinking water sources, these unregulated springs can pose unexpected risks.

Join Penn State Extension experts as they share insights from a statewide water quality monitoring initiative that reveals what's really flowing through these commonly used water sources.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn how these findings may impact your health and community.

Who is this for?

-- Anyone interested in water resources
-- Those who work in the water field
-- Individuals with a general interest in water
-- Roadside spring users
-- Private water system users
-- Travelers and outdoor enthusiasts

What will you learn?

-- Current work happening in the water resource field
-- Insights into microbial and chemical contamination in springs
-- Opportunities to share ideas with professionals across Pennsylvania
-- The occurrence of contaminants of emerging concern in roadside springs

Click Here to register and for more information.

Visit the Penn State Extension website for information on many other educational opportunities.

Upcoming Penn State Extension Events

February 5-- Penn State Extension Woods In Your Backyard Series (Part 4 of 9) - Forest Ecology and Woodlot Management Techniques. 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
February 10-- Penn State Extension Hosts Webinar On Nitrogen - Crop Nutrient And Water Pollutant. Noon to 1:00 p.m.
February 11-- Penn State Extension (6 of 10) Pennsylvania Forests Webinar Seminar Series - Tree Communication. Noon and 7:00 p.m.
February 12-- Penn State Extension Woods In Your Backyard Series (Part 5 of 9) - Providing and Enhancing Wildlife Habitat. 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
February 14-- DCNR, Penn State Extension Meaningful Watershed Education Workshop At

Greenwood Furnace State Park, Huntingdon County. 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
February 19-- Penn State Extension Woods In Your Backyard Series (Part 6 of 9) - Identifying and Controlling Invasive Plants In Small Woodlots. 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
February 21-- Penn State Extension In-Person Volunteer Live Staking Workshop. Orrs Bridge Road Restoration Site, 1 Stone Spring Lane in Camp Hill, Cumberland County. 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.
February 24-- Penn State Extension Ag Water Webinar Series: PFAS 'Forever Chemicals' 101 For Farmers. Noon to 1:00 p.m.
February 26-- Penn State Extension Woods In Your Backyard Series (Part 7 of 9) - Healthy Woods - Common Insects and Diseases. 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
March 3-- Penn State Extension Ag Water Series Webinar: Practices To Mitigate Flooding & Drought. Noon to 1:00 p.m.
March 4-- Penn State Extension Webinar On Residential Stormwater Solutions - Rainwater Catchment Systems. Noon to 1:00 p.m.
March 5-- Penn State Extension Woods In Your Backyard Series (Part 8 of 9) - Converting Lawns to Natural Areas (Meadows and Woods). 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
March 10-- Penn State Extension Ag Water Series Webinar: Tile Drainage In Pennsylvania. Noon to 1:00 p.m.
March 11-- Penn State Extension (7 of 10) Pennsylvania Forests Webinar Seminar Series - Hazard Tree Analysis. Noon and 7:00 p.m.
March 12-- Penn State Extension Woods In Your Backyard Series (Part 9 of 9) - Putting Your Knowledge To Work - What's Your Plan? Map it Out. 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.
March 17-- Penn State Extension Ag Water Series Webinar: Where Does Water Go? Watersheds & Mapping. Noon to 1:00 p.m.
March 19-- Penn State Extension Pond Management Series (1 of 4). Noon to 1:00 p.m.
March 24-- Penn State Extension Ag Water Series Webinar: Countywide Clean Water Plans - Beyond 2025. Noon to 1:00 p.m.
March 26-- Penn State Extension Pond Management Series (2 of 4). Noon to 1:00 p.m.
April 2-- Penn State Extension Pond Management Series (3 of 4). Noon to 1:00 p.m.
April 8-- Penn State Extension (8 of 10) Pennsylvania Forests Webinar Seminar Series - Forest Resilience Scorecard for PA. Noon and 7:00 p.m.
April 9-- Penn State Extension Pond Management Series (4 of 4). Noon to 1:00 p.m.
May 13-- Penn State Extension (9 of 10) Pennsylvania Forests Webinar Seminar Series - Tree Nuts in Pennsylvania. Noon and 7:00 p.m.
May 13-15-- Save the Date: DCNR Watershed Forestry Summit
June 10-- Penn State Extension (10 of 10) Pennsylvania Forests Webinar Seminar Series - The Use of Slash Walls to Exclude Deer and Regenerate Native Forest Tree Species. Noon and 7:00 p.m.
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[Posted: January 29, 2025]

Interfaith Partners For The Chesapeake Bay Hosts 3-Part Online Faithfull Green Leaders Training Starting March 11

The Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake Bay has issued an invitation to congregations throughout the Bay Watershed to join the more than 200 other congregations who have answered the call to form Green Teams in their communities.

Interfaith Partners will be hosting a three-part, online Faithfull Green Leaders Training Program starting March 11 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

The other training sessions will be held on March 18 and 25.

Through the training you will learn--

-- How to establish and grow a green team at your congregation
-- About exciting environmental education programs to engage your congregation
-- How to develop an action plan for your Green Team
-- Ways to enhance your communication skills to help spread the word

All attendees are strongly encouraged to come with at least two other people from their congregation because there is no such thing as "a team of 1."

Click Here to register and for more information.

Check out the Interfaith Partners Team Building Resources if you need help.

For more information on programs, initiatives, upcoming events and how you can get involved, visit the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake website. Follow on Facebook and on Twitter. Click Here to sign up for regular updates (bottom of the page).

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[Posted: January 28, 2025]

PA Organization For Watersheds & Rivers Now Accepting Applications For 2025 Sojourn Grants

On January 31, the PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers is now accepting applications for Pennsylvania River Sojourns Grants. Applications are due March 14.

The Pennsylvania Sojourn Program is a nationally unique program that awards more than $50,000 in grants across the state to support local organizations and their sojourn events.

These grants support on average between 10 and 15 paddling events each year, encompassing over 400 river miles and 50+ on-the-water days, offering more than 100 educational programs, and engaging over 4,000 people.

Grants are available on a competitive basis for single and multi-day paddling events on Pennsylvania's waterways.

