

# Conservation Committee Report

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Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

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## A Plan to Restore Pennsylvania

By: DCNR

Infrastructure. It's a big word that has big implications. Infrastructure that's in good shape supports a strong economy, creates opportunities for communities, and protects citizens from an increasingly unpredictable natural environment.

Failing infrastructure poses risks to safety, depresses economic activity, and can leave residents and businesses vulnerable to natural disasters like flooding.

Infrastructure is as diverse as buildings and parks, dirt and gravel roads, a broadband network, and water treatment plants.

Governor Wolf has a plan called Restore Pennsylvania that will provide funding to help communities:

Upgrade and expand green infrastructure, such as local and state parks, state forests, and trails

Address blight

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### The Conservation Pledge

I give my pledge as an

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

This is my Pledge!

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### Agriculture Secretary and Community Taskforce Discuss Spotted Lanternfly Efforts, PA Farm Bill

Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding and Senator Judy Schwank (D-Berks) joined members of the Spotted Lanternfly Community Engagement Taskforce to discuss the ongoing work to combat the Spotted Lanternfly and funding for

those efforts under the PA Farm Bill.

"Invasive species like the Spotted Lanternfly pose a significant threat to Pennsylvania's products and environment," said Secretary Redding. "The PA Farm Bill will designate targeted funds to help contain disas-

ters, outbreaks, and threats, helping us to protect our agricultural commodities and preserve the quality of life for Pennsylvanians."

As part of National Invasive Species Awareness

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## A Plan to Restore Pennsylvania (continued)

Expand broadband access

Mitigate the effects of localized flooding

“My vision for Pennsylvania includes vibrant towns and cities with new development, opportunities in rural and disadvantaged areas, and a modern, interconnected commonwealth,” said Governor Wolf. “Unfortunately, after decades of neglect and declining federal investment, Pennsylvania is falling behind, and we need a bold plan to get us back on track.”

Case in Point: Shikellamy State Park

DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn recently toured Shikellamy State Park to discuss how the Restore Pennsylvania proposal could help address a deteriorating marina building, parking lot repairs, river bank erosion, and other green infrastructure needs.

Shikellamy is along the Susquehanna River in Northumberland County.

“Flood waters and time have exacted a very costly toll on a building that once was a magnet for Shikellamy State Park visitors,” Dunn told tour attendees gathered outside the shell of the former restaurant. “Costly demolition and construction does not come easy. It requires the type of financial commitment Restore Pennsylvania can provide.”

“It’s important that our secretary is here today with all the other partners, to take a look at the park, to see how we can move forward,” said Rep. Lynda Schlegel Culver at the event. “Getting the funding together will be a long, large conversation that the legislators have to have.”

Friends of Shikellamy State Park member Rob Water said...“Hopefully with the renewed interest in the revitalization of this building, something is finally going to happen.”

Restore Pennsylvania projects will be driven by local input about community needs. Projects identified by local stakeholders will be evaluated through a competitive process to ensure that high-priority, high-impact projects are funded and needs across Pennsylvania are met.

Secretary Dunn urged communities and citizens who care about state and local park, forest, and trail projects to contact their legislators expressing their support for the plan.

State Park and Forest Needs

The millions of acres of state parks and forests include:

A lot of buildings, such as visitor centers, cabins, and bathrooms

Roads and trails

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## A Plan to Restore Pennsylvania (continued)

### Dams

Natural resources like lakes, wetlands, and trees

Many of the buildings were built between 1930 and the 1970s, and are showing the impacts over time from wear and tear, and a growing number of visitors.

Several hundred long-term repair and improvement projects of many types -- from as small as \$100,000 to as high as several million dollars -- are on a project list that totals around \$1 billion.

Reliable and adequate investments are needed to ensure state parks and forests remain places and healthy habitat that can be enjoyed by all Pennsylvanians.

### How It's Funded

Restore Pennsylvania will invest \$4.5 billion over the next four years on projects across the commonwealth, including new environmental projects and new recreational opportunities, such as:

Infrastructure and maintenance in state parks

Creation and revitalization of new local parks

Funding for new hiking, biking, and ATV trail projects

The plan will be funded through a commonsense severance tax on the extraction of natural gas.

