

PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**JOINT LEGISLATIVE AIR AND WATER POLLUTION
CONTROL AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

ANNUAL REPORT

2005

March, 2006

TO: All Members of the General Assembly

FROM: Representative Scott E. Hutchinson, Chairman
Senator Raphael J. Musto, Vice Chairman

SUBJECT: 2005 Annual Report

DATE: March, 2006

“You cannot step into the same river twice”
-Heraclitus

If Gifford Pinchot or Rachael Carson were to join the spectators in the Pennsylvania General Assembly’s Senate or House galleries today, they would undoubtedly be amazed by both the scope and direction of legislation to protect Pennsylvania’s natural resources. The nature of the debate on the environmental issues before the General Assembly today is very different from that of 75 years ago; indeed, the debate is very different from that of 40 years ago and, given the rapid pace of scientific and technological advances, it will change considerably in the years ahead as the needs of Pennsylvania change and new challenges surface.

Scientific and technological changes raise environmental issues that are regularly discussed and debated in hearing rooms and on the floors of the General Assembly. Yet legislators are called on to weigh the pros and cons of highly technical questions and alternative courses of action. To evaluate and formulate opinions on the complex environmental issues of today, legislators often rely on information received by way of legislative committees, particularly the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee (Committee).

The Committee carries out this mission by identifying, studying and analyzing environmental policy issues; publishing reports and recommendations; educating government officials and the public about the impact of policy decisions and providing a forum for public discussion of policy alternatives.

The Committee members and staff are pleased to present to you its 2005 Annual Report. The report details key activities and achievements of the Committee in its efforts to serve the General Assembly during the past year. The range and depth of our activities are reflected in the pages that follow, both in the summaries of what we have published in recent months and in the highlights of our ongoing activities. As in the past, we shall try to fulfill our mission and that of our members by looking ahead, seeking to anticipate the future environmental agenda.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

2005-2006 Session

Rep. Bob Bastian
Rep. Camille George
Rep. Richard Grucela
Rep. Julie Harhart
Rep. Scott E. Hutchinson, Chairman
Rep. Scott A. Petri
Rep. Thomas C. Petrone
Rep. Greg Vitali

Senator James Ferlo
Senator John R. Gordner
Senator Richard A. Kasunic
Senator Roger A. Madigan
Senator Raphael J. Musto
Vice Chairman
Senator Mary Jo White
Senator Robert C. Wonderling
Senator John Wozniak

COMMITTEE STAFF

Craig D. Brooks, Executive Director
Tony M. Guerrieri, Research Analyst
Geoff MacLaughlin, Communications Specialist
Lynn L. Mash, Administrative Officer

THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE AIR AND WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AND CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

In 1967, legislation (Act 448, P.L. 1022) was enacted creating the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee. The Committee consists of 18 members of the General Assembly. Nine members are appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, five from the majority party and four from the minority party. The Speaker of the House of Representatives also appoints nine members, five from the majority party and four from the minority party.

The Committee's powers and duties according to Act 448 include:

- **Conducting continuing studies of air and water pollution laws and recommending needed changes to the General Assembly.**
- **Conducting continuing studies of the enforcement of air and water pollution laws, and in conjunction with such studies making necessary trips to various sections of the Commonwealth to hold public hearings.**
- **Conducting continuing studies of mining practices, mining laws, and reclamation of mined lands.**
- **Holding public hearings and receiving comments regarding any or all of the above subjects of study.**

Since its creation, the Committee has been instrumental in the development of Pennsylvania's environmental laws and policies. The Committee staff is available at all times to assist members of the General Assembly with environmental and conservation issues. The Committee's files and library are extensive. Also, the staff has access to information from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), other state and federal agencies, private industry, and trade associations.

Coal Resources

In the early days of coal mining, waste coal was discarded because poor quality coal could not be burned using the technology of the day. Much of this refuse was left in large waste piles near the coal mines. These waste coal piles are commonly known as culm, gob or boney piles.