Sojourns must incorporate significant educational programming, and be open to all participants (i.e., private trips are not eligible).

Applicants can request up to $1,000 per on water day.

Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations with tax-exempt status 501(c)(3), municipalities, counties and educational institutions.

Grants require a 1:1 match in the form of cash and/or eligible non-cash (in-kind) services, or a combination of both cash and in-kind.

Please note that no portion of the match can be from DCNR.

Funding for the grants is provided through the Environmental Stewardship Fund administered by the DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Applications and instructions are now available at PEC's Grants & Awards webpage.

Visit POWR's Pennsylvania Sojourn Program webpage to learn more about sojourns.

The PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers, an affiliate of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, administers the Pennsylvania Sojourn program.

POWR has been in place for over a decade and has sponsored sojourn/paddling trips on many of the Commonwealth's rivers and streams.

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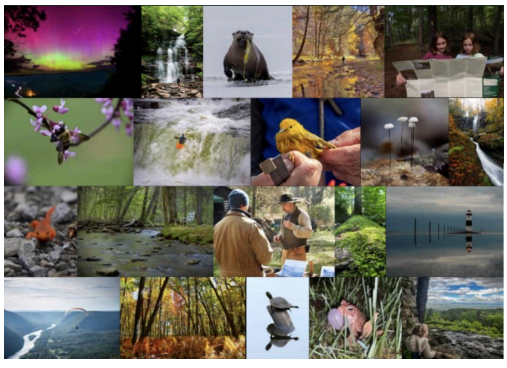
-- Republican Herald: Scout Reservation Land In Schuylkill County Now Permanently Protected

-- PA Capital-Star: PA House Committee Unanimously Backs Bike Lane Legislation

[Posted: January 31, 2025]

PA Parks & Forests Foundation Announces Winners Of 2024 Photo Contest

On January 28, the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation welcomed over 300 photos submissions for the 2024 "Leap In" Photo Contest and sends a 'congratulations' to all participants and the top 20 winners.



"The annual photo contest not only demonstrates the beauty and history of Pennsylvania's state parks and forests, it demonstrates peoples' connections to these special places," **said Marci Mowery, President of the Foundation**. "We applaud the photographers for capturing the images and we applaud the leaders who had the foresight to conserve these special places for today and generations to come."

The winners are--

Judge's Choice

-- Best in Show: Hilary Schnabel, Sproul State Forest
-- Awe: Carey Fritz, Clear Creek State Park
-- Beyond the Edge: Holly April Harris, Ohiopyle State Park
-- 'Leap In' to New Experiences: Gloria Benfer, Shikellamy State Park
-- 'Leap In' to the Lesser Known: Colin Gillette, Mount Pisgah State Park
-- 'Leap In' to Volunteering: Maureen Dwyer, Presque Isle State Park
-- Young Photographer (12-17): Andy Zhang, French Creek State Park

People's Choice

-- Best in Show: Jessica Mitchell, Kings Gap Environmental Education Center
-- Awe, First Place: Wendy Hampe, Forbes State Forests
-- Awe, Runner Up: Sabine Panzer, Kooser State Park
-- Beyond the Edge, First Place: Todd Underwood, French Creek State Park
-- Beyond the Edge, Runner Up: Rick Baker, Presque Isle State Park
-- 'Leap In' to New Experiences, First Place: Ally Latham, Ricketts Glen State Park
-- 'Leap In' to New Experiences. Runner Up: David Nolte, Hyner View State Park
-- 'Leap In' to the Lesser Known, First Place: Liz Mickley, Fowlers Hollow State Park
-- 'Leap In' to the Lesser Known, Runner Up: Jason Philibotte, Pinchot State Forest
-- 'Leap In' to Volunteering, First Place: Sam Rob, Pine Grove Furnace State Park
-- 'Leap In' to Volunteering, Runner Up: Linda Stager, Tioga State Forest
-- Young Photographer, First Place: Addelyn Brown, Ricketts Glen State Park
-- Young Photographer, Runner Up: Christian Scheibe, Weiser State Forest

Click Here to see all the winners and quotes from the photographers.

All of the 2024 submissions on PPFF's Facebook page.

The award winners' photographs will also hang in the East Wing Rotunda in the state capitol in April.

Watch the PPFF website for additional details as they become available.

2025 Photo Contest Now Open

The 2025 Photo Contest is now open to adults and youth! This years' theme focuses on Pennsylvanian's love of trails. Whether it's a slow forest bathing meander or extensive miles climbing mountains, PPFF encourages you to experience the journey.

Categories for this year include Beyond the Trail, Comradery on the Trail, Peaceful Easy Feeling, Tales from the Trail, Texture of the Trail, and Young Photographers (12-17).

The deadline for submissions is September 30.

For information on categories, rules, and submitting your photos, visit PPFF's 2025 Photo Contest webpage.

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[Posted: January 28, 2025]

Jan. 31 Take Five Fridays With Pam, PA Parks & Forests Foundation



The January 31 Take Five Fridays With Pam is now available from the PA Parks and Forests Foundation featuring articles on--
-- DCNR Invites Public Comments On New Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan
-- Photo Contest Winners Announced!
-- Enter 2025 Photo Contest!
-- Foundation RFP On Assessment Of Workforce Trends For PA Outdoor Corps Program
-- Masthead photo is also a Jigsaw Puzzle

Click Here to read the entire Take Five.

Visit the PA Parks & Forests Foundation's Events webpage and DCNR's Calendar of Events for activities happening near you.

Visit Explore PA Trails and Get Outdoors PA for recreation areas near you.

For more information on programs, initiatives, special events and how you can get involved, visit the PA Parks & Forests Foundation website. Click Here to sign up for regular updates from the Foundation, Like them on Facebook or Follow them on Twitter or tune in to their YouTube Channel. Click Here to become a member of the Foundation.

The Foundation mobilizes 65,000 volunteers annually to steward YOUR state parks and forests.

