



## Susquehanna *Healthy, Sustainable Susquehanna Communities*



The Susquehanna Greenway is a planned corridor of interconnected trails, parks, river access points, and conserved areas, linking people to the natural and cultural treasures of the Susquehanna River and its West Branch. Nearly 500 miles in length, it is one of our state's greatest resources -- balancing the needs of generations today and tomorrow, conserving the environment for all living things, and creating healthy, sustainable communities.

### Susquehanna Greenway Partnership

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### In This Issue...

[Treasured Towns & Landscapes Photo Contest](#)

[Public Access in the Chesapeake Watershed](#)

[Chalk It Up To The River](#)

[Buffalo Valley Rail Trail Opens](#)

[OSM/VISTA Volunteer Starts on Upper West Branch](#)

[Making the Case For Trails](#)

[Your Membership Supports a Sustainable Future](#)

[Fall Foliage Driving Tours](#)

### Treasured Towns & Landscapes Photo Contest Help Us Spread The Word!

Do you have family or friends who love to be outside enjoying the towns along the river, fishing, hiking, or bike riding? Let them know to enter their stunning town, landscape, and wildlife photos in our *Treasured Towns and Landscapes* Photo Contest.



Use the "forward to a friend" link at the bottom of this newsletter to help us spread the word. There is a special Youth Category for photographers under 18. Winners will receive prizes from \$50 to \$200 and have their photos included in a photo gallery that will travel throughout the Greenway. Click [here](#) to see last year's winners, submit your entry, and for official rules and forms.

*Photo by Cody Goddard*

### Public Access in the Chesapeake Watershed



This past June the National Park Service (NPS) sought public opinion on where to locate future boat ramps, fishing piers, places to swim, or waterside viewing opportunities in along the shores of the Chesapeake Bay

and its tributaries. During that 30-day public comment period NPS received **over 400** suggested locations! This information will help NPS and their partners create the "Chesapeake Bay

[Smart Transportation](#)

[Trout Population Increase](#)

[Watershed Mini Grants Available](#)

[Planning at Curwensville Lake](#)

[EMHR Celebrates Successful Year](#)

[Sustainable Landscaping Conference](#)

[Heritage Area Welcomes New Project Manager](#)

[New Tool To Aid Bay Restoration](#)

[Marel Raub Researchers on the River](#)

Regional Public Access Plan,” that will guide the development of 300 new public access sites by 2025. Recently, NPS and partners met in early November to organize and evaluate the public input. A draft plan will be available for public review in



### **Our Mission**

The Susquehanna Greenway Partnership is a leading champion for the Susquehanna River Watershed, Pennsylvania's most important natural resource and the largest tributary to the Chesapeake Bay. We work to advance public and private efforts to connect people with our natural and cultural resources, and promote a sustainable and healthy environment.

### **Volunteers Needed**

We are looking for volunteers who want to make a difference. If you are interested in helping with a local Greenway project, or

would like to assist SGP with an event, photography, office work, grant research, social networking, then go to our website and [click on volunteer](#).

### Susquehanna Greenway Regional Organizations

[North Branch](#)

[Endless Mountains Heritage Region](#)

[Middle Susquehanna and Lower West Branch SEDA-COG Community Resource Center](#)

[Upper West Branch Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#)

[Lower Susquehanna Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area](#)

### Upcoming Events

[Grant Workshop](#)  
Towanda  
November 29

[Green Screens Documentary](#)  
Lewisburg  
November 29

[Holiday Dinner](#)  
Sunbury  
December 1

[Sustainable Landscaping Conference](#)  
Lancaster  
December 2

[Bird Spotting and Lecture](#)  
Danville  
December 3

[Hess Mess Bike Race](#)  
Danville  
December 4

December, and the plan will be published in 2012. In the meantime, the current public access sites in the Bay region can be found [here](#).

### Chalk It Up To The River



The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Children's Chalk Fest at Wilkes-Barre's [River Common](#) was postponed twice due to flooding before this beloved event could invite children and families to make their non-permanent mark on

the riverfront. At last over 2,000 flocked to the river on a sunny October day to add to the unique chalk mural that became PA's largest! This year Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (EPCAMR) included a water quality education lesson in the form of recycled iron oxide red and orange chalk that teaches children about the legacy of PA's anthracite coal mining history, environmental consequences, and efforts for recovery. To learn more about EPCAMR's efforts, visit their [website](#).