To learn more, view the full [Restore Pennsylvania plan \(PDF\)](#).

## **Agriculture Secretary and Community Taskforce Discuss Spotted Lanternfly Efforts, PA Farm Bill (continued)**

[WeekOpens In A New Window](#), today's roundtable discussion allowed Secretary Redding and Senator Schwank to hear from members of the community whose lives are affected by the Spotted Lanternfly. The 13 members of the Spotted Lanternfly Community Engagement Taskforce are tasked with identifying the best ways to inform the community about the Spotted Lanternfly, and deliver updates on control efforts back to the local area.

"Berks County has been at the forefront of fighting the Spotted Lanternfly ever since it was discovered in 2014," Sen. Schwank said. "This taskforce is critical in supporting our efforts to combat this invasive pest."

The PA Farm Bill, announced last week, would invest more than \$24 million in Pennsylvania's agriculture industry to bolster infrastructure, expand resources, and cultivate future generations of leaders within agriculture. The plan includes the Pennsylvania Rapid Response Disaster Readiness Account, which funds \$5 million to allow for a quick response to agriculture disasters, including using animal or plant health officials to contain an outbreak or threat, like the Spotted Lanternfly.

Over the past year, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) has engaged in a multi-pronged approach to control the invasive pest with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Penn State. PDA has taken responsibility for suppressing Spotted Lanternfly populations in the core infestation area, while USDA has established a perimeter extending 18 miles out from the core area, where they are working to eliminate any infestation. Between the two agencies, the entire Spotted Lanternfly quarantine area – 13 counties in southeastern Pennsylvania – are being covered. Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences has taken the lead on public outreach through its Penn State Extension service.

The commonwealth is also engaging with the business community, stressing the risk that interstate and international commerce may be impeded. Businesses operating within the quarantine must obtain an operating permit, which requires training and passing a test to demonstrate a working knowledge and understanding of the pest and quarantine requirements. Permits demonstrate that individuals can identify the pest and ensure that it is not present on transported items.

With events held across the nation, National Invasive Species Awareness Week is held from February 25 – March 3 to raise awareness and identify solutions to invasive species issues at local, state, national, and international levels.

For more information about the Spotted Lanternfly, visit [www.agriculture.pa.gov/spottedlanternfly](http://www.agriculture.pa.gov/spottedlanternfly).

The Spotted Lanternfly is a menace to commerce across southeastern PA. We need your help to stop its spread. Businesses located or working within the quarantine, which move products,

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## **Agriculture Secretary and Community Taskforce Discuss Spotted Lanternfly Efforts, PA Farm Bill (continued)**

vehicles or other conveyances within or out of the [Spotted Lanternfly quarantine zone](#) are required to have a [Spotted Lanternfly permit](#). Owners, managers and/or supervisors are required to complete training, pass an exam, and then train their employees.

Source: the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA)

## **DEP Assesses \$1.5 Million Penalty Against Rice Midstream Holdings for Beta Pipeline Violations in Greene County**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has assessed a \$1.5 million penalty against Rice Midstream Holdings, LLC (Rice) for violations that occurred on Rice's Beta Trunk Pipeline located in Aleppo and Richhill townships, Greene County. The violations are for sediment discharges into local waterways, unstable construction, and the failure to maintain pollution controls.

"Protection of resources like streams and wetlands cannot be the concern of DEP alone. Environmental protection and compliance must also be an operator's top priority," said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "DEP will continue to hold operators accountable when they fail to meet the protective conditions of their permits."

Rice is required to use erosion and sedimentation control (E&S) best management practices (BMPs) in its pipeline construction to prevent sediment pollution into waters of the Commonwealth. On October 11, 2017, Rice reported—and a same-day DEP inspection confirmed—that sediment-laden water overtopped numerous E&S BMPs into unnamed tributaries to Mudlick Fork and Harts Run. E&S BMPs were not properly maintained or not installed at all. Subsequent inspections revealed similar violations on January 21, 22, and 23, 2018; February 12 and 15, 2018; and March 6 and 30, 2018. Rice voluntarily shut down construction of new sections of the pipeline, redirected resources to the remediation of unstable areas, and resolved the violations as of April 30, 2018.