*(**Photo** by Jeff London, Cook Forest State Park, Clarion, Forest, Jefferson Counties.)*

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Apply Now! PA Master Naturalist Volunteer Spring Training Offered In Adams, Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Dauphin, Indiana, Montour, Philadelphia, Somerset Counties




PENNSYLVANIA Master Naturalist

Want to learn more about nature and how to protect it? Want to meet like-minded nature enthusiasts and make a difference together?

Pennsylvania Master Naturalist is a statewide partnership initiative that aims to connect people with their local ecosystems through intensive natural science training and local conservation service work.

It is a venture directed toward developing a local corps of "master volunteers and service providers" to offer education, outreach and service dedicated to the understanding and management of natural areas within their communities.

Pennsylvania Master Naturalist works closely with a coalition of community and conservation organizations to ensure that they have the necessary volunteer leadership to address the most pressing conservation needs and challenges.

This year-round program has three components: the initial volunteer training course, volunteer service, and continuing education.

Click Here to read more about becoming a Master Naturalist.

Spring Training

Spring training courses will be offered in Adams, Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Dauphin, Indiana, Montour, Philadelphia and Somerset counties.

Class sizes are small and fill quickly.

Click Here to apply and for more information.

To learn more about programs, initiatives and upcoming events, visit the PA Master Naturalist website.. Follow them on Facebook. Click Here to sign up for their email list.

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[Posted: January 27, 2025]

Help Wanted: PA Master Naturalist - Communications/Development Coordinator

PA Master Naturalist is seeking qualified applicants for a Communications/Development Coordinator to support its communication strategies as well as resource development activities to promote and advance a volunteer service-learning program devoted to natural resource conservation in communities throughout Pennsylvania.

This role involves creating public relations and promotional materials across various platforms, including social media, websites, newsletters, and press releases; overseeing website updates; managing internal and external communications and outreach to strategic partners; cultivating and stewarding volunteers and donors, and other responsibilities as needed.

Candidates should have strong written and verbal communication skills along with a relevant background in communications/marketing, resource development, and/or non-profit management.

Click Here for all the details.

To learn more about programs, initiatives and upcoming events, visit the PA Master Naturalist website.. Follow them on Facebook. Click Here to sign up for their email list.

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[PaEN]
-- PA Parks & Forests Foundation Announces Winners Of 2024 Photo Contest [PaEN]
-- Commonwealth Financing Authority Announces $16 Million In Act 13 Funding For Watershed Restoration, Flood Mitigation, Recreation; Small Water & Sewer Application Period Opening [PaEN]
-- Save The Date! May 13-15 DCNR Watershed Forestry Summit [PaEN]
-- Apply Now! PA Master Naturalist Volunteer Spring Training Offered In Adams, Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Dauphin, Indiana, Montour, Philadelphia, Somerset Counties [PaEN]
-- Help Wanted: PA Master Naturalist - Communications/Development Coordinator [PaEN]
NewsClips:
-- Tribune-Democrat: Path Of The Flood Trail Earns State's Trail Of The Year Award
-- Altoona Mirror: Path Of The Flood Trail Gets State Honor In Cambria County
-- Beaver Times: Beaver County Receives State Grants For Parks, Green Spaces
-- Altoona Mirror: Bedford Fulton Recreation Authority Received Grant For Trail Project Along Abandoned Turnpike

-- PennLive: Lebanon County Man Charged With Animal Cruelty After Trying To Run Over A Fox With A Snowmobile; Unclear With 17-Year Also Involved Was Charged
-- Inquirer: Charges Expected For Lebanon County Snowmobilers Who Ran Over Fox
-- City & State PA: PA Tourism Marketing Efforts Get Long-Overdue Upgrade
-- Erie Times: Ice Dunes At Presque Isle Are Beautiful, But Dangerous
-- Republican Herald: Scout Reservation Land In Schuylkill County Now Permanently Protected
-- PA Capital-Star: PA House Committee Unanimously Backs Bike Lane Legislation
[Posted: January 27, 2025]

Bristol Twp. Environmental Advisory Committee Bird Town Spotlight: The American Bittern

The following article is part a Bristol Township Environmental Advisory Committee initiative to educate community residents on endangered species in Bucks County.


Photo © Alan Murphy Photography

The American Bittern (Botaurus lentiginosus) is currently listed as "State Endangered" in Pennsylvania, and is protected by PA Title 34, Chapter 21 Game or Wildlife Protection, and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (16 U.S.C. 703-712).
This sleek statured bird stands 23-24 inches tall with an impressive 36-inch wingspan and an average adult weight of one pound.
It is identifiable by the dark and light brown colors of its plumage. A black streak rests on its upper neck with brown and white feather coloration running from the throat to the underbelly. Its legs are a distinct muted yellow color.
Native habitats include freshwater marshes with tall vegetation including cattails and bulrushes.
The unique feather patterns and coloration of the American bittern allow the species to camouflage with wetland plant species to avoid predation.

As a primarily nocturnal species, they are most active from dusk through the late hours of the night.

The American bittern is a carnivorous bird with a variable diet consisting of fish, crustaceans, amphibians, reptiles, small mammals such as voles, and insects (dragonflies, grasshoppers, and water beetles).

The population declined following the loss of wetland habitats in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

The US Geological Survey reported in the Water Supply Paper 2425 a loss of over 50% of Pennsylvania's wetlands in the last two centuries.

The Department of Environmental Protection reports that 4,660 acres have been restored since 1990 using regulatory and nonregulatory programs. American bittern declines can also be attributed to pesticides leaching into wetlands habitats poisoning species and causing decreases in unaffected invertebrate prey.

As an indicator species, the extinction of the American bittern will disrupt natural ecosystem functions.

Indicator species are animals or plants whose presence or absence help determine if an

ecosystem is healthy or not.

Extinction may facilitate prey population growth, particularly among vole species, such as the Eastern meadow vole (Microtus pennsylvanicus).

With a short gestation period, a singular female may produce 72 offspring per year. This may negatively impact foliage as voles graze on shrubs and the bark of small trees.

Voles are also carriers for salmonella, tularemia, rabies, fleas, and Lyme infected ticks.

[Visit the Game Commission's American Bittern webpage for more information.

[Visit the WeConservePA Environmental Advisory Council webpage to learn What's an EAC?]

