

Conservation Committee Report

Volume 26 Issue 1

Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

January 2024



The Conservation Pledge

I give my pledge as an

American to save and faithfully defend from waste, the natural resources of my country; the soil, the water, the air, the minerals, the plant life and the wildlife.

This is my Pledge!

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DEP Awarding \$39.6 Million to Replace Aging Diesel Fleets with Zero-Emission Vehicles

The grant initiative targets diesel fleets of medium and heavy-duty freight and port drayage trucks.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is awarding 16 applicants more than \$39.6 mil-

lion, funded by the Environmental Mitigation Trust Agreement for State Beneficiaries, to replace diesel-fueled fleets with modern, zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) as a part of the 2022-2023 Medium and Heavy-Duty Zero-Emission Vehicle Pilot Grant.

Part of the Driving PA Forward program, this grant was developed under the Shapiro administration, to improve air quality statewide by driving transformation from older, high-polluting diesel engines to clean

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DEP Issues Air Quality Plan Approval for Leachate Evaporation System at Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill

After an extensive environmental review, the air quality authorization includes protective conditions and increased monitoring

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has authorized an air quality plan approval to allow an onsite leachate treatment and evaporation system to be installed at Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill, located in Rostraver Township,

Westmoreland County.

Leachate is moisture which is produced by waste itself and stormwater that infiltrates the landfill's waste. Leachate from landfills must be treated onsite

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DEP Awarding \$39.6 Million to Replace Aging Diesel Fleets with Zero-Emission Vehicles (continued)

transportation technologies.

“Clean air is crucial in ensuring a healthy environment,” said DEP Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley. “That’s why we see it as our mission to address one of the most significant air quality challenges facing our Commonwealth—emissions from transportation. These recommendations mark the highest-dollar awards in any round, for any Driving PA Forward Initiative funding program, showing a step forward in Pennsylvania’s effort in reducing these emissions by getting more clean trucks on the road in the communities that need them.”

DEP is awarding \$39,605,578.58 to 16 applicants for the battery-electric replacement of dozens of vehicles, including home delivery trucks, refuse/recycling trucks, terminal tractors, and the hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicle replacement of two terminal tractors and their supporting charging infrastructure.

The 2022-2023 Medium and Heavy-Duty Zero-Emission Vehicle Pilot Grant also focuses on funding projects located in underserved and disproportionately impacted communities, such as Environmental Justice and Act 47-designated communities.

Applicants awarded:

Allegheny County:

- Borough of Munhall—\$1,681,008
- o Will replace (3) eligible Class 8 refuse collection trucks with (3) battery-electric refuse trucks
- o Will install (1) DC fast charger with (3) charging plugs

Beaver County:

- PGT Holdings Inc.— \$3,289,500
- o Will replace (10) eligible Class 8 short-haul tractors with (8) battery-electric vehicles (BEVs) and (2) hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEV)
- o Will install (8) DC fast charger plugs and will maintain (2) mobile hydrogen fueling units

Butler and Westmoreland Counties:

- SQ Trucking, Inc.—\$523,221
- Will replace (4) eligible Class 4/5 home delivery step vans with battery-electric vehicles (BEV)

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DEP Awarding \$39.6 Million to Replace Aging Diesel Fleets with Zero-Emission Vehicles

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Cambria County:

- Pro Disposal Inc.— \$6,190,500
- o Will replace (16) eligible Class 8 refuse trucks with BEVs
- o Will install (16) DC fast charging plugs

Centre County:

- The Pennsylvania State University— \$3,305,011
- o Will replace (5) eligible Class 6 and Class 7 box trucks with BEV box trucks
- o Will install (4) DC fast EV chargers and one Level 2 EV charging plug at (3) home-base locations across the main campus

Dauphin County:

- Wilsbach Distributors, Inc.—\$2,004,833
- o Will replace (5) eligible beverage delivery vehicles with BEVs
- o Will install (2) DC fast EV chargers
- Freight Equipment Leasing LLC—\$2,162,177
- o Will replace (6) eligible Class 8 freight trucks with BEVs
- o Will install (4) DC fast EV chargers