Waste coal piles leach iron, manganese and aluminum pollution into waterways and cause acid drainage that kills neighboring streams. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) estimates that there are 258 million tons of waste coal in Pennsylvania.

During the 1980's, small power plants began to find ways to utilize waste coal to produce electricity. Improvements in technology, rising imported fuel prices and record-high oil and natural gas prices have made it more practical to pursue energy technologies that only a few years ago might not have been cost-competitive.

On Thursday, May 12, 2005 the Committee toured Reliant Energy's Seward Power Plant in East Wheatfield Township, Indiana County. The 521-megawatt, \$800 million Seward Power Plant is the largest waste coal-fired generating plant in the world. The plant uses circulating fluidized bed combustion, which blows large amounts of air into the furnace for more complete burning than a traditional coal furnace. When in full production, the Seward plant will use about 11,000 tons of waste coal a day.

The Seward Power Plant represents part of Pennsylvania's clean coal technology and its renewable alternative energy portfolio, which requires that 18 percent of electricity sold in the state come from renewable or environmentally beneficial sources by 2020. It is estimated that the Seward Plant will consume 100 million tons of waste coal from sites throughout western Pennsylvania over the next 30 years.

Coal remains an abundant energy source. Pennsylvania is the fourth largest coal producer in the United States, following Wyoming, West Virginia and Kentucky. Despite Pennsylvania's abundant coal reserves, domestic shortages of coal have occurred in several parts of Pennsylvania, particularly in regard to anthracite coal consumers.

Pennsylvania sits atop 12 billion tons of anthracite coal, but consumers that use it for home heating have been having a difficult time getting it. In the 2004/2005 heating season, coal yards in Schuylkill County, the nation's number one producer of anthracite, had to ration coal to existing customers and tell new customers to look elsewhere.

The culprit is lack of production. The shortage potentially impacts thousands of homeowners who still heat with anthracite, a hard coal that is mined only in eastern Pennsylvania.

The Committee held a public hearing on June 27, 2005 in Harrisburg, Dauphin County to discuss the availability of coal in eastern Pennsylvania's anthracite region, and federal and state regulation of the coal industry. The hearing featured testimony from several individuals including DEP's Michael Terretti, Director of District Mining Operations; Mr. Daniel Blaschak, Chairman of the Pennsylvania Anthracite Council; and Mr. Joseph Wade, President and CEO of the Wade Financial Group.

Witnesses gave the Committee several reasons for the coal shortage and some interesting information on the world coal markets. Among the reasons for the domestic shortage was the glut of cheap Chinese coal and coke imports from 2000-2003, which put many Pennsylvania anthracite coal producers out of business. But those imports dried up when 2004's rapid industrial gains in China, India and other emerging nations caused a shortage of carbon and other natural resources. As a result, China kept its coal and coke products for domestic use rather than exporting them. Industrial expansion also increased the demand for, and use of, oil which caused an increase in prices and meant that American businesses and consumers turned to alternative forms of energy – like anthracite coal – just when the supply had dried up.

Domestically, the new demands of full cost bonding put in place by DEP, and stricter safety enforcement by the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration either made it more difficult for anthracite operations to mine coal or resulted in mine closings just when demand was peaking.

However, it may not be a matter of mining more coal – but moving more coal. The Committee heard testimony about concerns whether the U.S. has the necessary railcars, locomotives, trucks and barges to transport the coal that is needed to supply a growing American appetite for electricity.

Copies of the public hearing transcript and additional information concerning coal mining issues may be obtained from the Committee office.

FOREST RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Legislative Forestry Task Force

Forests have long defined Pennsylvania's natural, economic and cultural landscape. Pennsylvanians look to forests as a source of timber, recreation, clean air and water, and fish and wildlife habitat. The forest industry is a major contributor to the economy of Pennsylvania and is the key economic driver for many rural communities.

As Pennsylvania grows, as its economic base changes and its cultural values shift, the relationship Pennsylvanians have with forests becomes increasingly complex. Seeing through that complexity to a more complete understanding of the issues and forest conditions is critical to making informed decisions about Pennsylvania's forest landscape.