### Buffalo Valley Rail Trail Opens

A new 9.2 mile rail trail opened last week in Central Pennsylvania, with 200 people participating in a celebratory race. Linking Mifflinburg to Lewisburg, the Buffalo Valley Rail Trail is named for the beautiful farming valley it runs



through. It is the first developed off-road rail trail in the area and allows for safer bike and pedestrian navigation between towns. Future trail extensions are planned to bring the trail through Lewisburg to the edge of the West Branch Susquehanna. This project was born of the efforts of the Lewisburg Area Recreation Authority, Union County, the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Federal Highway Department. To learn more about the rail trail, to donate, or to volunteer visit [www.bvrt.org](http://www.bvrt.org) or call 570-524-4774

### OSM/VISTA Volunteer Starts on Upper West Branch



#### Welcome Von Holguin

Von has just begun his year of service as an Office of Surface

Hearth Cooking Lesson  
Harrisburg  
December 4

WWII Program  
Mount Wolf  
December 7

Autumn Ecology Program  
Tunkhannock  
December 9

Owl Program  
Danville  
December 9

Scout Workshop: Bears  
Harrisburg  
December 10

If you would like to have an event included in our newsletter, please send event and contact information to: [info@susquehannagreenway.org](mailto:info@susquehannagreenway.org)

### Special Thanks to Our Major Sponsors



Mining/Volunteer In Service To America (OSM/VISTA) with the Clearfield County Conservation District and the

Susquehanna Greenway Partnership. Von will be working on restoration and green infrastructure projects and with developing a corps of volunteers to assist with these projects.

Hailing from Los Angeles, California, he received a degree in Sustainable Systems at the University of Rochester in Rochester, NY. He discovered a fascination with nature and the environment at an early age, and got involved with the national parks as a Student Naturalist at Eaton Canyon Nature Center in the Angeles National Forest. Throughout his college career he had several opportunities to participate in projects and get hands-on experience in a variety of areas. Read more about Von and his role with the Clearfield Conservation District [here](#).

### Making the Case For Trails



Did you know that the most desired community amenity that homeowners seek when buying a home are trails? Did you know that overnight trail users spend an average of \$98/day and day users average \$13/day along PA's

Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) trail?

These important findings (from the National Association of Home Builders and a GAP study respectively) are just some of the many useful facts and figures available from American Trails, a national non-profit that promotes trails. American Trails just recently hosted a webinar, "Making the Case for Trails in Hard Economic Times" to illustrate how investing in land and water trails provides multiple benefits to local economies, as well as personal health and wellness of trail users! Even if you missed the webinar, you can gain access to many of the articles, studies, and economic models that were referenced in the lecture. Click [here](#) to learn more.

### Your Membership Supports a Sustainable Future

#### Join SGP in the Creating Susquehanna Greenway

The Susquehanna Greenway Partnership provides assistance to many local partners to create new trails and parks in their communities, and conserve our natural resources and cultural heritage. If you believe, like we do, that our land and water





resources must be protected and enhanced to ensure that we have a healthy and prosperous future, we ask that you show your support for our work by becoming a member. Your contribution will help to create green collar jobs constructing parks, trails and river accesses. It will help to increase property values and minimize future flooding through green infrastructure improvements. The bottomline is that if we want our communities to be the types of places where families and young professionals want to live, where new businesses want to locate, then we must invest in greening our communities. Your investment in the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership is an investment in the future of our river towns and future generations. Please [click here](#) to join today. Thank You!  
Trish Carothers, SGP Program Director

### Fall Foliage Driving Tours

Looking for some guidance as you explore the Lower Susquehanna? The Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area’s river auto tours provide a variety of sightseeing opportunities within the Heritage Area, including natural areas, structures, and historic communities. Visit their [website](#), print a tour map, grab your camera, and get ready for some great views of the river!



### Smart Transportation

#### The Lake Augusta Regional Plan

The Lake Augusta Regional Plan, for the Sunbury, Northumberland, and Shamokin Dam area utilizes "Smart Transportation," a new approach to integrating land use and transportation planning. Street trees and bicyclists are not after thoughts in a downtown setting. Wider and faster roads with sprawling development are not always the best solution for a place. The desire to go “through” a place must be balanced with the desire to go “to” a place, or to live in a place. Transportation projects are tailored to meet the needs of individual places and the ultimate solution arises from a multi-disciplinary process with community involvement. SEDA-COG’s Community Resource



Center (CRC), a Regional Lead Organization for the Susquehanna Greenway is developing planning through a collaborative process with funding from PennDOT and participation of a diverse 40 member stakeholder committee. The Lake Augusta Regional Plan defined a total of eight smart transportation projects for incorporation into PennDOT's 12 year plan. All of the projects outlined within the plan seek to improve different and diverse transportation/land use issues around Lake Augusta. Solved together they will help transform the region into a community of walkable vibrant downtowns and connected valuable recreational resources. To learn more about the Lake Augusta Gateway Corridor Plan, visit the CRC website [here](#).