Delaware County:

- City of Chester—\$1,575,074
- o Will replace (3) eligible Class 8 refuse collection trucks with BEVs
- o Will install (1) DC fast charger and (2) Level 2 EV charging plugs

Erie County:

- City of Erie— \$3,120,000
- o Will replace (5) eligible Class 8 refuse collection trucks with BEVs
- o Will install (1) Level 2 and (3) DC fast EV chargers
- Legend Equipment Leasing, LLC—\$2,304,394

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DEP Awarding \$39.6 Million to Replace Aging Diesel Fleets with Zero-Emission Vehicles

(continued)

- o Will replace (5) eligible Class 8 freight trucks with BEVs
- Will install (3) DC fast EV chargers

Lehigh County:

- Loomis Armored US, LLC—\$1,322,109
- o Will replace (6) eligible Class 6 armored trucks with BEV trucks
- o Will install (3) EV chargers

Mercer County:

- Tri-County Industries, Inc.—\$2,785,505
- o Will replace (5) eligible Class 8 refuse trucks with BEVs
- o Will install (3) Level 2 EV chargers and (1) DC fast EV charger

Northumberland County:

- Watsontown Trucking Company—\$1,799,620
- o Will replace (5) eligible Class 8 freight trucks with BEVs
- o Will install (2) DC fast EV chargers

Philadelphia County:

- Sysco Leasing, LLC— \$3,975,000
- o Will replace (10) eligible Class 8, short-haul, semi-tractors with BEVs
- o Will install (10) DC fast charging plugs
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority—\$1,684,462
- o Will replace (6) eligible freight and delivery trucks with BEV trucks
- o Will install supporting EV charging infrastructure

York County:

- Day & Ross USA Inc.—\$1,883,161
- o Will replace (5) eligible Class 8 freight trucks with BEVs
- Will install (2) DC fast EV chargers

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DEP Awarding \$39.6 Million to Replace Aging Diesel Fleets with Zero-Emission Vehicles

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For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, please visit website, or follow DEP on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

DEP Issues Air Quality Plan Approval for Leachate Evaporation System at Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill (continued)

or transported to a separate treatment facility. Evaporating liquid leachate at Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill would eliminate risks of spills, impacts, and traffic associated with trucking leachate offsite for disposal.

The air quality plan approval establishes emissions limitations and monitoring requirements. DEP is currently reviewing a waste permit modification application, which, if approved, would authorize the use of the evaporator system for the treatment of the landfill's leachate. Both the plan approval and waste permit modification must be obtained prior to operation.

"DEP carefully and thoroughly reviewed the application while also considering feedback from the public," said **DEP Southwest Regional Director Jim Miller**. "This authorization meets or exceeds the air quality regulations and includes a number of safeguards and conditions to be protective of public health and the environment."

The approved leachate treatment and evaporation system includes extensive pre-treatment of the leachate. The evaporator will include a three-stage demisting filtration system with a 99% removal efficiency of filterable particulate matter. The air quality plan approval also includes numerous measures to monitor pollutants that may be emitted through the evaporation process and/or present in the leachate and assure compliance with emission limitations.

Modeling and calculations using accepted scientific methods show any radionuclides emitted into the air will not pose a health risk. Radiation monitors will be placed in six onsite locations and will measure 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and be analyzed regularly.

The plan approval also requires that a third-party conduct an audit inspection of the leachate pre-treatment and evaporation system every 12 months. Audits would include a full system inspection, cleaning, instrument calibration, training of operating staff, operator certification, and system restoration as needed.

On November 1, 2023, DEP executed a consent order and agreement that also requires Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill to take extensive proactive measures to detect, correct, and prevent future violations.

Supporting documents as well as additional permitting and compliance information are available on the DEP's community information webpage for Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill.

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Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

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Leachate is moisture which is produced by waste itself and stormwater that infiltrates the landfill's waste. Leachate from landfills must be treated onsite or transported to a separate treatment facility. Evaporating liquid leachate at Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill would eliminate risks of spills, impacts, and traffic associated with trucking leachate offsite for disposal.