However, on May 25, 2018, Rice reported three significant slope failures within and outside the Beta Trunk Pipeline's permitted limit of earth disturbance. In addition, there were E&S BMP failures along a different section of the pipeline, and soil was stockpiled in a wetland. Rice corrected these violations as of July 5, 2018.

The Beta Trunk Pipeline is an approximately 7.5-mile gathering line, within a larger "Beta System," that takes natural gas from several well pads to transmission facilities. The line was permitted by DEP in July 2017, and portions of the line are in service. DEP continues to inspect the pipeline as it remains under construction.

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## **DEP Assesses \$1.5 Million Penalty Against Rice Midstream Holdings for Beta Pipeline Violations in Greene County (continued)**

In December 2018, DEP approved a permit modification to repair the slope failures. As part of DEP's review, it required the permittee to submit a geotechnical design report with detailed plans for each location to repair and install BMPs, avoid future slides, and to address stability.

This pipeline is now owned by Equitrans Midstream Corp. but the violations began prior to the acquisition of Rice. The signed Consent and Civil Penalty document can be viewed at <http://files.dep.state.pa.us/Newsroom/NewsroomPortalFiles/Rice%20Beta%20Trunk%20CACP%2020190226.pdf>.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

## **DEP Issues Environmental Assessment Letter to Chrin Landfill Regarding Proposed Expansion in Northampton County**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has issued its environmental assessment review letter to Chrin Landfill (Chrin) regarding the facility's permit application for expansion in Williams Township, Northampton County. DEP has determined that Chrin has shown that the identified benefits of the project clearly outweigh the remaining known and potential harms of the project.

DEP issued the review as part of Chrin's July 2015 application to expand its existing landfill by approximately 32 acres.

Some of the benefits to the local community recognized by DEP are in the form of host fees to the township, which could cover roadway maintenance, with additional benefits arising from local employment and free waste and recycling services. The review also noted mitigation the landfill has proposed to limit some potential harms associated with traffic, air quality, water quality, and litter. Capping and landscaping plans will mitigate the known visual impacts of the project.

"DEP diligently reviewed the application to make sure the benefits to the community regarding this expansion are evident and carried out," said DEP Northeast Regional Office Director Mike Bedrin. "A project of this size has to show that resident will see minimal impacts."

The proposed expansion area would be located within the current landfill permit boundary and consists of an overlay on the existing disposal area and a new disposal area to the east of the existing landfill. The total height would increase between 30 and 40 feet. The project does not propose to increase the daily maximum and quarterly average waste acceptance rates for the landfill. Chrin has indicated that the expanded landfill will allow the landfill to continue operating for approximately eight (8) additional years.

A public meeting was held on March 21, 2016, to discuss the project and a public hearing on the permit application was held on January 20, 2017, at the Wilson Area High School to take testimony from residents. A 30-day comment period followed where DEP accepted written comments.

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## **DEP Issues Environmental Assessment Letter to Chrin Landfill Regarding Proposed Expansion in Northampton County (continued)**

The review of the permit application now moves on to the technical review phase.

Those wishing to comment on the technical review can do so by mailing written comments to Roger Bellas, Waste Management Program Manager, DEP Northeast Regional Office, 2 Public Square, Wilkes-Barre, 18701 or by emailing him at [rbellas@pa.gov](mailto:rbellas@pa.gov). Public comments will be accepted until April 29, 2019.

A copy of the environmental assessment letter is available for review at DEP's Northeast Regional Office between the hours of 8 AM and 4 PM or the Bethlehem District Office at 4530 Bath Pike, 18017. Appointments for reviewing the application materials may be made by calling (570) 826-2511. Additional copies of the letter are also available for review at the Easton Public Library, 515 Church Street and the Easton Area Neighborhood Center, 902 Philadelphia Road. The public does not need an appointment to view documents at either location.

To read the letter, click here:

<http://files.dep.state.pa.us/RegionalResources/NERO/NEROPortalFiles/CommunityInformation/ChrInLandfill/ChrIn%2028Feb2019%20Final%20EA.pdf>

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

## DEP Reaches Settlement on Abandoned Wells

Agreement secures historic bonding for abandoned oil and gas wells

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has announced a settlement with Diversified Gas & Oil Corporation and Diversified Oil & Gas, LLC (collectively referred to as Diversified) and Alliance Petroleum Co LLC (Alliance) over well plugging violations in 23 Pennsylvania counties.

