



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

1998 BAY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Nutrient Management: Nutrient management is the cornerstone of Pennsylvania's [Chesapeake Bay Program](#). Pennsylvania's Nutrient Management Act went into effect in October 1997. During the first year, 628 regulated farmers have come forward to comply. Another 113 non-regulated farmers have submitted plans to voluntarily participate. The act also called for the state Department of Agriculture to develop and implement a Nutrient Management Specialist certification program. Individuals must be certified in order to write or review nutrient management plans. Currently there are more than 300 certified specialists.

Grants are available to assist farmers with the costs associated with implementing nutrient management plans. Since 1985, more than \$30 million has been allocated to 41 counties for distribution to 1,225 farmers. In June 1998 the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed an amended version of the state's Agriculture Linked Investment Program (Agri-Link) to provide up to \$25 million to farmers in the form of low interest loans through local lending institutions to implement approved nutrient management plans. The Agri-Link loans will be available in early 1999. Pennsylvania also provides streambank fencing at no cost to the farmer. Over 200 miles of streams have been protected.

This December, [Chesapeake Milk™](#), is being sold at grocery markets in the Bay watershed. Each time a consumer purchases the milk, five cents per half gallon will be returned to dairy farmers in the region who are achieving a high standard of natural resource protection, or will be used to assist other farmers in enhancing their environmental protection practices. The sponsors of the project include the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, The Pennsylvania State University, the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture and the Rodale Institute.

Protecting Forests and Establishing Buffers: Pennsylvania developed a statewide plan, [Pennsylvania Stream ReLeaf](#), that involved over 100 individuals and representatives of groups from across the Commonwealth. "Operation Tree Rescue" jump-started the plan in the spring and the fall. The Commonwealth made available to local groups about \$700,000 worth of tree and shrub seedlings from land purchased for a state correctional facility. In the bay watershed, more than 57 miles of riparian buffers have been restored since January 1996. Training and outreach efforts have been assisted by the development of the "Forest Buffer Toolkit: Replanting Pennsylvania's Streamsides." Pennsylvania's efforts will be further enhanced by its application for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program to help provide incentives for buffer restoration. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative is a voluntary, industry-driven effort created by the American Forest & Paper Association. It focuses on logger training,

landowner education and public outreach programs. In 1998, in cooperation with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), training was provided to 952 loggers. More than 4,000 information packets were distributed to landowners considering harvesting timber.

DCNR, through the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Program (CFA), assisted 2,713 forest landowners in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed in 1998. Because of this effort forest resources management plans were prepared for 280 landowners entailing 64,418 acres. More than 750 acres of tree plantings and 15,544 acres of wildlife habitat were established on marginal soils and riparian areas.

Watershed Protection and Restoration: The departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Aging, together with the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement, established the nation's first statewide Senior Environment Corps program for water monitoring. Through 10 Senior Environment Corps, 250 seniors collect information on water quality, stream habitat, and biological conditions in 100 streams. DEP also has developed a directory of more than 80 monitoring groups, initiated a newsletter for volunteer monitors, provided technical assistance and training workshops for nearly 300 individuals and coordinated the springtime Water Quality Snapshot in several river basins in the state.

The Watershed Restoration and Assistance Program was established in 1998 as a grants program to assist locally managed watershed restoration and protection projects that focus on nonpoint source pollution. Watershed associations and other nonprofit groups, local governments and county conservation districts are eligible. DEP is reviewing 145 applications.

For the past several years DEP has implemented the Pennsylvania Wetland Replacement Project. Permit applicants who have limited wetland replacement options can contribute instead of undertaking wetland creation projects. Almost 300 permit applicants have contributed more than \$400,000 to the fund for the replacement of 45 acres of wetlands.

The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) provides low interest loans and grants to support the construction of new and upgraded municipal water, wastewater and stormwater systems. From 1995 to July 1998, PENNVEST has approved \$500 million in loans, and \$8 million in grants, for construction of 110 water system projects, 169 wastewater projects and 31 stormwater projects. PENNVEST also has approved almost \$3 million in loans to over 200 homeowners for repair of malfunctioning on-lot sewage disposal systems.

Reclaim PA was introduced by Gov. Ridge in 1998 to coordinate the Commonwealth's abandoned mine reclamation and well plugging program. Reclaim PA includes legislative, policy and management initiatives designed to enhance mine operator, volunteer and DEP reclamation efforts. DEP is taking steps to provide financial incentives to operators who do re-mining, increase citizen involvement in mine reclamation and actively explore new technologies.

Community Conservation Partnership: The [Community Conservation Partnership](#) initiative was launched by the Ridge administration to join DCNR with communities to provide recreational opportunities and conservation of Pennsylvania's natural and cultural heritage. Highlights include:

- Rivers Conservation: Since October 1997 nearly \$1.1 million helped non-profit organizations and

local governments protect and enhance waterways across the Commonwealth.