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Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

DEP Issues Notice of Violation to Keystone Landfill for Malodor

DEP Takes Additional Enforcement Action Against Keystone Landfill for Odors Being Objectionable and Causing Discomfort to the Public After Responding to Residents' Odor Complaints

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) to Keystone Sanitary Landfill (KSL) in Lackawanna County for failing to control odors from the leachate lagoons at its facility in Dunmore and Throop Boroughs. DEP's investigation into residents' complaints revealed that the odors rise to the level of a malodor after being detected by DEP staff at three residences in Throop Borough.

A malodor is defined by DEP regulation as: "[A]n odor which causes annoyance or discomfort to the public and which the Department determines to be objectionable to the public." A malodor is confirmed if a landfill-associated odor is detected on a complainant's property, with the complainant, by Department staff and is determined to be objectionable to the public.

"DEP stands by its commitment to promptly address odor complaints near Keystone Sanitary Landfill," said **DEP Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley**. "Thanks to community reports and swift response from dedicated DEP staff, we were able to make this malodor determination and hold the landfill accountable. I want to assure the public that DEP staff are continuing to work diligently to ensure KSL mitigates these odors as soon as possible."

The malodor determination was made after DEP staff responded to odor complaints on December 2, 2023 and detected moderate to strong leachate odors consistent with odors that have been detected at KSL's leachate lagoons. DEP then detected these odors at three homes in the borough and determined a malodor existed.

As a result of this investigation, DEP has determined that KSL is in violation of the Solid Waste Management Act, the Air Pollution Control Act, the Municipal Waste Management rules and regulations, and KSL's operating permits.

KSL has 15 days to respond to the NOV and is to submit a proposed plan and schedule to DEP that addresses the correction and prevention of the above violations.

This is the second NOV DEP has issued to KSL in recent weeks. In December, 2023, DEP issued an NOV for failure to control odors, citing the landfill for inadequate cover. KSL has until January 12, 2024 to submit an odor mitigation plan that addresses the December, 2023 NOV.

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DEP Issues Notice of Violation to Keystone Landfill for Malodor (continued)

In addition to the NOVs, DEP suspended KSL's Settlement Accommodation Plan (SAP) in late November, 2023. The SAP allowed the landfill to add more waste to areas of the landfill that had previously been capped. This action was also in response to DEP's investigation of numerous odor complaints received and the regular confirmation of landfill gas odors offsite by DEP staff during the months of September, 2023 through November, 2023.

DEP is actively addressing hundreds of complaints about off-site odors from the Keystone Sanitary Landfill. DEP staff are available to receive odor complaints around the clock, and are monitoring the landfill with inspectors who conduct odor patrols after-hours on weekdays and weekends.

DEP staff will continue to address each complaint. Odor complaints may be reported to 570-826-2511, 24 hours per day. Pennsylvanians can also file an online complaint at: greenport.pa.gov/obPublic/EnvironmentalComplaintForm.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, please visit website, or follow DEP on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

DEP Receives \$3 Million From EPA to Develop Climate Action Plan, Proposes Grant Program to Reduce Emissions in Heavy Industry

DEP is asking for input on designing and implementing a new program that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Pennsylvania's industrial sector

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has received \$3 million from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a Priority Climate Action Plan focused on reducing emissions in the Commonwealth's industrial sector. Upon completing the plan, DEP will be eligible to apply for up to \$500 million to implement it. DEP's plan will focus on a statewide industrial decarbonization grant program, known as Reducing Industrial Sector Emissions in Pennsylvania (RISE PA), that will provide funding for industries to reduce carbon and benefit the health and safety of surrounding communities.

DEP is seeking funding for RISE PA from the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

According to the 2023 Pennsylvania Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report, the industrial sector is the highest greenhouse gas (GHG) emitting sector, accounting for just over 30 percent of Pennsylvania's total GHG emissions.