*Graphic provided by CRC.*

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### Trout Population Increase

We are always told that electricity and water don't mix, but the Eastern Abandoned Mine Program at Trout Unlimited brings them together to conduct trout counts along tributaries of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River.



Electrofishing methods temporarily stun fish which then float to the surface to be counted. For the past three years TU has conducted counts on the entire length of the Middle Branch, a small tributary to Two Mile Run in the lower Kettle Creek watershed. Middle Branch had significant water quality impacts from acid mine drainage (AMD) until TU and partners implemented the Middle Branch Passive Treatment system to intercept the AMD in 1998. The first year of the survey they came up empty handed. The second year they found four trout, and this year they report that they counted 26 trout! TU will continue its efforts to improve AMD-impacted tributaries that enter the river and you can learn more about their programs [here](#).

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### Watershed Mini Grants Available

Here's a great funding opportunity for watershed organizations in Western and Central Pennsylvania! The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is accepting proposals for the 2011-2012 Watershed Mini Grant Program, which provides assistance to the region's grassroots watershed groups. Funding for the program is provided by Dominion. The mini grant can support operating costs, organizational promotion and outreach, and/or watershed restoration projects. Grants of up to \$1,000 may be awarded for operating expenses. Up to \$2,500 is available for

promotion and outreach or restoration projects. A cash or non-cash match is preferred but not required. Find out more [here](#)

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### Planning at Curwensville Lake

Fishermen at Curwensville Lake in Clearfield County may soon have to retire their claims that “it was THIS big,” as the Lake Authority has been discussing the possibility of acquiring a certified scale for anglers to determine the



weight of their catch. The scale would enable fishermen to measure any record-setting, or brag-worthy fish on site, rather than travelling off site to find a certified scale. It could also encourage more public interest in lake recreation, as the lake could host fishing contests. The Lake Authority is also currently completing a master site plan for the area that proposes to improve or upgrade recreational opportunities at the lake. Proposals include expanded camping areas, better access to fishing, a dog park with dog dock, and improved restrooms and playground areas. Read more about this planning [here](#).

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### EMHR Celebrates Successful Year

Over 50 members, partners, and supporters attended the Endless Mountains Heritage Region’s (EMHR) Annual meeting in October. EMHR



promotes the preservation, protection, and promotion of the rural heritage, history and landscapes of the Endless Mountains region, and works to build the Susquehanna Greenway as the SGP regional lead organization and water trail manager for the North Branch of the Susquehanna River. Supporters celebrated the new Historic District designation for Montrose, and discussed the regional impacts of the natural gas industry with author and keynote speaker, Seamus McGraw. To learn more about EMHR visit their [website](#).

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### Sustainable Landscaping Conference

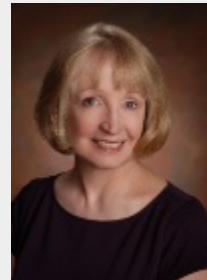
Did you know that sustainable landscapes can include longer-lived plants that rely less on the chemical pesticides and fertilizers? That can mean fewer chemicals in our waterways! The Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council (CCLC) will hold its fourth “Turning a New Leaf” Conference on Friday, December 2 in Lancaster. The conference provides

professionals with the latest information on sustainable landscaping and development best practices. The conference also hosts an EcoMarketplace featuring a variety of local organizations and green businesses. To view the program or for registration costs and discounts, see the CCLC website [here](#).

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### Heritage Area Welcomes New Project Manager

The Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area (SGHA) is pleased to announce Cynthia K. Fuhrer has been named Susquehanna River Project Manager. Fuhrer brings a solid record of project management experience to the Heritage Area. In this newly created position Fuhrer will work closely with SGHA partner organizations to promote heritage tourism and economic development in the Lower Susquehanna River corridor, improve trail linkages and access areas that will enhance the visitors' experience on the Lower Susquehanna River Water Trail and protect important resources and habitats in conjunction with the Lower Susquehanna Conservation Landscape Initiative. "We are thrilled to have Cynthia join our staff. Filling this position will enhance the work of the Heritage Area and allow us to broaden the reach of our programs and projects", says Mark Platts, SGHA President. Learn more about the Lower Susquehanna Water Trail [here](#).



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### New Tool To Aid Bay Restoration

The Chesapeake Bay Program has developed the web-based Chesapeake Assessment and Scenario Tool (CAST) to help states, municipalities, federal agencies and others quickly and easily assess the most effective ways to reduce pollution in the Bay Watershed. CAST is a web-based tool that closely replicates the results of full Bay Program model runs. It will help partners understand and work with the Bay Program's suite of models as the Bay jurisdictions develop their Phase II Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) and two-year milestones. CAST allows the Bay jurisdictions to quickly estimate pollution load reductions that would result from various management actions, as well as understand which combinations of best management practices (BMPs) provide the greatest pollution load reductions for their area. Click [here](#) to learn more and use the tool.

