

Environment – Protect Our Natural Resources

Contributing Agencies & Mission Statements

Department of Agriculture

Russell C. Redding, Secretary
www.agriculture.state.pa.us
Complement Level: 690
Total Budget: \$265.619 M

The mission of the Department of Agriculture is to encourage, protect and promote agriculture and related industries throughout the commonwealth while providing consumer protection through inspection services that impact the health and financial security of Pennsylvania's citizens.

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

John Quigley, Secretary
www.dcnr.state.pa.us
Complement Level: 1,407
Total Budget: \$360.473 M

The mission of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is to conserve and sustain Pennsylvania's natural resources for present and future generations' use and enjoyment.

Department of Environmental Protection

John Hangar, Secretary
www.dep.state.pa.us
Complement Level: 3,018
Total Budget: \$663.374 M

The mission of the Department of Environmental Protection is to protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment.

Fish & Boat Commission

Douglas Austen, Ph.D., Executive Director
www.fish.state.pa.us
Complement Level: 432
Total Budget: \$57.734 M

The mission of the Fish and Boat Commission is to protect, conserve and enhance the commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities.

Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority

Paul Marchetti, Executive Director
www.pennvest.state.pa.us
Complement Level: 27
Total Budget: \$478.507 M

The mission of the Infrastructure Investment Authority is to serve the communities and citizens of Pennsylvania by funding sewer, storm water, drinking water and various other types of projects that solve water problems not associated with traditional infrastructure systems, such as brownfields, acid mine drainage and homeowner septic problems.

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Natural Resource Conservation and Management

Key Objective: Reduce energy consumption by developing clean, renewable forms of energy generation and promoting Pennsylvania-based energy resources.

Why this objective is important: The Alternative Energy Investment Act of 2008 positioned Pennsylvania to build a new, renewable energy economy by providing \$650 million for new investments in alternative energy and renewable energy. The fund will also support energy efficiency projects for residents, businesses and local governments, and will help consumers reduce energy consumption through conservation and weatherization measures. Together with the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard Act of 2004, the law will encourage alternative energy expansion by leading to the creation of at least 10,000 jobs and \$3.5 billion in new private investment.

How we are doing: The Department of Environmental Protection’s new programs include:

- Keystone HELP (Home Energy Loan Program) – Approximately 1,300 contractors signed up to participate in the program, which helps individual homeowners secure low-cost loans for home energy efficiency projects, reflecting potential market growth.
- Small Business Energy Efficiency Program – Small business award recipients, who have an average annual energy bill of \$26,360, project an average 50 percent reduction to \$13,575.
- PA Sunshine Solar Program – Begun in May 2009, this program is providing \$100 million in rebates to residents and small businesses for solar photovoltaic and solar thermal projects on their homes and small business facilities. PA Sunshine Solar is now processing applications from more than 200 businesses that total 3.3 megawatts of solar energy, 2 megawatts of which are fully approved. The program is dramatically affecting the solar market and creating jobs in Pennsylvania.

Key Objective: Manage state park and forest lands based on the highest standards.

Why this objective is important: The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources manages 2.4 million acres of state park and forest lands, balancing the needs of many users. These lands are valuable to local economies, the health of our citizens, the diversity of plants and wildlife, and the beauty of our commonwealth.

How we are doing: Pennsylvania is one of only 11 states certified by an independent source as managing its state forests sustainably according to guidelines established by the Forest Stewardship Council.

State Park and Forest Lands			
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Percentage of Forest Stewardship Council certification criteria met	100%	100%	100%
Acreage of state park and forest lands enrolled in deer management	871,493	920,000	824,558
Number (percentage) of forestry staff trained in environmentally sensitive maintenance practices (<i>cumulative</i>)	197 (12%)	250 (18%)	267 (21%)
Standard tons of carbon sequestered in state forest timber resources (<i>cumulative</i>)	108,500,000	112,000,000	116,600,000

Sources: Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Forest Stewardship Council, Smartwood Program

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Natural Resource Conservation and Management *(continued)*

To improve and add to state park and forest lands, the department relies on the Keystone Fund and Growing Greener I and II, which have been depleted or are dwindling because of the economy. Timber sale revenues are declining, and the Oil and Gas Lease Fund is supporting other state budget needs. Without additional revenue sources, the department is limited in its ability to maintain and improve the state park and forest system.