"RISE PA aims to help spur private sector investment in greenhouse gas emissions technologies by helping to offset the upfront costs of large-scale, transformative projects," said **DEP Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley**. "We are not just reducing emissions but also reducing barriers by turning high abatement costs into high-impact solutions that shape a cleaner, more prosperous future for industry and Pennsylvania communities alike."

DEP is also looking for input from industry, academia, community-based organizations, and other interested stakeholders on issues related to the design and implementation of RISE PA. DEP is specifically interested in receiving input on program design, size, scope, scale, and award structure as well as the potential outputs and metrics, including emissions reductions and community benefits.

If DEP receives CPRG funding for RISE PA, prospective projects would need to satisfy the following proposed criteria:

- Benefit (and not negatively impact) low-income and disadvantaged communities
- Achieve GHG emission reductions that are long-lasting and certain
- Incorporate high labor standards, emphasize job quality, and support equitable workforce development

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DEP Receives \$3 Million From EPA to Develop Climate Action Plan, Proposes Grant Program to Reduce Emissions in Heavy Industry (continued)

“The Climate Pollution Reduction Grants present a unique opportunity for Pennsylvania to become a national leader in industrial decarbonization,” said **Brian Regli, Executive Director of Critical Investments**. “By mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and curbing harmful co-pollutants, RISE PA seeks to champion environmental protection and invites industry leaders to become pioneers in shaping a sustainable future.”

DEP is requesting responses to 10 questions to inform the development of program solicitation guidelines for RISE PA. Those questions, and additional information about the Department’s general goals and objectives for RISE PA program development, can be found in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

Interested persons may submit information by e-mail to RA-EP-CPRG@pa.gov. Information must be received no later than Monday, January 22, 2024.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, please visit website, or follow DEP on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Shapiro Administration Announces Over \$2 Million for Conservation Projects in Southcentral Pennsylvania

Projects include streambank restoration, stormwater improvements, watershed restoration efforts, floodplain restoration and habitat protection

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced today that 12 projects in the state's southcentral region were awarded a total of \$2,051,051 through DEP's Growing Greener Plus grant program. These projects work to protect waterways and watersheds, reclaim abandoned mine sites, and work to reclaim and plug abandoned oil and gas wells. This year's awards exceed \$12 million statewide.

"The Growing Greener Plus grant program empowers communities to pursue environmental progress and innovation," said **Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley**. "This support fuels vital Pennsylvania initiatives that protect our land and restore local watersheds. As a result, our Commonwealth can look forward to a greener future."

Energy Transfer Marketing & Terminals, L.P. has paid the Office of Attorney General (OAG) \$10 million to fund projects that improve the health and safety of water sources along the routes of the pipelines. This funding is being distributed through existing Commonwealth grant programs to ensure high-impact projects are selected in the affected communities and that proper oversight is provided. Grant programs include those operated by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the DEP.

"Pennsylvanians have a fundamental right to clean water, and these two projects will further my office's mission to make that right a reality," said **Pennsylvania Attorney General Michelle Henry**. "The conviction we secured against Energy Transfer for environmental crimes while building natural gas pipelines will continue to pay dividends for future generations by funding projects that protect Pennsylvania's natural resources."

Growing Greener is the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history to address critical environmental concerns. Growing Greener grants can be awarded to watershed groups, local or county government, municipal authorities, county planning commissions, county conservation districts, council of governments, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations. Grantees have up to three years to implement their projects.

The full list of approved Growing Greener Plus projects, funded by the Environmental Stewardship fund, in Southcentral Pennsylvania includes:

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Shapiro Administration Announces Over \$2 Million for Conservation Projects in Southcentral Pennsylvania (continued)

Dauphin County:

- Capital Area Greenbelt Association, Inc.— \$288,000
 - o The project will repair 825 linear feet (LF) of deteriorating stream channel using regrading and plant materials. The project will reduce sediment pollution by re-shaping the overly deep and wide stream to provide a defined drainage channel for the base flow, a wide flat floodplain, and change the eroding vertical embankments to a naturally stable gradient planted with approximately 2,600 new native plants including live stakes, large and small trees, shrubs, and seeding.