Submitted By:

-- Arielle Trost *is the Secretary of the Bristol Township Bird Town Committee.*

-- Kody Brittingham *is the Chairman of the Bristol Township Environmental Advisory Committee.*

-- Rachel Omlor *is a Consultant to the Environmental Advisory Committee, with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Conservation from Cedar Crest College.*

Related Articles This Week:

-- DCNR Invites Public Comments To Help Shape A Bold Vision For Outdoor Recreation In PA; 5 Webinars Start Feb. 3 [PaEN]

-- DCNR: Path Of The Flood Trail In Cambria County Named 2025 Pennsylvania Trail Of The Year [PaEN]

-- PA Organization For Watersheds & Rivers Now Accepting Applications For 2025 Sojourn Grants [PaEN]

-- Jan. 31 Take Five Fridays With Pam, PA Parks & Forests Foundation [PaEN]

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-- Beaver Times: Beaver County Receives State Grants For Parks, Green Spaces

-- Altoona Mirror: Bedford Fulton Recreation Authority Received Grant For Trail Project Along Abandoned Turnpike

-- PennLive: Lebanon County Man Charged With Animal Cruelty After Trying To Run Over A Fox With A Snowmobile; Unclear With 17-Year Also Involved Was Charged

-- Inquirer: Charges Expected For Lebanon County Snowmobilers Who Ran Over Fox

-- City & State PA: PA Tourism Marketing Efforts Get Long-Overdue Upgrade

-- Erie Times: Ice Dunes At Presque Isle Are Beautiful, But Dangerous

-- Republican Herald: Scout Reservation Land In Schuylkill County Now Permanently Protected

-- PA Capital-Star: PA House Committee Unanimously Backs Bike Lane Legislation
[Posted: January 27, 2025]

Environment & Energy Educational Opportunities For Students & Adults

Opportunities to learn more about environmental and energy issues affecting Pennsylvania for students and adults--

Awards/Recognition
-- DCNR: Path Of The Flood Trail In Cambria County Named 2025 Pennsylvania Trail Of The Year [PaEN]
-- Tribune-Democrat: Path Of The Flood Trail Earns State's Trail Of The Year Award
-- Altoona Mirror: Path Of The Flood Trail Gets State Honor In Cambria County
-- DEP Announces Winners Of Student Radon Poster Contest, Encourages Pennsylvanians To Test For Radon [PaEN]
-- Rodale Institute Accepting Applications For The Good Farmer Award [PaEN]
-- PA Parks & Forests Foundation Announces Winners Of 2024 Photo Contest [PaEN]
-- Pennsylvania Solar Center Now Accepting Nominations For 2025 Lodestar Awards [PaEN]
Grants
-- First Community Foundation Partnership: 90+ Scholarships Available For Students In Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Mifflin, Northumberland, Sullivan, Snyder, Tioga, Union Counties
-- PA Organization For Watersheds & Rivers Now Accepting Applications For 2025 Sojourn Grants [PaEN]
Help Wanted
-- Fish & Boat Commission Recruiting New Class Of Waterways Conservation Officer Trainees
-- Help Wanted: PA Master Naturalist - Communications/Development Coordinator [PaEN]
-- Apply Now! PA Master Naturalist Volunteer Spring Training Offered In Adams, Allegheny, Beaver, Berks, Dauphin, Indiana, Montour, Philadelphia, Somerset Counties [PaEN]
Upcoming Events
-- House Energy Committee To Hold Feb. 4 Hearing On Bill Establishing $156 Million Federally-Funded Solar For All Program [PaEN]
-- E&ENews/Politico: EPA Freezes Federal Solar For All Program Funding Until Further Notice [PA Was Due To Receive $156 Million]
-- Penn State Extension To Hold Feb. 21 In-Person Volunteer Live Staking Workshop In Cumberland County [PaEN]
-- Penn State Extension Water Cooler Talk Feb. 26 Quality Of PA Roadside Springs Webinar [PaEN]
-- Interfaith Partners For The Chesapeake Bay Hosts 3-Part Online Faithful Green Leaders Training Starting March 11 [PaEN]
-- Save The Date! May 13-15 DCNR Watershed Forestry Summit [PaEN]
-- Lehigh Valley Wildlands Conservancy Highlights Upcoming Programs; Stream Team Volunteer Training; Much More
-- Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Now Accepting Registrations For Summer Nature Camps For Students Grades 1-6

-- Reminder: Call For Presentations: Penn State Extension Dive Deeper Summit For Water Educators Sept. 25 In Harrisburg

Public Participation

-- PA Oil & Gas Industrial Facilities: Permit Notices, Opportunities To Comment - February 1 [PaEN]

-- DEP Posted 89 Pages Of Permit-Related Notices In February 1 PA Bulletin [PaEN]

-- DCNR Invites Public Comments To Help Shape A Bold Vision For Outdoor Recreation In PA; 5 Webinars Start Feb. 3 [PaEN]

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-- DEP Invites Comments At March 3 Hearing On An Individual NPDES Stormwater Permit For Route 115 Associates Warehouse Project In Tunkhannock Twp., Monroe County [PaEN]

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-- Environmental Quality Board Invites Comments On 96 Stream Water Quality Redesignations In 29 Counties; Virtual Hearing March 13 [PaEN]

-- DEP Proposes To Add Nockamixon TCE Contamination To PA Priority List Of Hazardous Sites, Starts Process To Cleanup Contamination At The Source

-- Courier Times: Nockamixon Superfund Site Added To DEP's Priority Cleanup List; Here's What Happens Next

-- York Daily Record: The Hellbender, PA's Official State Amphibian, Is Proposed For Endangered Species Status

Programs/Information

-- York Daily Record: Lebanon DA Charged Both Snowmobilers With Animal Cruelty In Running Down Fox

-- PennLive: Lebanon County Man Charged With Animal Cruelty After Trying To Run Over A Fox With A Snowmobile; Unclear With 17-Year Also Involved Was Charged

-- Inquirer: Charges Expected For Lebanon County Snowmobilers Who Ran Over Fox

-- Sponsorship Opportunities Available For Penn State ACAP Ag Conservation Conference April 1-3 In Harrisburg [PaEN]