To allow state forests to regenerate, the department continues to use the Game Commission’s Deer Management Assistance Program to focus hunting in selected areas to limit the damage done when deer browse. The department also continues to explore the possibility of storing carbon dioxide underground as a way to offset the pollution that is causing the planet to warm and affecting our forests and wildlife.

Key Objective: Help communities and private landowners conserve forest lands and open space.

Why this objective is important: The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources manages only a small portion of Pennsylvania’s natural areas, lands and waters. Local communities, private landowners, non-profit conservation organizations, and state and federal agencies are all critical to the conservation of our natural resources. Funding sources and readily accessible information are important tools for conservation, smart development planning and natural resource management.

How we are doing: The amount of funds available to support open space acquisition and conservation easements is declining. A new designated funding stream is needed. The department continues to work with a broad range of partners to support land and forest conservation, locally driven planning and community revitalization that protects Pennsylvania’s natural and cultural assets.

Key Measures of Land and Forest Conservation			
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Acres of land conserved through acquisition and easement	18,490	31,051	10,435
Community members trained in LandChoices curriculum ¹	500	600	3,000
Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program online environmental reviews conducted ²	45,887	47,026	49,908

¹PA LandChoices is a curriculum that addresses communities, natural resource partnerships and sustainable land development. LandChoices measure does not include subsequent classroom use by administrators and secondary educators trained in its use.

²The Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program is a member of NatureServe, an international network of natural heritage programs that gather and provide information on the location and status of important ecological resources.

The department and its partners have conserved these important lands:

- With the Conservation Fund, Federal Forest Legacy funds and Adams County, the 2,500-acre Glatfelter Tree Farm #1 is being added to the Michaux State Forest.
- With the Natural Lands Trust and Berks County, French Creek State Park is being connected to the Schuylkill River Trail through property purchases.
- With the City of Bethlehem, acquisition of 45.9 acres and approximately 8 miles of right of way will continue development of the South Bethlehem Greenway.

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Natural Resource Conservation and Management *(continued)*

Key Objective: Increase agricultural resource conservation through farmland preservation.

Why this objective is important: Preserving farmland is critical to conserving Pennsylvania’s natural resources. The Department of Agriculture, along with state, federal and local partners, funds farmland preservation in Pennsylvania.

How we are doing: Between 2008 and 2009, the Department of Agriculture preserved 23,681 acres on 253 Pennsylvania farms. There remains a waiting list of 240,000 acres that Pennsylvanians want to preserve. Funding for 2008-09 farmland preservation breaks down as follows:

Funding for 2008-09 Farmland Preservation			
State Funds	County Funds	Township Funds	Federal Funds
\$44,536,165	\$38,597,977	\$1,599,317	\$1,783,450

Since Governor Rendell took office, more than \$527 million has been spent to preserve 178,276 acres of Pennsylvania farmland, a key reason why the state leads the nation in farmland preservation.

Key Objective: Decrease nutrient runoff and conserve Pennsylvania’s natural resources through the use of Best Management Practices.

Why this objective is important: With 7.8 million acres of farmland, 17 million acres of forest and 83,000 miles of rivers and streams, Pennsylvania has abundant natural resources. Farmers and the agriculture industry play key roles as stewards of these environmental resources, protecting them through best management practices and using conservation techniques to ensure that Pennsylvania agriculture is successful and sustainable. Because Pennsylvania contributes more than 50 percent of the fresh water that enters the Chesapeake Bay, conservation efforts reap rewards downstream as well.

How we are doing: The State Conservation Commission, a joint venture of the departments of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, oversees nutrient management in Pennsylvania. Between 2008 and 2009, nutrient management plans protected 589,450 acres, controlling nutrients beneficial to crops and pasture but harmful to streams and rivers. Nutrient management plans and nutrient balance sheets together retained nutrient resources on 748,628 Pennsylvania farm acres.