- Rail-Trails: \$1.2 million in funding was provided for the planning, acquisition and construction of 25 rails-to-trails projects throughout Pennsylvania.
- Land Trust: This year \$3.7 million funded the planning, acquisition and protection of critical habitat and open space across the Commonwealth.
- Community Grants: In 1998, \$9 million was announced to support 186 local park, recreation and conservation projects.
- Heritage Parks: This year \$2.5 million helped to fund 63 projects.
- Recreational Trails: Twenty-two grants totaling \$387,820 were awarded for recreational trail projects across the Commonwealth.
- Greenways: In 1997, the first Governor's Conference on Greenways and Trails was held, and Pennsylvania received the American Greenways Dupont Award for its efforts to promote and enhance a network of greenways and trails across the state. In response to conference recommendations, a Greenways Partnership Commission was created in April 1998.
- Growing Greener: In conjunction with The Natural Lands Trust and an advisory committee, DCNR developed Growing Greener, a publication that provides tools communities can use to protect open space and recreational land as part of their development strategies.

Fish Passage and Shad Restoration: Ground breaking occurred in August 1998 on the fish passage at York Haven Dam near Harrisburg. Operation should begin in April 2000, making more than 450 miles of Pennsylvania's major rivers in the Susquehanna River Basin accessible to migratory fish. Four dams on tributaries of the Susquehanna have been removed, making a total of 10 dams removed and one fish ladder constructed since 1995, providing access to more than 75 miles of tributary streams. The tens of thousands of shad that passed Holtwood and Safe Harbor dams during the first two years of operation have exceeded expectations.

During spring of 1998, the [Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission](#) stocked nearly 12 million young shad. Most of the larvae were stocked in Susquehanna and Juniata Rivers, and in the larger tributaries on the lower Susquehanna. The commission also has committed to reducing by 25% the nutrient loads from its 14 fish hatcheries statewide within five years.

Environmental Education: Gov. Ridge began a new chapter in Pennsylvania's efforts to promote environmental education by launching the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education. The center is a partnership of 11 state agencies set up to identify unmet environmental education needs and develop programs to meet those needs.

Pennsylvania also provides an Environmental Education Grant Program. The program is funded through 5 percent of the fines and penalties collected by DEP. More than \$2 million has been provided for the expansion and support of environmental education over the past five years.

21st Century Environment Commission: In 1998, the 21st Century Environment Commission presented its final report to Governor Ridge for consideration. The report recommends environmental priorities and explores new methods of achieving environmental goals in Pennsylvania in the next century. The report makes some 240 recommendations to improve the environment, economy and communities in Pennsylvania. The commission identified promoting responsible land use as the number one priority. Recommendations include acknowledging the problems created by current land-use patterns, educating Pennsylvanians on land use issues, providing local governments better tools to implement land use initiatives, leading by example and revitalizing older communities.

Pollution Prevention: This year the recipients of the Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence saved \$187.8 million by taking steps to make their operations environmentally friendly. Their savings were not just measured in dollars. More importantly, they eliminated more than 144 million gallons of wastewater, reduced the amount of solid waste by more than 12 million tons a year, saved more than 1.8 million kilowatt hours of electricity and eliminated 5.5 million tons of air pollution.

The Governor's Green Government Council is an initiative of the Ridge Administration that mandates consideration of environmental impact in the day-to-day decision making of state agencies. The GGGC "Green Plan," submitted to Gov. Ridge in September 1998, outlines more than 150 projects to prevent pollution, reduce energy costs, include green commodities in all state contracts, expand the state recycling program, recommend waste-reduction projects, experiment with new technologies to reduce fleet emissions, buy alternative-fuel vehicles and promote green technology in state-owned and leased buildings.

Environmental Protection Compliance Tracking System: For more than a year, DEP has been working on new performance measurements that focus on compliance rates rather than enforcement activities, on outcomes, impacts and results rather than traditional counts, such as the number of permits issued, number of inspections performed, number of enforcement actions taken or the total fines and penalties collected. This approach provides compliance data not only in traditional program specific formats, but also in a new facility-wide format. DEP is the first environmental protection agency in the country that is able to show air, water, waste and other program activities in a single integrated compliance view. Compliance data is available to the public on the DEP website at www.dep.state.pa.us.

Land Recycling: Pennsylvania's Land Recycling Program celebrated its third anniversary in 1998. In the three years since its inception, the program has grown to be a national leader in turning old sites into new opportunities for economic growth and environmental progress. There has been tremendous growth in both the number of sites admitted to the program (more than 650) and in the number of sites cleaned up (344 as of October 1998). There are more than 13,000 people working at sites cleaned up under the program.

Air Quality: Pennsylvania joined seven other states in calling on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to take steps to resolve air pollution transport from states in the South and Midwest. In September 1998, EPA finalized its plan for reducing nitrogen oxides, a smog-forming pollutant, across the Midwest and Northeast, including the states identified in Pennsylvania's August 1997 petition. Pennsylvania has begun implementing nitrogen oxide emissions reductions outlined in a voluntary agreement with other Northeast states. The Commonwealth has implemented a vehicle emissions inspection program in the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh metropolitan areas.

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