-- Erie Times: Ice Dunes At Presque Isle Are Beautiful, But Dangerous

-- The Allegheny Front: Inaugural Pennsylvania Chestnut Festival Promotes History And Conservation Efforts

-- The Guardian: Pennsylvania Flood Museum In Johnstown Temporarily Closed Due To Flooding

-- TribLive: Conservative Group Objects To Slippery Rock University STEM Program's Minority Recruitment

-- Kleinman Center For Energy Policy Blog: Rising Toward A Cleaner Future: PA's Carbon Capture And Storage Ladder For Industrial Decarbonization

Background On Issues

-- PUC: Calendar Year 2024 Act 13 Drilling Impact Fees To Remain Same As 2023; Dramatic Decline In Financial Support From Shale Gas Industry Continues [PaEN]

-- Range Resources And MarkWest Liberty Midstream File Legal Challenges To The 2,500 Foot Shale Gas Facility Setback Ordinance Adopted By Cecil Township, Washington County [PaEN]

-- The Energy Age Blog: Range Resources & MarkWest Liberty Midstream File Legal

Challenges Against 2,500 Foot Shale Gas Setback Ordinance In Cecil Twp., Washington County
-- Conventional Oil & Gas Industry Compliance With 2022 DEP Methane Reduction Regulation Put On Hold Pending Outcome Of Litigation [PaEN]
-- DEP Releases 2 Contracts For Bidding In Next Round Of Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging: 12 Wells In Kinzua State Park, McKean County, 18 Wells In Warren County [PaEN]
-- Rep. Vitali Introduces Bill To Restore DEP Authority To Increase Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging Bonds To Prevent Hundreds Of New Well Abandonments A Year [PaEN]
-- The Energy Age Blog: EQT Should Plug These Abandoned Conventional Wells In Peters Twp., Washington County Before Fracking From Mingo Well Pad
-- PA Republican Senator To Introduce Bill Suspending State Taxes On Natural Gas Producers; Cut DEP Permit Fees; End Drilling Moratorium On DCNR Lands; Exempt Coal-Fired Power Plants From EPA Regulations [PaEN]
-- Gov. Shapiro Proposes 'Lightning' Energy Plan To Increase & Diversify Energy Generation; Reduce Climate Changing Pollution; Lower Energy Costs; Create Jobs [PaEN]
-- Gov. Shapiro: What Industry Leaders, Lawmakers, Consumer Advocates Are Saying About The Governor's Commonsense Energy Plan
-- Gov. Shapiro Reaches Agreement With PJM To Prevent Unnecessary Price Hikes And Save Consumers Over $21 Billion On Utility Bills [PaEN]
-- PA Senate Republican Leader: 'Every Consumer Of Electricity In This Commonwealth Is Going To Pay More;' 'What You're Going To Face Is Going To Be Really Unpleasant' [PaEN]
-- Republicans On PA Senate Environmental Committee Report Out Bills To Eliminate Carbon Pollution Reduction Program Covering Power Plants, Establish Independent Energy Office [PaEN]
-- Utility Dive: PA Cryptocurrency Miner Stronghold-Scrubgrass Reclamation To Pay $1.4 Million To Settle Charges It Violated PJM Market Rules
-- Inquirer: Escalating Demand And Diminished Supply Has Spiked PUC Concern About The Future Ability Of State's Electric Grid
-- Post-Gazette Guest Essay: Transformational Investments In Renewables, Energy Efficiency Are Designed To Lower Energy Costs For Pennsylvania Consumers - By Molly Parzen, Conservation Voters Of PA
-- Citizens Voice: Lawmakers Raise Concerns Over Proposed UGI Natural Gas Rate Hike
-- TribLive Guest Essay: Help Is Out There For Those Struggling With Heating Costs - By Destenie Nock, People Energy Analytics, Carnegie Mellon
-- Reuters: Diversified Energy To Buy Permian Basin Oil & Gas Producer Maverick In $1.3 Billion Deal [Diversified Specializes In Buying Old Wells]
-- Inquirer: President Wants US To Be 'Leading' Producer Of Non-Fuel Minerals; Here's How PA Could Help; Rare Earth Elements Could Be More Important Than Expansion Of Fracking [PDF of Article]
-- White House: President Launches Initiative To Eliminate 10 Regulations For Every New Regulation Issued; Cost Of New Regulations Must Be 'Significantly' Less Than Zero [PaEN]
-- WSJ: US Imposes 10% Tariff On Canadian Oil, Gas, 25% On Other Products [PDF of Article] [United Refining In Warren Uses 70,000 Barrels Of Canadian Oil A Day]
-- Beaver Times: Two Years Ago: Remember Norfolk Southern Train Derailment
-- The Allegheny Front: 2 Years After Norfolk Southern Train Derailment Some Residents Worry About Liver Disease

-- TribLive/AP: Norfolk Southern And East Palestine Announce $22 Million Settlement After 2023 Derailment
-- WESA: PA Cong. Deluzio Calls On Vance To Push Rail Safety On Eve Of Norfolk Southern Derailment Anniversary
-- TribLive: PA Cong. Deluzio Pushes Rail Safety Bill With Visit To Tarentum, Allegheny County
-- TribLive Editorial: Railway Safety Is Worth Congressional Action
-- DEP Chesapeake Bay Healthy Waters Newsletter Highlights Nearly 16,700 BMPs In 2024; Grant Opportunities; County Clean Water Projects [PaEN]
-- Tribune-Democrat: Educator John Frederick Aims To Separate Fact From Fiction At Climate-Change Lecture In Cresson
-- Jan. 31 Take Five Fridays With Pam, PA Parks & Forests Foundation [PaEN]
-- Beaver Times - Brian Whipkey: Hunters Gain Access To 2,000 More Acres Of State Game Lands
-- Dept. Of Agriculture Confirms First 2025 Case Of Bird Flu In Domestic Poultry In Pennsylvania
-- The Center Square: Migrating Snow Geese Drive Avian Flu Outbreak In Pennsylvania
-- Post-Gazette - Mary Ann Thomas: PA Confirms First 2025 Bird Flu Case In Commercial Chicken Flock
-- Chesapeake Bay Journal: Bird Flu Raises Concerns About Poultry, Wildfowl In Chesapeake Region
-- WNEP: Riverside Boro Police In Northumberland County Warn Residents To Avoid Wild Birds After Encountering Sick Goose
-- Bristol Twp. Environmental Advisory Committee Bird Town Spotlight: The American Bittern [PaEN]
-- Williamsport Sun: It's The Perfect Time Of Year For Some Winter Birding
-- Williamsport Sun: Reflections In Nature - Princess Pine Lives Stand Out Among Freshly Fallen Snow

Visit the DEP Calendar of Events; PA Parks & Forests Foundation's Events webpage and DCNR's Calendar of Events for activities happening near you.