Because of the importance of the forest industry to the economy and its rural communities, the Legislative Forestry Task Force and Advisory Committee were established in 1994, pursuant to House Resolution 263. The resolution itself was introduced after three statewide public hearings in 1993 by the Committee into forestry issues in Pennsylvania, and formation of a task force was a direct recommendation of the Committee.

The Forestry Task Force is composed of four members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly; two members of the Senate and two members of the House of Representatives. The Advisory Committee is composed of 16 members from many disciplines including: education; forestry; the timber products industry; the Pennsylvania Game Commission and others.

Since its inception in 1994, the task force has continued its work through a series of legislative resolutions enacted in succeeding legislative sessions, with staff assistance from the Committee. The most recent resolution, House Resolution 256, Printer's Number 1510, adopted on November 24, 2003, provided the task force with a broad and challenging two-year mission. The legislative resolution outlined five issues that the task force considered as basic elements of importance to the forest industry. These issues are as follows:

- Forest planning and management on federal and state lands;
- Recreational opportunities in state parks and forests;
- Promotion of timber management to private landowners;
- Government and non-governmental acquisition of forestland; and
- Forest bio-reserves.

As part of House Resolution 256, the task force conducted five public meetings between August, 2003 and March, 2005. Each meeting provided Forestry Task Force and Advisory Committee members with a background presentation about one of the issues prescribed in the legislative resolution and offered the opportunity for comment.

The task force issued a report in June 2005. The report's two dozen recommendations are predicated on the information gathered from a variety of organizations, including the Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Forestry, Penn State University's School of Forest Resources, the USDA Forest Service and others, and reflect the comments and discussions by task force and advisory committee members. Key recommendations for the DCNR Bureau of Forestry include:

- **Assure on-going opportunities for public involvement and interaction during any management planning activities – especially prior to the Bureau of Forestry's next revision of the State Forest Resource Management Plan.**
- **Renew its commitment to the forest land use planning process by clarifying its land use objectives and planning framework.**
- **Continue to coordinate with other state and federal agencies on related issues that impact management of the public forests.**

Debate on these recommendations is ongoing.

The success of this effort led the General Assembly to adopt Senate Resolution 137, Printer's Number 968, in 2006. This resolution again establishes a Legislative Forestry Task Force and Advisory Committee, and directs the committee to research additional issues facing Pennsylvania's forests and forest products industry. These issues include the growing threat of forest pests and diseases, the impact of municipal ordinances on accessing private forests, the U.S. Forest Service's survey of the private forest land owner in Pennsylvania, prescribed burning as a forest regeneration management tool, and the impact of government's increasing acquisition of private forest land and the maintenance of those acquisitions. Upon completion of the research, the findings and recommendations of the task force will be issued in a report to the General Assembly.

In addition, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Environmental Resources and Energy Committee held an informational meeting in August, 2005 to learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of Pennsylvania's forest system. Committee Executive Director, Craig Brooks, provided a summary of the task

force report and an overview on how Pennsylvania's forests impact the environment, recreational activities and the economy.

The 2005 Forestry Task Force Report is available on the Committee's website at <http://jcc.legis.state.pa.us>, or by calling the Committee office at 717-787-7570.

RECYCLING

Waste Tires

Pennsylvania has managed to build one of America's most successful recycling programs since passage in 1988 of Act 101, the Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act. The recycling industry is a growing industry and has the potential to have a tremendous impact on the economy and environment of Pennsylvania. The Commonwealth is home to numerous recycling businesses that manufacture a variety of material and products. These businesses have clearly demonstrated the positive effect they have on the state's economy. In addition, there are new companies coming into the state that have their foundation in recycled materials. Consequently, efforts need to be focused on developing opportunities to attract and enhance recycling businesses within the state.