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The Renew Growing Greener Coalition issued the following statement from Executive Director Andrew Heath in response to House Bill 1950 and its associated amendments:

*“As the House debates the finer points of House Bill 1950, the Renew Growing Greener Coalition is encouraged by the provision that dedicates 25 percent of the revenues from the Oil and Gas Lease fund to partially replenish the Environmental Stewardship Fund.*

*“We also recognize and appreciate the inclusion of money for the Environmental Stewardship Fund in amendments proposed by Reps. DiGirolamo, George, Hanna and Quinn. However, we urge the House to pass a final measure that matches or exceeds the funding levels that are contained in the original bill.”*

Growing Greener is a bipartisan program established in 1999 under Governor Tom Ridge and later expanded by Governors Schweiker and Rendell. Since its establishment, Growing Greener has created a legacy of success, preserving more than 107,000 acres of Pennsylvania’s family farmland, conserving more than 42,300 acres of threatened open space, adding 26,000 acres to state parks and forests, capping more than 2,100 abandoned wells and restoring over 16,000 acres of abandoned mine lands. Moreover, Growing Greener has contributed and leveraged billions of dollars to the Pennsylvania economy by helping to boost tourism, create jobs and generate revenue.

Yet despite the program’s accomplishments, funding for Growing Greener projects and grants fell from an average of approximately \$150 million per year for the last six years to \$27.3 million in the current state budget, more than an 80 percent reduction.

The Renew Growing Greener Coalition is the Commonwealth’s largest coalition of conservation, recreation and environmental organizations representing more than 350 organizations and government entities. For more information on the Coalition, visit [www.RenewGrowingGreener.org](http://www.RenewGrowingGreener.org).

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## Meet Our Board

Marel Raub



When Marel Raub sees the waters of the Susquehanna River, she feels at home. “I was born, raised and continue to live



within a mile of the river,” says Ms. Raub. Growing up in Perry County with family businesses that include a registered

Holstein dairy farm and a local ice cream manufacturing and retailing business, she developed close ties to the Susquehanna. “The history of my community in Duncannon is heavily influenced by the river,” explains Ms. Raub. As the Pennsylvania Director of the Chesapeake Bay Commission, a tri-state legislative commission dedicated to developing policy to improve the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed, she is professionally concerned with the health of the Susquehanna River as well. “The river provides fifty percent of the Bay’s fresh water, so the health of Chesapeake is directly related to the health of the Susquehanna,” she explains.

Ms. Raub serves on the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership’s Board of Directors because, “I believe in SGP’s goal of building connections between individuals, communities, and the river resource. From there, the river itself can help to foster connections between communities through the corridor and nurture an improved sense of place and common identity.” When not discussing new policy or forwarding the mission of the SGP, Ms. Raub enjoys the outdoors through scenic road trips, taking photography and packing up her rod for the occasional fly fishing adventure.

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## Researchers on the River

Peter Petokas, Ph.D



Microchips are no longer just for cats and dogs. As a Research Associate with the Clean Water Institute and the Department of Biology at Lycoming College, Dr. Petokas and his trained team of student interns from Lycoming College and the University of Pittsburgh have implanted microchips in over one thousand

Eastern Hellbenders to monitor these giant salamanders.

Strictly a North American species, the hellbender has been declining throughout its entire range and is under review for possible federal listing as a threatened or endangered species. Dr. Petokas explains that most existing West Branch populations are stable and self-sustaining, but at least one major population has declined precipitously in the past six years. He points to diseases, chemical pollution, invasive species predation, and habitat degradation as possible causes of this decline. As Dr. Petokas and his team continue to monitor hellbenders, they are also developing plans for enhancing stream habitat and

releasing hellbenders in areas where populations have declined or disappeared.

Dr. Petokas and his team also study vernal pool ecology by monitoring water chemistry, rainfall, and use of the pools by plants and animals. Planned future efforts include pool construction in areas where they once occurred, but were destroyed by human development activities. The group provides education and outreach to local schools, environmental groups, and the general public. If you would like to report a hellbender sighting, request information on the Eastern Hellbender, vernal pool ecology, or schedule a presentation for a group, Dr. Petokas can be reached at **[petokas@lycoming.edu](mailto:petokas@lycoming.edu)**.

*Photo courtesy of Dr. Petokas*

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Please visit our website at <http://www.susquehannagreenway.org/>  
[Click here to donate to our cause](#)