Fulton County:

- Fulton County Conservation District— \$117,110
 - o The project will design and permit two sites, which will total 2,200 LF of livestock exclusion, stream restoration, and streamside forested buffers along banks of Big Cove Creek.

Huntington County:

- Chesapeake Conservancy, Inc.— \$140,000
 - o The project will implement Phase I and Phase II activities for the Warriors Mark Run - East catchment. The project includes design, permitting and plan writing for projects, and construction for a farm restoration project.
- Huntingdon County Conservation District— \$374,346
 - o The project will complete four stream restoration projects in Huntingdon County to stabilize eroding streambanks and reduce the loading of sediment and nutrients into Standing Stone Creek. It will install best management practices (BMPs) such as muddills, log cross vanes, rock vanes, rock toe, and brush mattresses that will stabilize the eroding streambanks and provide beneficial fish habitat.

Lancaster County:

- Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake— \$116,000
 - The project will provide technical assistance to congregations with the sponsor's partners, the Center for Watershed Protection and Alliance for the Chesapeake. The project will design, permit, and construct up to nine green infrastructure projects at five congregations and provide green team training, maintenance training, and various educational events and ribbon cuttings to help additional congregations in Lancaster County take action towards cleaner water.

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Shapiro Administration Announces Over \$2 Million for Conservation Projects in Southcentral Pennsylvania (continued)

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- Cocalico Creek Watershed Association— \$96,400
 - o The project will design and permit a stream and wetland restoration along approximately 1,285 LF on the Little Cocalico Creek at Fry Run.
- Lancaster County Conservation District— \$276,225
 - o The project will restore 3,400 LF of stream habitat with livestock exclusion fencing and riparian forest buffer.

Lancaster & Chester Counties:

- Stroud Water Research Center, Inc.— \$258,000
 - o The project will implement 27.65 acres (ac) of forested buffers on nine farms in Lancaster and Chester Counties. The buffers on six Lancaster County farms will also provide livestock exclusion.

Mifflin County:

- Mifflin County Conservation District— \$67,725
 - o The project will design and permit urban BMPs at the Lewistown Country Club, including bioswales, rain gardens, formal conservation landscaping, and invasive plant species control. The BMPs will treat stormwater coming from the parking lot and entrance road.

York County:

- Leg Up Farm, Inc.— \$108,000
 - o The project will improve conditions to an unnamed tributary to Codorus Creek and will result in improved water quality. The project will result in 500 LF of stream restoration, 1.2 ac. of wetland creation, a stormwater BMP, and flood reduction adjacent State Route 181.
- Watershed Alliance of York, Inc.— \$103,100
 - The project will survey, design, and permit approximately 4,100 LF of stream restoration, 1.1 ac. of floodplain benches to be created, and 3.8 ac. of riparian buffer plantings.

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Shapiro Administration Announces Over \$2 Million for Conservation Projects in Southcentral Pennsylvania (continued)

- Horn Farm for Agricultural Education— \$141,145
 - The project will design and permit three restoration projects within the headwaters of Kreutz Creek Watershed, including 2,100 LF of streambank stabilization with 5 ac. of forested riparian buffers, 1 ac. of riparian forested wetlands, and 300 LF of stormwater BMP.
- York County Conservation District— \$105,000
 - The project will design and permit an approximately 5,000 LF of channel and floodplain restoration. The benefits include sediment and nutrient load reductions, and improving aquatic and terrestrial habits for native fish, plants, and animals when constructed.

As part of the FY2022-23 budget, Act 54 of 2022 allocated funds to DEP for grants and reimbursements (up to 75 percent of allowable costs) to municipalities and counties for eligible activities. The primary focus of the Act 167 Plan grants for is for the preparation or revision of Act 167 Plans by counties.

The full list of approved Act 167 Stormwater Management Planning Grants, funded by the COVID- American Rescue Plan Act, in Southcentral Pennsylvania includes:

Blair County:

- Blair County ACT 167 Stormwater Management Plan— \$30,000
 - Blair County has 1,092 miles of streams and 10 percent impaired waters. The county has implemented several best management practices with the goal of reducing over a million pounds of sediment, and addressing stormwater and flooding issues.