An example of the opportunities for success in assisting the growth of recycling businesses can also be seen in the state's waste tire recycling program. The Committee took an active role in developing the state's Waste Tire Recycling Law (Act 190 of 1996) and a follow-up measure to expand the original law (Act 111 of 2002). Since the legislation's enactment, the Committee has held a number of meetings and public hearings on waste tire issues.

The Committee's first tour of 2005 was on January 28 when several members and staff visited the Starr tire pile in Greenwood Township, Columbia County. The Starr pile is the state's largest waste tire pile. DEP is looking for innovative uses and new market opportunities for the tires.

Processed tires can be used for high value projects, including mats, playground surfaces or carpet underlayments. Tires can also be used as fuel or for civil engineering projects such as lightweight backfill for walls and bridge abutments or for approved on-lot septic installations. Whole tires can be used for erosion control, crash barriers and artificial reefs.

The Committee visited the site at the invitation of Representative David Millard and Committee member Senator John Gordner of Columbia County.

Plastics

In February, 2005, the Committee toured the LaFarge Whitehall Cement Plant in Whitehall, Lehigh County. The purpose of the tour was to observe the operation of a cement plant, and initiate a discussion between members of the legislature and LaFarge personnel concerning the use of waste tires and LaFarge's proposal to burn non-recyclable plastics as fuel for its 3,000-degree cement kilns. According to the company, plastics release more energy and burn cleaner than coal, the traditional source of fuel at the plant.

LaFarge first submitted an application to burn non-recyclable plastics in June, 2004. It was not permitted to submit the application until it had completed tests that included the evaluation of up to 200 air contaminants. On December 12, 2005, LaFarge received permission from the state to burn non-recyclable plastics as fuel. DEP said a two-year review, including a test burn, determined that emissions would meet air quality regulations. The company plans to burn 10,000 tons of plastics each year to replace 40 percent of the coal it burns each year. The state permit requires the company to conduct annual stack tests to check emission levels.

In 1994 the company went through a similar process to add tires as a fuel source. Operated by LaFarge of North America, Inc., the facility consumes over one million tires annually as a fuel source.

The Whitehall Township plant produces about 750,000 tons of cement each year for the construction industry in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware. The Committee visited the LaFarge Plant at the invitation of Representative Julie Harhart, a Committee member in whose district LaFarge is located.

RecycleBank

At its June, 2005 Environmental Issues Forum, the Committee hosted the principals of a Philadelphia firm called RecycleBank, an incentive-based recycling program that appeals to consumers' thriftiness, as well as, their environmental concerns by offering them coupons for participating. The coupons can then be redeemed by consumers for products and services.

Under the program, residents receive special containers that contain a tracking device. The amount of recyclable materials is weighed and residents receive credit for the amount they recycle. The program is proving to be successful in Philadelphia, which historically has a poor recycling rate.

Residents can mix various recyclables – paper, plastic, glass, tin, aluminum, and metal – in the container. Participating businesses include small, locally owned firms as well as national chains such as Starbucks, Home Depot, Whole Foods, Bed Bath and Beyond, and FedEx Kinko's. According to RecycleBank, its program in Philadelphia has tripled the recycling rates in participating neighborhoods.

Enough interest was generated in the RecycleBank Program that the Committee was asked to provide a follow-up informational meeting to local officials and businesses in Hazleton, Pennsylvania.

Recycling Markets Center

In order to build a successful recycling program in Pennsylvania, it is critical that there are stable end-use markets for recycled materials. These end use markets can be encouraged through programs and efforts that promote the use of recycled content products by consumers, manufacturers, government, construction companies and others.

The Committee toured the state's new Recycling Markets Center (RMC) and the Environmental Training Center (ETC). Both centers are located at Penn State's Harrisburg campus. The RMC's mission is to expand and develop stronger and more stable markets for recovered secondary materials, stimulate demand for products with recycled content and research and maintain current market trend data. The RMC is the lead organization in developing recycling markets in Pennsylvania, working with environmental, technical assistance and economic organizations to support generators, haulers, processors, manufacturers and end users of recycled materials and products. Priority materials at the outset are tires, organics, plastics and glass.