Visit DEP's Teaching Green webpage to learn about more environmental education resources.

Visit the PA Environment Digest Calendar Of Events for more opportunities.
[Posted: February 1 2025]

News From PA House & Senate

The information you need to follow legislation in the House and Senate- starting with articles and NewsClips from last week--

Senate/House Bills Moving

Senate

Eliminating Carbon Pollution Program Covering Power Plants: Senate Bill 186 (Yaw-R-Lycoming) abrogates Pennsylvania's carbon pollution reduction program covering power plants consistent with RGGI was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee by a party-line vote of 7 to 4, Republicans supporting, referred into and out of the Senate Appropriations Committee [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary] and is now on the Senate Calendar for action. Read more here.

Independent Energy Office: Senate Bill 187 (Yaw-R-Lycoming) establishing an Independent Energy Office like the Independent Fiscal Office was reported from the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee by a party-line vote of 7 to 4, Republicans supporting, referred into and out of the Senate Appropriations Committee [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary] and is now on the Senate Calendar for action. Read more here.

Utility Terminations: Senate Bill 154 (Boscola-D-Lehigh) reenacting "Chapter 14" utility protections related to utility termination for unpaid bills was reported from the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee unanimously, referred into and out of the Senate Appropriations Committee [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary] and is now on the Senate Calendar for action.

Exclude Counties From Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program: Senate Bill 35 (Langerholc-R- Cambria) require DEP to start the process for removing Blair, Cambria, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming, Mercer, and Westmoreland counties from the vehicle emission inspection program was amended and reported from the Senate Transportation Committee, referred into and out of the Senate Appropriations Committee [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary] and is now on the Senate Calendar for action.

Exempting Certain Vehicles From Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program: Senate Bill 149 (Langerholc-R-Cambria) exempting exempting vehicles for up to five years from the date of manufacture from the vehicle emissions inspection program was reported out of the Senate Transportation Committee, referred into and out of the Senate Appropriations Committee [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary] and is now on the Senate Calendar for action.

House

Protecting Bike Lanes: House Bill 291 (Daley-D-Montgomery) authorizing municipalities to create parking-protected bike lanes between curbs and parked vehicles to improve bike safety was unanimously reported out of the House Transportation Committee and referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

Top 10 Stories On Harrisburg/PA Politics Last Week--

Because In Politics Everything Is Connected To Everything Else--

-- Top 10 Stories: Harrisburg/PA Politics Reported By Local News Media Last Week [PaEN]

Bill Calendars

House (February 3): <> Click Here for full House Bill Calendar.

Senate (February 3): <> Senate Bill 35 (Langerholc-R- Cambria) require DEP to start the process for removing Blair, Cambria, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming, Mercer, and Westmoreland counties from the vehicle emission inspection program [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary]; Senate Bill 149 (Langerholc-R-Cambria) exempting exempting vehicles for up to five years from the date of manufacture from the vehicle emissions inspection program [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary]; Senate Bill 154 (Boscola-D-Lehigh) reenacting "Chapter 14" utility protections related to utility termination for unpaid bills [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary]; Senate Bill 186 (Yaw-R- Lycoming) abrogates Pennsylvania's carbon pollution reduction program covering power plants consistent with RGGI [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary]; Senate Bill 187 (Yaw-R-Lycoming) establishing an Independent Energy Office like the Independent Fiscal Office [Senate Fiscal Note & Summary] ; Click Here for full Senate Bill Calendar.

Committee Meetings

House
February 3-- House Republican Policy Committee hearing on stopping new energy taxes. Room 418 Main Capitol. 9:30 a.m.
February 3-- House Game & Fisheries Committee informational meeting on Game Commission deer hunting season changes. Room 523 Irvis Office. 9:00 a.m. Click Here to watch online.
February 4-- House Energy Committee hearing on House Bill 362 (Fiedler-D- Philadelphia) authorizing the PA Energy Development Authority to establish a $156 million federally-funded Solar For All Program (sponsor summary) now prohibited by Fiscal Code bill passed last year with the state budget [Read more here.]. Room B31 Main Capitol. 10:00 a.m. Click Here to watch online.
February 5-- House Local Government Committee meets to consider House Bill 388 (Cerrato-D-Montgomery) authorizing municipalities to replace water and sewer laterals serving residences. Room 205 Ryan Building. 10:00 a.m. Click Here to watch online.
<> Click Here for full House Committee Schedule.

Senate
<> Click Here for full Senate Committee Schedule.

Bills Introduced

Developing Pollinator Habitats: House Bill 426 (Pielli-D-Chester) encourages any new construction of a garden, lawn, or green space at a state facility to include insecticide-free native plants and flowers to help develop pollinator habitats. Click Here for a fact sheet.

Responsibility for Monitoring, Protecting Insects: House Bill 441 (Pielli-D-Chester) adding a requirement to the Wild Resource Conservation Act to monitor and protect pollinators and insects in Pennsylvania (sponsor summary).

Bills Pending In Key Committees

Check the PA Environmental Council Bill Tracker for the status and updates on pending state **legislation and regulations** that affect environmental and conservation efforts in Pennsylvania.