The Department of Agriculture’s Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program allows farmers to earn tax credits in exchange for implementing production and conservation Best Management Practices (BMPs) in order to conserve natural resources. Best Management Practices are the foundation for environmental stewardship and natural resource conservation.

Resource Enhancement and Protection Program			
	Number of BMPs	Total Project Cost	Total REAP Tax Credit
2007-08	635	\$23.46 Million	\$9.8 Million
2008-09	961	\$23.50 Million	\$10 Million

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Natural Resource Conservation and Management *(continued)*

Key Objective: Improve knowledge, protection and management of the commonwealth’s aquatic resources and habitats.

Why this objective is important: Pennsylvania has more than 83,000 miles of rivers and streams, 5,266 acres of flat-water lakes, 200,000 acres of reservoirs, and 735 square miles of Lake Erie waters. Approximately 170 species of fish, 79 species of amphibians and reptiles, and countless aquatic invertebrates call these waters home.

How we are doing: In 2008-09, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission:

- Established the Sinnemahoning Creek Watershed Restoration Grant program and awarded \$1.36 million to 14 grantees for projects that benefit aquatic resources and recreational boating and fishing.
- Investigated 283 pollution and disturbance incidents in or along commonwealth waters and successfully prosecuted 170 cases.
- Reviewed and commented on permits for activities impacting commonwealth waters and aquatic habitats, including: 194 mining, 159 drawdown, 267 triploid grass carp, 1,225 aquatic herbicide, 7 hydropower, 82 water allocation, 3,550 threatened and endangered species impact reviews, and more than 1,000 applications for Department of Environmental Protection water obstruction and encroachment permits, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act permits, solid waste, and transportation projects.
- Convened the 2nd Susquehanna River Smallmouth Bass symposium to develop collaborative solutions to fish disease and water quality issues.
- Repaired and upgraded state fish hatchery facilities using Growing Greener II funds, improving water quality. Specifically, the commission improved wastewater treatment at Bellefonte, Huntsdale and Benner Spring. The commission also made major dam upgrades at Opossum and Leaser Lakes and secured \$10.7 million for high-hazard dam renovations.
- Removed 30 small dams, reopened and restored nearly 100 miles of stream habitat for migratory and resident fishes, and assisted more than 200 projects for lake and stream habitat improvement on private lands.

Key Objective: Increase the number of drinking water and wastewater facilities that comply with safe drinking water requirements, improve system treatment capacity and take other steps to improve water quality.

Why this objective is important: Many economically distressed communities cannot afford to make necessary improvements to their drinking water and wastewater facilities. Not making these improvements would jeopardize the quality of Pennsylvania’s streams and the health of its citizens. Contaminated drinking water can cause illnesses that threaten the health of Pennsylvanians and create economic costs through lost employment and productivity. Contaminated streams are aesthetically undesirable, cause fish and waterfowl to suffer, and reduce recreational opportunities for fishing, swimming, boating and related pastimes. Stream contamination negatively affects tourism and other industries that benefit from recreational activities.

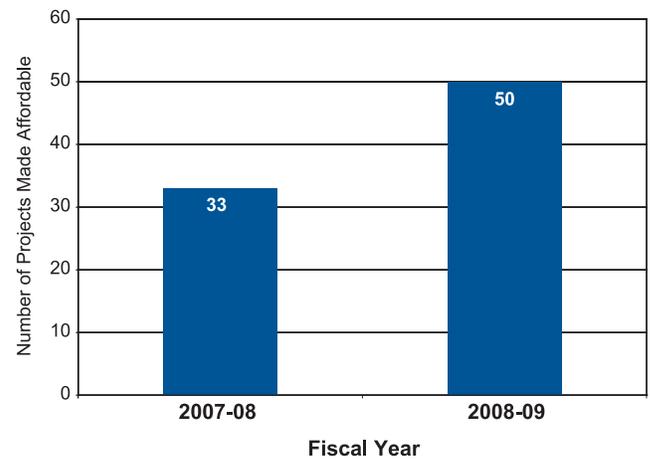
How we are doing: The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) helps economically distressed communities afford projects that they could not otherwise afford. PENNVEST leverages drinking water and wastewater improvement grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by combining them with commonwealth general obligation bond proceeds. These financial resources, however, constitute only a fraction of the water-related funding needs in Pennsylvania.