The ETC acts as the parent entity of the RMC, reviewing strategic plans, business plans and financial reports. The ETC is part of the University's Environmental Engineering Department. The center works with both DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and operates in conjunction with the "Small Public Water Systems Technology Assistance Center".

Following up on the Committee's visits with RMC Director Warren Weaver and ETC coordinator Alison Shuler, Weaver and other RMC staff members made a presentation on the RMC's priorities and progress at the Committee's December, 2005 Environmental Issues Forum. The Committee plans to work together with both centers to further the efforts of each.

For more information about the ETC, visit its website at www.hbg.psu.edu/etc. For more information on the RMC, visit its website at www.parmc.org.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Pennsylvania has always been a popular tourism destination. The Commonwealth has a prime competitive advantage in its historical, natural and cultural attractions. Yet many of the components of this image, including historical sites, transport, interpretation and signposting, wildlife management, litter collection and roadside maintenance lack the constant attention they need to maintain high standards.

At the Committee's Environmental Issues Forum held on April 4, 2005 Ms. Julia Marano, Executive Director of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, gave a presentation regarding the organization's Great Pennsylvania Cleanup, which was held on April 23, 2005. She was joined by DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty, who reported on the progress of the statewide cleanup effort, and Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Executive Vice-President, Blaine Bonham, who described the link between community greening and beautification with quality of life and economic revitalization.

On October 4 and 5, 2005, the Committee co-sponsored the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Roadside Aesthetics 2005 Summit and Workshop in Camp Hill, Cumberland County. The summit gave stakeholders an opportunity to discuss local, state and regional anti-litter, beautification and enforcement projects from around the state.

Featured speakers included DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty and the Steel Recycling Institute's Bill Heenan, co-chairs of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, and Representative Scott Hutchinson, Chairman of the Joint Conservation Committee.

The stakeholders agreed on many points at the summit, but the overarching goal included developing a strategic and comprehensive approach to improving roadside aesthetics in Pennsylvania.

Heritage Parks

On January 13, 2005 the 400-mile corridor that stretches through 11 northern Pennsylvania counties was designated as the newest heritage park region. The Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corridor became the 12th state heritage park.

On February 9, 2005 the Committee traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with members of Congress and their staff to discuss the future of Pennsylvania's

heritage areas on the national scene. The meeting recognized the success of northwestern Pennsylvania's Oil Heritage Region in becoming a nationally-designated heritage region in November, 2004. The region was already designated as a state heritage area, and encompasses six National Historic Districts and 17 sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Committee has also been an active participant in discussions concerning the future and sustainability of the Delaware & Lehigh (D & L) Canal National Heritage Corridor, one of the members of the Pennsylvania Heritage Parks system and one of Pennsylvania's five nationally designated heritage areas. This is a natural outgrowth of the Committee's past work in support of the state's heritage parks and development of the heritage area concept.

The D & L has been conducting two studies – one by a study team from the Conservation Study Institute (CSI) and the other by the Pennsylvania Economy League (PEL). The CSI study is intended to provide the corridor commission options on how to structure the organization for the future. The PEL report will examine the cost of care, as well as options within the corridor's legislative authority to form an entity to care for the "spine" of the region – its trail and canal, opportunities for funding, and administrative and structural issues.

MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY STATE SURVEY - 2005

Since 1997, the Committee has commissioned a series of questions included in the annual Mansfield University State Survey (formerly known as the Public Mind Survey of Mansfield University) to look at how Pennsylvania residents view their environment. The Mansfield University State Survey is often a first step in understanding the public assessment on environmental issues facing the legislature.

The 2005 survey focused on three basic areas: exposure to harmful substances in the environment, aquaculture and fish consumption advisories, and health advisories in general. The aquaculture questions were ones in which the Committee has had a particular interest. The Committee had conducted a public hearing in August, 2004 regarding the Pennsylvania aquaculture industry and fish consumption advisories. The industry was concerned that overly alarming advisories were hurting their industry and belying the safety of farm-raised Pennsylvania fish.