Session Schedule

Here is the latest voting session schedule for the Senate and House--

House
February 3, 4, 5
Budget Hearings February 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, March 3, 4, 5, 6
March 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26
April 7, 8, 9, 22, 23, 24
May 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 24
June 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30
September 22(NV*), 23(NV), 24(NV), 29, 30
October 1, 6, 7, 8, 27, 28, 29
November 17, 18, 19
December 8(NV), 9(NV), 10(NV, 15, 16, 17
*non-voting

Senate
February 3, 4, 5
Budget Hearings February 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, March 4, 5, 6
March 24, 25, 26, 31
April 1, 2
May 5, 6, 7, 12, 13
June 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

[Posted: February 1, 2025]

The Feds - New Administration

Articles and NewsClips about federal actions impacting Pennsylvania--

New Federal Administration
-- White House: President Launches Initiative To Eliminate 10 Regulations For Every New Regulation Issued; Cost Of New Regulations Must Be 'Significantly' Less Than Zero [PaEN]
-- WSJ: US Imposes 10% Tariff On Canadian Oil, Gas, 25% On Other Products [PDF of Article] [United Refining In Warren Uses 70,000 Barrels Of Canadian Oil A Day]
-- Wall Street Journal: New Federal Administration Memo Orders Agencies To Broadly Pause All Federal Grants, Loans, Financial Assistance Programs Pending Review [PDF of Article]
-- AP: Federal Judge Temporarily Blocks New Administration's Freeze On Federal Grants And

Loans
-- AP: President Rescinds Memo Freezing Federal Money After Widespread Confusion; Executive Orders Requiring Funding Review Still In 'Full Force'
-- AP: President Rescinds Funding Freeze But Uncertainty Lives On For Wide Array Of Environmental Programs
-- E&ENews/Politico: EPA Freezes Federal Solar For All Program Funding Until Further Notice [PA Was Due To Receive $156 Million]
-- Financial Times: President Wiped Out Dozens Of Biden's Climate Initiatives In First-Week Blitz
-- Post-Gazette -Ford Turner: Republicans US Sen. McCormick, Cong. Reschenthaler Defend Funding Freeze
-- TribLive Editorial: Government Must Be Reliable To Function
-- TribLive/AP: Wall Street Journal Takes Critical Eye To Start Of President's 2nd Term: 'Remarkably Poor Judgment'
-- Inquirer: Gov. Shapiro Says Federal Funding Freeze Is Creating 'Havoc,' As PA, NJ Officials Scramble
-- TribLive: Federal Funding Comes Through To Replace Roughly 1,000 Lead Water Service Lines In Alle-Kiski Valley [All Federal Disbursements Now Frozen]
-- Inquirer: President Wants US To Be 'Leading' Producer Of Non-Fuel Minerals; Here's How PA Could Help; Rare Earth Elements Could Be More Important Than Expansion Of Fracking [PDF of Article]
-- Washington & Jefferson College: Sweeping Changes Being Made In US Energy Policy By New Federal Administration
-- PittsburghUnionProgress.com: New Administration Order Canceling Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Leaves Some PA Sites In Limbo [Order Froze Disbursements In This And Other Programs]
-- The Allegheny Front - Reid Frazier: Nearly $1 Million Federal Stormwater Climate Grant In Allegheny County Environmental Justice Communities [New Administration Froze Disbursements In This And Other Programs]
-- Environmental Health News: New Administration Withdraws Proposed Limits On PFAS 'Forever Chemicals' In Industrial Wastewater

Other Federal NewsClips

-- EPA: Lee M. Zeldin Sworn In As 17th EPA Administrator
-- Politico: US Senate Confirms Zeldin To Head EPA
-- House Energy Committee To Hold Feb. 4 Hearing On Bill Establishing $156 Million Federally-Funded Solar For All Program [PaEN]
-- E&ENews/Politico: EPA Freezes Federal Solar For All Program Funding Until Further Notice [PA Was Due To Receive $156 Million]
-- DEP Releases 2 Contracts For Bidding In Next Round Of Conventional Oil & Gas Well Plugging: 12 Wells In Kinzua State Park, McKean County, 18 Wells In Warren County [PaEN]
-- NYT: Oil, Gas Companies Embrace New President, But Not 'Drill, Baby, Drill' [No Plans To Increase Production Unless Prices Rise Significantly]
-- ABC27: Could Three Mile Island Restart Be At Risk Due To Federal Funding Freeze?
-- LancasterOnline: Activist Urges Lancaster County Commissioners To Fight Three Mile Island Opening

-- LancasterOnline: Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant Owner Defends Safety Record And Planning Of Restart
-- Reuters: Talen Goes To Court Over FERC's Amazon Co-Located Data Center Rejection
-- Pittsburgh Business Times: PennEnvironment Warns Of Environmental, Cost Impact Of A.I. Buildout
-- ABC27: Could Three Mile Island Restart Be At Risk Due To Federal Funding Freeze?
-- Reuters: Talen Goes To Court Over FERC's Amazon Co-Located Data Center Rejection
-- US EIA: Electric Power Sector Has Driven Rising PA Natural Gas Consumption Since 2013
-- Utility Dive: Calpine To Sell 2 PA Gas Power Plants To Avoid Market Power Concerns From Constellation Merger
-- WESA: PA Cong. Deluzio Calls On Vance To Push Rail Safety On Eve Of Norfolk Southern Derailment Anniversary
-- TribLive: PA Cong. Deluzio Pushes Rail Safety Bill With Visit To Tarentum, Allegheny County
-- The Allegheny Front: 2 Years After Norfolk Southern Train Derailment Some Residents Worry About Liver Disease
-- TribLive/AP: Norfolk Southern And East Palestine Announce $22 Million Settlement After 2023 Derailment
-- The Allegheny Front - Reid Frazier: Nearly $1 Million Federal Stormwater Climate Grant In Allegheny County Environmental Justice Communities [New Administration Froze Disbursements In This And Other Programs]
-- York Daily Record: The Hellbender, PA's Official State Amphibian, Is Proposed For Endangered Species Status

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Public Participation Opportunities/Calendar Of Events

Click Here for a list of public participation opportunities and a calendar of events.