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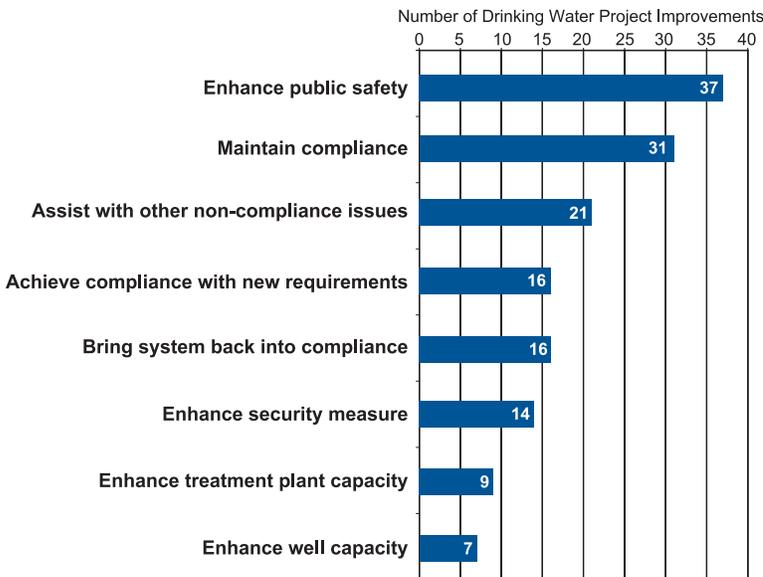
Natural Resource Conservation and Management *(continued)*

PENNVEST's biggest challenge is insufficient funding to meet all of the requests that the agency receives from financially needy communities. Many financially needy communities face expensive challenges to fix their water infrastructure problems and need both low-interest loans and grant funding to make improvements affordable. PENNVEST analyzes affordability and allocates scarce grant resources to those cases where funding will have the greatest impact and most substantially reduce user rates.

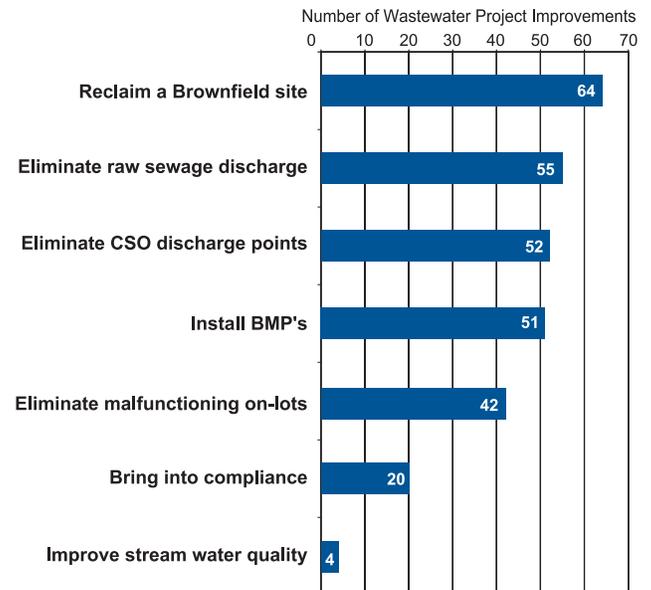
PENNVEST Makes More Projects Affordable



**PENNVEST Improves Drinking Water Quality
2008-09 Fiscal Year**



**PENNVEST Improves Wastewater Quality
2008-09 Fiscal Year**



Key Objective: Increase the number of approved projects that are constructed and verified as complete in order to improve efficiency and loan repayments.

Why this objective is important: PENNVEST provides loans to communities to fund wastewater and drinking water projects. Because PENNVEST uses loan repayments to fund new loans, loans must be amortized and principal repayments must begin as soon as possible. PENNVEST works with borrowers and with the Department of Environmental Protection to regularly review projects, verify completion and move toward amortization.

How we are doing: PENNVEST has been increasing the number of projects that go to final amortization in each of the past two years. Although borrowers often control when projects move toward final amortization, PENNVEST effectively works with borrowers and encourages them to move as quickly as possible.