In order to better understand public opinion behind these issues, the Mansfield University State Survey asked adult Pennsylvanians for their opinion on the Pennsylvania product and advisories.

The survey found that while 58.6 percent of Pennsylvanians were aware of the advisories, the amount of trust people put in the advisories varied widely. There were as many people who put little or no trust in the advisories (49 percent) as those who did trust them (48.9 percent). Despite a lack of trust by many, however, the advisories caused concern to 70.5 percent who saw or heard them and 73 percent said they followed the advisories' recommendations, whether or not they believed the warnings.

Two areas of concern to the Committee are:

- **Only 42 percent of Pennsylvanians are aware that Pennsylvania raises fish, such as trout, under controlled conditions, and,**
- **Only 49.9 percent said they would feel comfortable eating Pennsylvania farm-raised fish even if they were told that the fish was safe to eat.**

This says something about the promotion of Pennsylvania's aquaculture industry and raises questions about what people have to fear from consuming farm-raised fish.

Other issues covered by the survey include the public's knowledge about whether there are harmful substances in the environment, where they come from and how they are detected. In addition, the public was asked about its awareness of what ozone action days were.

The Mansfield University State Survey is a scientific telephone survey of adults in Pennsylvania. Conducted between February 13 and March 2, 2005 it contains the opinions of 1,372 respondents.

Survey results and additional information concerning aquaculture may be obtained by contacting the Committee office.

FUTURE COMMITTEE PROJECTS

The Committee will continually identify environmental issues for the General Assembly's attention. Activities range from information sharing and discussion to symposiums or public hearings. Committee members have looked ahead to identify issues where they might request Committee attention (or in some cases, additional Committee attention) in 2006; a list with some of these issues is provided below. While the list is not intended to be comprehensive, it is illustrative of the range of issues that could be addressed by the Committee as time and resources allow.

The first is House Resolution 88, Printer's Number 560. House Resolution 88 (which passed the House in June, 2005 and the Senate in November, 2005) is a concurrent resolution which would establish a task force under the Committee's jurisdiction to study issues concerning sewage management and treatment at publicly owned treatment systems and facilities throughout the Commonwealth. The first meeting of the task force is expected in the Spring of 2006.

Also, on a monthly basis, the Committee will continue to invite experts to Harrisburg to speak at the Environmental Issues Forums (described later in this report).

In addition to the activities of the Committee itself, Committee staff works on various special projects and outreach activities on an ongoing basis. In consultation with Committee members, Committee staff attends local, state and federal policy forums, including the legislatively created Green Ribbon Commission, the Goddard Forums, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Chesapeake Bay Workshops, Citizen Advisory Committee meetings, and other environmental events during the past year.

The Committee looks forward to working closely with the General Assembly on these and other important environmental issues during 2006.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

January 28, 2005 – Committee members and staff toured the Starr tire pile in Columbia County. The Starr tire pile is the largest tire pile in Pennsylvania with an estimated 10 million tires. DEP staff conducted the tour and provided much valuable information.

February 1, 2005 – The Committee held its first Environmental Issues Forum of the 2005 legislative session. The guest speaker was Mr. Andrew McElwaine, then President and CEO of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, gave a presentation on the state's nutrient trading program and its progress.

February 3, 2005 – The Committee visited the LaFarge Whitehall Cement Plant in Whitehall, Pennsylvania. The Committee met with LaFarge officials to discuss their needs and concerns and tour the plant. The tour included a presentation on the plant's use of tire-derived fuel.

February 9, 2005 – The Committee traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with members of Congress and their staff and discussed National Heritage Area designations.

March 14, 2005 – The March Environmental Issues Forum featured a presentation by Dr. Harold H. Schobert, Professor of Fuel Science and Director of Penn State's Energy Institute. Scientists at Penn State's Energy Institute have been conducting research on an innovative new method for turning coal into jet fuel for the U.S. Air Force.