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-- DEP Posted 89 Pages Of Permit-Related Notices In February 1 PA Bulletin [PaEN]
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-- Courier Times: Nockamixon Superfund Site Added To DEP's Priority Cleanup List; Here's What Happens Next

-- York Daily Record: The Hellbender, PA's Official State Amphibian, Is Proposed For Endangered Species Status

[Posted: February 1, 2025]

Grants & Awards

Click Here for grants, awards, recognition programs and contest deadlines.

-- Commonwealth Financing Authority Announces $16 Million In Act 13 Funding For Watershed Restoration, Flood Mitigation, Recreation; Small Water & Sewer Application Period Opening [PaEN]
-- Appalachian Region Independent Power Producers Assn. Now Accepting Mine Reclamation Grant Applications [PaEN]
-- PA Organization For Watersheds & Rivers Now Accepting Applications For 2025 Sojourn Grants [PaEN]
-- First Community Foundation Partnership: 90+ Scholarships Available For Students In Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Mifflin, Northumberland, Sullivan, Snyder, Tioga, Union Counties

[Posted: February 1, 2025]

PA Bulletin Public Notices - February 1

Highlights of the environmental and energy notices in the February 1 PA Bulletin--

-- The Environmental Quality Board published notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin inviting comments on 96 stream water quality redesignations in 29 counties. A virtual hearing is scheduled for March 13. Read more here.

-- PA Oil & Gas Industrial Facilities: Permit Notices, Opportunities To Comment - February 1 [PaEN]

-- **DEP published** notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it will hold a March 5 hearing on a proposed Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit for the Hazleton Generation natural gas power plant in **Hazle Township, Luzerne County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1110) Read more here.

-- **DEP published** notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it will hold a February 19 hearing on the proposed Title V RACT 3 Air Quality Permit for the Cleveland-Cliffs Steel Butler Works in **Butler Township, Butler County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1110) Read more here.

-- **DEP published** notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it will hold a March 3 hearing on an Individual NPDES Stormwater Permit for a Route 115 Associates, LLC warehouse project in **Tunkhannock Township, Monroe County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1167) Read more here.

Permits - Comments
-- Penn Renewables, LLC/Forest Sixty Six I, LLC - Solar Energy Facility: DEP invites comments on Individual NPDES Stormwater Permit for a 24.5 acre solar energy project impacting Scott Run (High Quality) in **Jenkins Twp., Forest County.** (PA Bulletin, page 1103)
-- Water & Land Solutions LLC - Firden Run Mitigation Bank: DEP invites comments on a Chapter 105 permit to restore 7,253 fee of stream and 2.69 acres of wetland as a mitigation bank at the headwaters of the Fallen Timber tributary to the Monongahela River located in **Elizabeth Twp., Allegheny County.** (PA Bulletin, page 1120)
-- Land Reclamation , LLC - Huling Run Mitigation Bank: DEP invites comments on a Chapter 105 permit to reestablish 12 acres of wetland and 10,185 feet of stream as a mitigation bank in the Huling Run Watershed, a tributary to the Allegheny River located in **Sugarcreek Twp., Armstrong County**. (PA Bulletin, page 1120)

Permits Issued
-- PNK P2, LLC - 3 Warehouse Buildings At Great Streams Commons: DEP issued a Chapter 105 permit for a warehouse project impacting wetlands subject to compensatory mitigation located in **Gregg Twp., Union County**. Received April 16, Issued Jan. 10. (PA Bulletin, page 1161)
-- Core5 Industrial Partners - Warehouse: DEP issued a Chapter 105 permit for a warehouse and related facilities impacting Pocono Creek (High Quality) located in **Pocono Twp., Monroe County**. Received May 12, 2021, issued Jan. 14. (PA Bulletin, page 1161)

Bids
-- **DEP released** two conventional oil and gas well plugging contracts for bid--
-- McKean County, Hamlin Township: 12 orphan gas wells in and near Kinzua Bridge State Park. Mandatory pre-bid meeting February 13. Click Here for bid document.
-- Warren County, Mead Township: 19 abandoned, orphan oil wells. Mandatory pre-bid meeting February 12. Click Here for bid document.
Visit the BidExpress.com website for the latest information and any updates to the bid packages.
-- **DEP published** notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin of an opportunity to bid on the Reitz Abandoned Mine Reclamation Project in Shade Township, Somerset County.
-- The **York County Municipal Solid Waste and Refuse Authority** published notice in the February 1 PA Bulletin it has issued a Request for Proposals for waste disposal services in the years 2026-2039. (PA Bulletin, page 1168)

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Note: The Department of Environmental Protection published 89 pages of public notices related to proposed and final permit and approval/ disapproval actions in the February 1 PA Bulletin - pages 1080 to 1169.

Sign Up For DEP's eNotice: Did you know DEP can send you email notices of permit applications submitted in your community? Notice of new technical guidance documents and regulations? All through its eNotice system. Click Here to sign up.

Related Tools ----------

Visit DEP's Public Participation Center for public participation opportunities.
-- Allegheny County Health Department Public Comment Notices

DEP Proposals Out For Public Review
Other Proposals Open For Public Comment - DEP webpage
Submit Comments on Proposals Through DEP's eComment System
Recently Closed Comment Periods For Other Proposals - DEP webpage
Other Proposals Recently Finalized - DEP webpage

DEP Regulations In Process
Proposed Regulations Open For Comment - DEP webpage
Submit Comments on Proposals Through DEP's eComment System
Proposed Regulations With Closed Comment Periods - DEP webpage
Recently Finalized Regulations - DEP webpage
DEP Regulatory Update - DEP webpage

DEP Technical Guidance In Process
Draft Technical Guidance Documents - DEP webpage
Technical Guidance Comment Deadlines - DEP webpage
Submit Comments on Proposals Through DEP's eComment System
Recently Closed Comment Periods For Technical Guidance - DEP webpage
Technical Guidance Recently Finalized - DEP webpage
Copies of Final Technical Guidance - DEP webpage
DEP Non-Regulatory/Technical Guidance Documents Agenda [February 2024] - DEP webpage

[Posted: January 31, 2025]

Stories Invited - About PA Environment Digest

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