“This agreement is a win for the commonwealth because it ensures that over 1,400 oil and gas wells are properly maintained or plugged and that these operators, not Pennsylvania citizens, bear the full cost of operating or plugging them,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell.

Diversified and Alliance have agreed to a \$7 million surety bond for the wells covered by this settlement, plus an additional \$20,000 to \$30,000 bond for each abandoned or nonproducing oil and gas well acquired in the future. Under current law, adopted in 2012 as an amendment to Pennsylvania's Fiscal Code, conventional oil and gas operators such as Diversified and Alliance are only required to secure \$25,000 of blanket bonding to cover all of their wells, which in the case of the two companies, amounts to bonding of approximately \$2 per well. The performance bonding negotiated in this settlement is closer to actual plugging costs that can begin around \$20,000 per well and go much higher depending on well and site conditions.

With this Consent Order and Agreement (COA) in place, DEP has approved pending transfers of non-producing mostly conventional oil and gas wells to Alliance and Diversified. The COA allows some wells to be put back into production, so long as minimum production levels are maintained, and sets a plugging and restoration schedule for non-producing wells of 15 years while prioritizing the plugging of wells that pose health, safety, and/or environmental threats. The COA may be extended for an additional 5 years subject to additional bonding of \$30,000 per well for wells to be plugged during the extension.

The Oil and Gas Act requires owners and operators to plug wells upon abandonment. [In July 2018, DEP issued orders](#) to Alliance, XTO Energy Inc. (XTO), and CNX Gas Company LLC (CNX) to plug 1,058 abandoned oil and gas wells across the state—based on required self-reporting of well production data—and held pending transfers of said wells.

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## DEP Reaches Settlement on Abandoned Wells (continued)

Those wells, along with wells that Diversified also reported as non-producing, make up the approximately 1400 wells specifically addressed in in the COA. Alliance, XTO, and CNX appealed DEP's orders to the Pennsylvania Environmental Hearing Board.

Pennsylvania has over 8,000 orphaned and [abandoned oil and gas wells](#) on its inventory and hundreds of thousands of legacy wells may be unaccounted for, posing a major financial liability and environmental, public health, and safety risk.

The signed COA document can be viewed at <http://files.dep.state.pa.us/Newsroom/NewsroomPortalFiles/DiversifiedCOA.PDF>.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

## **Rust-Oleum settles with EPA over hazardous waste violations at manufacturing facility in Williamsport, Maryland**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a settlement with the Rust-Oleum Corporation to address alleged violations of hazardous waste regulations at its paint manufacturing facility in Williamsport, Maryland.

EPA cited the Rust-Oleum Corporation for violating the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), the federal law governing the treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste.

RCRA is designed to protect public health and the environment, and avoid long and extensive cleanups, by requiring the safe, environmentally sound storage and disposal of hazardous waste.

Under terms of the settlement, Rust-Oleum will pay a \$168,000 penalty, and has ensured EPA it will properly contain and manage hazardous waste in the future. The settlement reflects the company's compliance efforts, and its cooperation in the investigation. As part of the settlement, Rust-Oleum has not admitted liability for the alleged violations, but has certified its compliance with RCRA requirements.

Inspectors from EPA and the Maryland Department of Environment identified numerous monitoring, record keeping and hazardous waste storage violations during an inspection.

The facility, which has been in operation at this location since 1978, manufactures paints that are primarily contained in aerosol cans. The facility uses a variety of mills and tanks to mix, grind, and thin the types of paints it generates.

For more information about EPA's hazardous waste program, visit <https://www.epa.gov/hw>

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

## DEP Unveils Plan to Increase Electric Vehicle Use in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania could gain almost \$2.8 billion in benefits from lower greenhouse gas emissions, help reduce respiratory disease, increase consumer savings, and create jobs if just three in 10 vehicles were electric, according to a plan released by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

“Interest in electric vehicles is increasing, but until now there’s been no statewide plan to foster a cohesive approach,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “We developed research-based strategies for government and private planning and policy decisions to help increase the opportunities and benefits of electric vehicles across the state.”