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Shapiro Administration Announces Over \$2 Million for Conservation Projects in Southcentral Pennsylvania (continued)

Lancaster County:

- Lancaster County Act 167 Plan Update (Phase 1)— \$50,000
 - o The project will update Lancaster County's Act 167 plan which will allow the county to more effectively address its accelerated runoff and flooding problems, which in turn will have benefits for water quality and pollutant loading. A new plan will provide updated ordinances to support regional runoff and flood management.

The approved project within the Mariner East 2 pipeline corridor from the OAG Energy Transfer settlement agreement in Southeastern Pennsylvania include:

Berks County:

- Berks County Conservation District— \$250,625
 - o The project will design and permit shovel-ready floodplain and stream restoration projects on four contiguous properties, extending over a mile of stream located in the Cacoosing Creek Watershed. The project will conduct an assessment, planning, design and permitting on several high priority stream and floodplain sections.

Statewide Projects:

- Pocono Northeast Resource Conservation Development Council— \$400,000
 - o The proposed project is a group of service providers that collaborate with watershed and lake management organizations and municipalities to enhance the programmatic and technical skills of these groups to successfully monitor, protect, and restore Pennsylvania's waterways throughout the state.
- Stream Restoration, Inc.— \$352,583
 - o The project will provide watershed groups, nonprofit organizations, conservation districts, and governmental agencies technical assistance related to the monitoring, operation, and maintenance of abandoned mine drainage (AMD) treatment systems.

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Shapiro Administration Announces Over \$2 Million for Conservation Projects in Southcentral Pennsylvania (continued)

Stream Restoration, Inc.— \$268,432

- o The project will provide watershed groups, nonprofits, conservation districts, and governmental agencies involved with the restoration of AMD impaired watersheds a free, user-friendly, web-based, GIS-enabled data and project management tool to help with monitoring, assessment, evaluation, management, and maintenance of watershed restoration projects with a major emphasis on AMD treatment systems.

For more information on the Growing Greener Plus grant program, application guidance, and to sign up for notifications when grant programs reopen, visit DEP's webpage, Growing Greener Plus Grants Program.

You can also visit the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's website, or follow DEP on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Launching the Office of Outdoor Recreation

Our work to grow outdoor recreation for Pennsylvania continues to be a top priority.

We are actively working on developing our three new state parks, collaborating with stakeholders, partners, and local governments on improving recreation access, and we are implementing ideas from public feedback to continue to add new opportunities and offerings on public lands.

With the fantastic outdoor experiences available on public lands as the foundation, we celebrated the creation of our new Office of Outdoor Recreation in 2023 alongside Governor Shapiro.

Thanks to the governor for prioritizing the launch of the Office of Outdoor Recreation.

This office will highlight our diverse and exceptional outdoor opportunities by:

Expanding partnerships

Emphasizing the importance of outdoor recreation for our enjoyment and our economy

Creating opportunities for systemic support and investment in the sector that adds \$17 billion to Pennsylvania's economy

Be on the lookout for exciting new announcements from Office of Outdoor Recreation Director Nathan Reigner in the coming months!

Source: PA DCNR

Shapiro Administration Announces Over \$1 Million for Conservation Projects in Northeast Pennsylvania

Projects include stream restoration, dam modifications and agricultural conservation

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced that five projects in the state's northeastern region were awarded a total of \$1,052,401 through DEP's [Growing Greener Plus grant program](#). These projects work to protect waterways and watersheds, reclaim abandoned mine sites and work to reclaim and plug abandoned oil and gas wells. This year's awards exceed \$12 million statewide.

"The Growing Greener Plus grant program empowers communities to pursue environmental progress and innovation," said **Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley**. "This support fuels vital Pennsylvania initiatives that protect our land and restore local watersheds. As a result, our Commonwealth can look forward to a greener future."