March 17, 2005 – Pursuant to House Resolution 256 of 2003, the Legislative Forestry Task Force and Advisory Committee held a meeting to discuss the use of bioserve systems as a strategy to preserve key habitats.

April 11, 2005 – The Committee's Environmental Issues Forum observing Earth Day had several guest speakers, including Ms. Julia Marano, Executive Director of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and two special guests: DEP Secretary Kathleen McGinty, and Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Executive Vice-President Blaine Bonham. The presentations focused on the link between community greening and beautification with quality of life and economic revitalization.

May 9, 2005 – Penn State University Senior Research Associate Thomas D. Peterson gave a presentation on climate change, energy policy and natural resource issues. He discussed greenhouse gas action plans, what they are and their use in states around the nation.

May 12, 2005 – The Committee toured Reliant Energy's Seward Power Plant in Indiana County. The 521-megawatt facility is the largest waste coal-fired generating plant in the world.

June 13, 2005 – Mr. Patrick Fitzgerald, President of the Philadelphia-based firm RecycleBank, discussed the company's innovative pilot program which financially rewards households that recycle with coupons for goods and services.

June 27, 2005 - The Committee held a public hearing in Harrisburg to discuss the availability of anthracite coal in Pennsylvania. The hearing was intended to collect information on the future of the coal industry, eastern Pennsylvania's anthracite region, and federal and state regulation of the coal industry.

August 26, 2005 – Committee staff toured the Environmental Training Center and the Recycling Markets Center at Penn State's Harrisburg campus. The Recycling Markets Center, which opened July 1, 2005, is part of DEP's initiative to encourage growth of the state's recycling industry.

August 31, 2005 – Committee Executive Director, Craig Brooks, provided testimony to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee on how

Pennsylvania's forests impact the environment, recreational activities and the economy.

September 29, 2005 – The Committee, in cooperation with the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, toured the Weaber Lumber production facilities in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. The tour included a recent timber harvest site on privately-owned land, as well as a tour of Weaber's sawmill and the company's new state-of-the-art flooring production plant.

October 5, 2005 – Committee staff attended, and its Chairman spoke at the "Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Roadside Aesthetics 2005 Summit and Workshop" in Camp Hill. The summit, cosponsored by the Committee, examined roadside aesthetics in Pennsylvania.

October 24, 2005 – Speakers at the Committee's Environmental Issues Forum included Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society President Lee Bryan, Cindy Dunn, Director of the DCNR's Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, and Vanyla Tierney, Chief of Greenways and Rivers Partnerships. The speakers provided an update on the statewide recreation plan.

October 28, 2005 – As a follow-up to the June, 2005 Environmental Issues Forum on the RecycleBank program, an informational meeting was held in Hazleton, Pennsylvania with city officials and private industry to review the program's benefits.

November 14, 2005 – Mr. Paul Zeph, Project Director of Audubon Pennsylvania's Kittatinny Ridge Project, provided an overview of the Kittatinny Ridge (also known as Blue Ridge Mountain and North Mountain) an important habitat area for many forms of wildlife, an important recreation corridor and a valuable source of drinking water for thousands of Pennsylvanians. In addition, Mr. Zeph introduced Audubon's statewide "Important Bird Area" program and discussed how Pennsylvania's other ridges have similar value for wildlife and people.

December 12, 2005 – The topic of the Committee's Environmental Issues Forum was Pennsylvania's new Recycling Markets Center (RMC) – its start-up, initial projects and future plans. Guest speakers were RMC Executive Director Warren Weaver and RMC Recycling Program Manager Robert J. "Bob" Bylone, Jr.

COMMITTEE LIBRARY

The Committee maintains an extensive, publicly available, reference library of environmental and legal materials. A valuable resource on environmental protection, the library currently holds over 1,200 publications, many of which are un-

available elsewhere. The library holds materials that Committee staff uses for their research, as well as material useful to the public.