Led by DEP, a coalition of public and private partners called Drive Electric PA analyzed barriers to electric vehicle use. They developed Pennsylvania’s Electric Vehicle Roadmap, recommending 13 strategies to increase use of these zero-emission vehicles.

Partners include PennDOT; the Pennsylvania Departments of General Services and Conservation and Natural Resources; the Public Utility and Turnpike Commissions; and about 100 industry, business, community, and academic partners.

Transportation generates 20 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in Pennsylvania, according to DEP’s draft 2018 Greenhouse Gas Inventory. Governor Wolf’s Executive Order on climate change requires that 25 percent of state government passenger cars be replaced with electric vehicles by 2025. A few cities, such as Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and organizations are working to expand electric vehicle use locally. Increasing numbers of residents, businesses, and organizations are applying to DEP rebate programs for electric vehicles or charging stations. For example, in the past two years, Pennsylvania residents have received more than \$3.3 million in rebates for 2,135 electric vehicles.

Still, there are only about 15,000 electric vehicles in the state, a fraction of the approximately eight million passenger cars registered.

By 2023, an electric vehicle will emit 50 percent less greenhouse gas than a gasoline-powered car, according to Pennsylvania’s Electric Vehicle Roadmap.

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## **DEP Unveils Plan to Increase Electric Vehicle Use in Pennsylvania (continued)**

The plan projects that if three in 10 cars and light-duty trucks were electric by 2033, Pennsylvania could enjoy almost \$2.8 billion in benefits.

Asthma and other respiratory disease related to air pollution would be lower. Jobs in electric vehicle manufacturing and infrastructure would be created. Consumers would save money through fuel efficiency and less maintenance. Utility ratepayers would have lower costs from improved efficiency in the electric grid.

But public knowledge of the benefits of electric vehicles is low. People are uncertain about the availability of charging stations and mileage range. Up-front cost may be high. There's currently no statewide policy to increase adoption.

[The Electric Vehicle Roadmap](#) identifies seven strategies to start to overcome these barriers in just two years:

- Develop policy or legislation to encourage utilities to invest in transportation electrification and leverage their expertise and consumer relationships to improve the electric market in a way that maximizes benefits to ratepayers and society.

- Establish statewide electric sales goals.

- Expand DEP's Alternative Fuel Investment Grants program for municipalities, businesses, and organizations.

- Increase investment in charging stations and public awareness of them.

- Create an education program and a cooperative program to support fleet purchases.

- Develop a consumer education campaign.

- Develop an outreach program to raise awareness of electric vehicles among car dealerships.

The plan recommends six other strategies for five years and beyond. Coalition members are now collaborating on potential ways to put the strategies in place.

Pennsylvania's Electric Vehicle Roadmap was funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, under State Energy Program Award Number DE EE0006994 through contract with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

## **DEP Orders Erie Coke Corporation to Submit Control Plan to Resolve Ongoing Violations**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has ordered Erie Coke Corporation (Erie Coke) to address ongoing violations of the Pennsylvania Air Pollution Control Act at Erie Coke's coke production facility in the City of Erie.

"This action requires Erie Coke Corporation to re-evaluate its methods of operation and plan equipment to ensure that the facility is operated in full accordance with its permit and the applicable rules and regulations for the protection of our citizens. DEP is committed to enforcing the commonwealth's conditions of the permits we issue and protecting Pennsylvania's air," said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell.

Since June 2017, DEP has documented numerous and ongoing violations at the facility located near the channel entrance to Presque Isle Bay. Violations cited in the Order include, among others:

- Failing to operate a hydrogen sulfide absorber pollution control device at all times when operating the coke oven batteries;

- Flaring or combustion of coke oven by-product gas with hydrogen sulfide concentrations greater than allowed;

- Excessive visible fugitive emissions from coke pushing operations;

- Over 12,000 minutes of excessive visible emissions from the battery combustion stack between January and September of 2018;

- Failing to prevent topside and door emissions as required by permit;

- Failing to prevent visible fugitive particulate matter emissions from crossing off the Erie Coke property;

- Failing to promptly remove earth or other material from paved streets onto which earth or other material was transported by trucking;

- Failing to conduct annual stack testing of the Coke Side Shed Baghouse.