Growing Greener is the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history to address critical environmental concerns. Growing Greener grants can be awarded to watershed groups, local or county government, municipal authorities, county planning commissions, county conservation districts, council of governments, educational institutions, or non-profit organizations. Grantees have up to three years to implement their projects.

The full list of approved Growing Greener Plus projects, funded by the Environmental Stewardship fund, in Northeast Pennsylvania includes:

Lehigh County:

- Wildlands Conservancy, Inc.— \$200,000

The project will stabilize two areas along Laurel Run to restore habitat and prevent damage to park infrastructure. The project will install instream habitat structures, grade and stabilize eroding stream-banks, and establish a native riparian buffer along the stream.

Lehigh, Carbon, Bucks, Monroe, Philadelphia & Northampton County:

- Partnership for the Delaware Estuary— \$149,802

The project will develop and expand a newly formed water quality collaborative for the direct Delaware River drainage north of Philadelphia in Philadelphia, Bucks, and Lehigh Counties and beyond. The project will bring together various stakeholder groups to work together towards the common goal of improving water quality.

Monroe County:

- Monroe County Conservation District— \$407,599

The project will permit and construct agricultural best management practices (BMPs) in the Pine Creek subwatershed of Buckwha Creek. The project site is a 119 acreage (ac.) beef operation.

Northampton County:

- Wildlands Conservancy— \$175,000

o The project will design, permit, and construct a large-scale dam removal and stream restoration project along a priority site in the Bushkill Creek. It will involve dam removal, instream habitat restoration, and riparian buffer plantings to address impairment issues and provide long-term, sustainable benefits to the water quality and biological health of the Bushkill Creek.

(continued on page 21)

Shapiro Administration Announces Over \$1 Million for Conservation Projects in Northeast Pennsylvania (continued)

o Bushkill Stream Conservancy— \$120,000

The project will enhance instream and riparian habitat along a 1,500 linear feet (LF) section of Bushkill Creek flowing through Wildlands Conservancy's Binney and Smith Preserve. The project area is located immediately upstream from a run-of-the-river dam that was removed in 2021 and is accessible from the nearby Palmer Township Bike Path.

As part of the FY2022-23 budget, Act 54 of 2022 allocated funds to DEP for grants and reimbursements (up to 75 percent of allowable costs) to municipalities and counties for eligible activities. The primary focus of the Act 167 Plan grants for is for the preparation or revision of Act 167 Plans by counties.

The full list of approved Act 167 Stormwater Management Planning Grants, funded by the COVID- American Rescue Plan Act, in Northeast Pennsylvania includes:

Lehigh & Northampton County:

• Lehigh Valley Planning Commission— \$30,000

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC), the official planning agency for Lehigh and Northampton Counties, will create a consistent, up-to-date Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP). The revised SWMP will regulate the impacts of subdivision and land development activities, ensure best management practices including the expansion of green infrastructure, identify and develop a plan to mitigate adverse impacts on equity communities, among other social, economic, environmental, and resiliency benefits.

Statewide Projects:

• Pocono Northeast Resource Conservation Development Council— \$400,000

o The proposed project is a group of service providers that collaborate with watershed and lake management organizations and municipalities to enhance the programmatic and technical skills of these groups to successfully monitor, protect, and restore Pennsylvania's waterways throughout the state.

o Stream Restoration, Inc.— \$352,583

o The project will provide watershed groups, nonprofit organizations, conservation districts, and governmental agencies technical assistance related to the monitoring, operation, and maintenance of abandoned mine drainage (AMD) treatment systems.

o Stream Restoration, Inc.— \$268,432

The project will provide watershed groups, nonprofits, conservation districts, and governmental agencies involved with the restoration of AMD impaired watersheds a free, user-friendly, web-based, GIS-enabled data, and project management tool to help with monitoring, assessment, evaluation, management, and maintenance of watershed restoration projects with a major emphasis on AMD treatment systems.

For more information on the Growing Greener Plus grant program, application guidance, and to sign up for notifications when grant programs reopen, visit DEP's webpage, [Growing Greener Plus Grants Program](#).

You can also visit the [Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's website](#), or follow DEP on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)