COMMITTEE WEBSITE

The Committee also maintains a world-wide website. On the site, you can access the Committee's newsletter, the **Environmental Synopsis**, and view archived issues as well. The website also contains information regarding current Committee activities, reports and the Environmental Issues Forums.

The links page can direct you to a range of sites that identify global, national, regional, state, and local issues and perspectives.

The Committee hopes you use the website to not only find information, but also to contact the Committee and utilize our resources. Your comments about information posted, as well as suggestions to improve the site are welcomed.

For a closer look at the Committee's website, visit <http://jcc.legis.state.pa.us>.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FORUMS

The Committee seeks to provide timely and interesting information on a variety of environmental topics to members of the General Assembly. One way in which the Committee accomplishes this is through its Environmental Issues Forums. The forums are public informational sessions at which prominent guest speakers present information on topics of interest related to the Committee's mission.

The forums are designed for the discussion of issues of interest and importance to members of the General Assembly. Forum programs are, however, open to the public and are intended to reach a wide audience. Participants in the forums include policy makers, scholars, and business and community leaders.

COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

Environmental Synopsis

The **Environmental Synopsis** is a monthly newsletter, written by the Committee staff, that covers state, national, and international environmental issues. Articles in 2005 covered a diversity of topics ranging from federal policies supporting biofuels to population and development trends in coastal areas. The **Environmental Synopsis** is distributed to all members of the General Assembly and to

more than 400 other locations including business and industry, environmental organizations, government agencies, colleges and universities and citizens.

The **Environmental Synopsis** is published by the Committee to brief decision-makers and citizens on critical issues, trends, and ideas that could impact citizens and government. Information in the synopsis does not necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the Committee or the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

The **Environmental Synopsis** is available in hard copy or in electronic version, as well as on the Committee's website. Please contact the Committee office at 717-787-7570 if you wish to be included on either the hard copy or electronic mailing list. Back issues are available upon request.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Committee has a library of more than 60 reports its staff has researched and prepared on a variety of environmental issues. They include:

- Comprehensive Review of the Water Pollution Enforcement Program, 1970.
- Comprehensive Review of the Municipal Solid Waste Management, 1975.
- Integrated Flood Management: A Pennsylvania Perspective, 1981.
- Public Utility Commission Regulation of Water Supply Systems, 1982.
- Research Monograph: Safe Drinking Water Act, April 1983.
- Coal Reclamation Report: Part I. Remining Previously Affected Areas, 1984.
- Coal Reclamation Report: Part II. General Reclamation Program, 1984.
- Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal: A Special Briefing on the Proposed Appalachian Compact, 1985.
- Research Monograph: Pennsylvania Hazardous Waste Treatment and Disposal Facility Siting Criteria, Sept./Oct. 1985.
- House Resolution No. 6, Land Application of Sewage Sludge: Part I: Administrative Issues, 1986.
- House Resolution No. 6, Land Application of Sewage Sludge: Part II: Technical Criteria, 1986.
- Research Monograph: Protecting Water Quality With Well Construction And Location Standards, May/June 1986.
- Research Monograph: Resource Recovery: An Examination Of Current Technologies, Environmental Factors, And State Air Emission Standards, October 1986.
- Pennsylvania's Water and Sewerage Infrastructure Needs, 1987.
- Research Monograph: The Safe Drinking Water Amendments of 1986, February/March 1987.

- Research Monograph: The State Role In The New Federal Superfund Program, May/June 1987.
- A Review of the Pennsylvania Oil and Gas Act, Act 223 of 1984, as amended, 1988.
- Pennsylvania State Parks, 1989.
- Watershed Protection and Senate Bill 1012 of the Session of 1989, 1990.
- The Use and Regulation of Roadside Springs in Pennsylvania, 1990.
- Research Monograph: Endangered Funds For Species of Special Concern: A Review Of Pennsylvania's Wild Resource Conservation Act, May 1990.
- Research Monograph: Urban Storm Water Management, May, 1991.
- Septage Management and Disposal in Pennsylvania, July 1991.
- A Review of PENNVEST - The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority Program, 1991.
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