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## **DEP Orders Erie Coke Corporation to Submit Control Plan to Resolve Ongoing Violations (continued)**

Many of the violations are similar those addressed by a 2010 consent decree between the DEP and Erie Coke. The consent decree terminated in 2015 after Erie Coke upgraded the facility and paid \$4 million in penalties. DEP has not detected exceedances of ambient air quality standards at its monitors in the area, but continues to investigate the effects of Erie Coke's violations.

DEP's order requires Erie Coke to complete stack testing of the Coke Side Shed Baghouse within 30 days after the DEP approves a stack testing protocol, immediately notify the DEP if the hydrogen sulfide absorber is taken out of service, and within 60 days, submit a plan and schedule to correct the violations.

Erie Coke has applied to renew its Title V operating permit for the facility and that application is under review by DEP. Many of the violations noted in the Order were documented as part of the DEP's compliance review for the renewal of the Title V operating permit.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

## **DEP Awards Grant Funding for Cleaner, Safer Western Pennsylvania Streams**

Several western Pennsylvania communities and the Flight 93 National Memorial will enjoy safer, cleaner streams for improved public health and recreation uses, thanks to \$1.6 million in grants from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for local projects to remove acid mine drainage (AMD).

“Pennsylvania continues to chip away at the immense challenge of restoring streams impaired before the creation of environmental regulations,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “These projects bring together the best resources in planning, design, construction, and maintenance to help bring streams back to life.”

Seven projects will help restore more than 20 miles of streams in four counties and at the Flight 93 National Memorial site. The projects are as follows:

### **Clearfield County**

Clearfield County Conservation District received \$249,500 to improve recreational use of Little Beaver Run in Decatur Township by designing and building an AMD treatment system, including a pond, wetland, and limestone bed, to reduce acidity.

### **Fayette County**

Mountain Watershed Association received \$426,279 for new work to maintain remediation and address new discharges in the Gallentine and Sagamore AMD passive treatment systems in Saltlick and Springfield townships. The two systems are integral to maintaining water quality in Indian Creek, which prior AMD remediation has restored to a trout-stocked fishery.

### **Indiana County**

Indiana County Conservation District received \$83,624 to develop a plan to restore 18 miles of AMD-impaired streams in the Yellow Creek Watershed. The conservation district office will assess the watershed on foot and via drone and discharge sampling along Yellow Creek. They'll then develop a restoration plan that will guide future cleanup strategies and enable existing and planned AMD treatment systems to qualify for funding.

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## **DEP Awards Grant Funding for Cleaner, Safer Western Pennsylvania Streams (continued)**

Stream Restoration Incorporated received \$57,559 to develop a plan to restore Aultman's Run Watershed, which has 69 miles of stream and covers parts of Indiana and Armstrong counties. Completion of the restoration plan will guide future cleanup strategies and enable five planned AMD and coal refuse cleanup projects to qualify for funding.

### **Somerset County**

Paint Creek Regional Watershed Association received \$48,193 for limestone treatment to restore AMD-impaired headwaters of Babcock Creek in Gallitzin State Forest. The project is anticipated to expand local habitat for Pennsylvania's state fish, the brook trout.

Somerset County Conservation District received \$551,319 for construction of an AMD passive treatment system on Lamberts Run in Stonycreek Township, one mile from the Flight 93 National Memorial. In addition to removing the final source of AMD impairment in Lamberts Run Watershed, the system is expected to improve water quality in the upper Stonycreek River. This project complements existing DEP-led treatment at the headwaters of Lamberts Run on the Flight 93 property.

Shade Creek Watershed Association received \$208,141 for AMD treatment on Coal Run in State Game Land 228, Shade Township. The project will restore more than 4 miles of stream and maintain previous mine drainage treatment in the headwaters of Shade Creek, which are supporting native brook trout populations.

The grants come from the state Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Act Fund and a state AML Set Aside fund supported by the federal Abandoned Mine Land Program.

Source: Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

## **DEP Approves Report Detailing Cause of Advanced Disposal Services Greentree Landfill 2017 Slope Failure**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced that it has approved Advanced Disposal Services Greentree Landfill, LLC's (Advanced Disposal) "Root Cause Report" detailing Advanced Disposal's investigation and conclusion regarding the cause of the slope failure on February 8, 2017, at the Greentree Landfill in Kersey, Elk County.

DEP required Advanced Disposal to conduct the investigation and submit the Root Cause Report under a Consent Order and Agreement between the DEP and Advanced Disposal dated November 30, 2017. Experts hired by Advanced Disposal prepared the Root Cause Report and concluded that the placement of non-conventional waste streams within the Greentree Landfill, including low shear strength sludges, and other operational factors created conditions that caused the February 8, 2017 slope failure. Industry experts hired by DEP to review the Root Cause Report did not contest the conclusions and DEP approved the Root Cause Report.

The Consent Order and Agreement also required Advanced Disposal to remediate the slope failure area, consent to restrictions on sludge acceptance, and pay a civil penalty of \$600,000.

Advanced Disposal later agreed to a modification of the agreement that included \$95,000 in additional penalties. Advanced Disposal continues to remediate the area of the slope failure at Greentree Landfill. The penalties were paid into the Solid Waste Abatement Fund, which is used to address problems at abandoned landfills, help to address littering and anti-dumping initiatives.

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

## **New water treatment facility will reduce lead levels in Pittsburgh's water system**

[Two years](#) after Allegheny County Controller Chelsa Wagner declared our water quality to be “a public health crisis,” lead levels in Pittsburgh's water remain above [EPA action levels](#).

Relief may be on the way.

At the end of January, the [Pittsburgh Water and Sewage Authority](#) (PWSA) broke ground on a new water treatment facility in Highland Park. The two-building complex, located within the Sycamore Grove Shelter, will supply orthophosphate chemicals into the water from the nearby reservoir.

“Constructing this facility and adding orthophosphate to our water system will reduce lead levels across our water system,” said PWSA Executive Director Robert Weimar.

PWSA officially announced the construction on Feb. 12, one week after signing a settlement with the [Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission](#) to adopt [new guidelines](#) for how the utility will carry out its ongoing lead remediation efforts. In addition to rules for pipe replacements, the settlement requires PWSA to expand access to free water filters and increase the overall transparency of the effort.

“Even though we're aggressively replacing thousands of lead lines, it will take years to replace all of them,” said Weimar. “In the immediate term, we will begin applying orthophosphate to address high lead levels by using this effective and widely-accepted treatment method.”

Orthophosphate chemicals coat the inside of water service lines, creating a barrier between the water itself and the piping materials. For cities like Pittsburgh, dealing with aging lead pipes that are corroding into the local water supply, the chemicals can significantly reduce water pollution levels.

According to a press release, the facility will begin treating the water from the reservoir by the end of March. Construction of additional access points in Highland Park, the Aspinwall Water Treatment Plant and the Bruecken Pump Station will also begin in the next several weeks.

While the PWSA's ongoing efforts to solve the city's lead crisis have generated controversy, this particular announcement was cheered by local advocacy groups.

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## **New water treatment facility will reduce lead levels in Pittsburgh's water system**

**(continued)**

“While they replace lead service lines around the city, it’s critical that they find more immediate solutions like treating the water with orthophosphates and providing filters to people that need them,” said Aly Shaw, an organizer with [Pittsburgh UNITED](#). “We’re very happy to see this.”

But even with the state settlement and new treatment plan, the PWSA’s legal woes are likely to continue for much for the next year. [On Feb. 1](#), Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro formally charged the water authority with endangering the health of 161 households by not properly informing them of when the agency replaced nearby lead water lines.

While Pittsburgh UNITED has often been openly critical of PWSA, they as well other environmental groups have also pointed out that the city’s lead crisis stems from reckless, and in some cases illegal, decisions made by the French multi-national consultants [Veolia](#), who managed the city’s water lines from July 2012 to December 2015.

“Pittsburgh’s lead crisis started after the previous chemical to treat our water for lead was illegally switched under Veolia’s management,” said Shaw. “For two years, we’ve worked with local residents to make sure that Veolia is held accountable for their mismanagement of PWSA and their role in the city’s lead crisis. We’d like to see the Attorney General’s office do the same, and place blame where it belongs.”

Source: [Bill O'Toole](#)