PENNVEST Completed Projects		
2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
98	147	150

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Natural Resource Conservation and Management *(continued)*

Key Objective: Clean the air by limiting exposure to unsafe levels of air pollutants.

Why this objective is important: The Department of Environmental Protection protects public health and the environment by controlling emissions and limiting exposure to unsafe levels of air pollutants. Pollutants of primary concern include ground-level ozone (smog), fine particulate matter that can lead to heart and respiratory problems, and toxic air pollutants.

How we are doing: With the exception of the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley areas, the state is meeting the 1997 federal standard for ozone. The department asked the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to designate 32 counties as “attainment areas” because air quality in those counties met national standards. However, in March 2008, the EPA tightened the air quality standards, lowering the ozone limit. In 2009, the department asked the EPA to designate many of the 32 counties as “nonattainment areas” based on the revised standard. The department is working with the EPA, which will issue new ozone designations in 2010, to continue to improve air quality. For more information, visit www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/airwaste/aq/.

During 2007 and 2008, the department worked closely with industry representatives and the citizens in the Collegeville area of Montgomery County to investigate and reduce elevated levels of trichloroethylene, an industrial solvent which can cause neurological and respiratory symptoms when inhaled at high concentrations.

Pennsylvania implemented its revised Clean Vehicles Program in resulting in cleaner, healthier air across the commonwealth. Early studies in 2005 and 2006 found that the program will significantly reduce levels of pollution. Cleaner-burning cars get better gas mileage, so drivers have to fill up less often. Reducing air pollution from vehicles also benefits businesses because greater reductions in car and light-duty truck emissions mean factories, power plants and manufacturers may reduce emissions by less and still meet overall air quality standards.

Outdoor Recreation

Key Objective: Increase the number of vibrant urban and suburban communities that use trails, developed riverfronts, parks and open spaces to connect people to the outdoors and build local economies.

Why this objective is important: Helping communities create outdoor connections improves quality of life and can help reduce sprawl. “Green infrastructure” is fueling new economic development in small towns across the state. Having natural amenities in urban or suburban settings also helps the 72 percent of Pennsylvania residents who live in these areas connect with nature.

How we are doing: The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources continues to advance its landscape approach to conservation, working regionally with partners on sustainable community initiatives. The department has expanded its award-winning TreeVitalize program to help 14 metropolitan areas restore tree cover as an act of stewardship, citizen involvement and economic investment.

The department’s grant program is going “green” with grant criteria to encourage better conservation practices and an online grant application process that reduces mailing and paper use and improves reporting and performance evaluation.

A decline in the funds available from the Keystone Fund, Growing Greener I and II and other revenue sources will slow down these efforts.

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Outdoor Recreation (continued)

Key Outdoor Recreation Performance Measurements			
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
TreeVitalize – total trees planted	20,000	40,000	130,000
Number of grants (amount) awarded for community recreation and conservation	418 (\$61,900,000)	464 (\$54,500,000)	415 (\$54,600,000)
PA Managing Forestry Communities ¹	236	241	238
PA communities that received forestry assistance	501	525	650

¹Managing Forestry Communities are municipalities with management plans, dedicated forest assistance staff, a forest ordinance and advocacy.

Key Objective: Increase the ability of residents and visitors to experience the outdoors.

Why this objective is important: Connecting Pennsylvanians to the outdoors contributes to their enjoyment, health and well-being, and increases their appreciation of the state’s natural resources. Experiencing nature helps people make choices that protect these resources.

How we are doing: More people are visiting our award-winning state parks. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has doubled its outdoor recreation programs and expanded its environmental education offerings. Operational efforts to become more efficient and green inspire Pennsylvanians to practice conservation in their own lives. The iConservePA initiative, which connects people to conservation ideas and tips, is becoming increasingly popular.

Outdoor Recreation Programs			
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
State park attendance ¹	35,800,000	33,200,000	36,600,000
Percentage of available state park family cabins rented on peak weekends	92%	92%	92%
Percentage of available state park campsites rented on peak weekends	66%	66%	68%
LEED registered buildings under construction or completed (park and forest)	5	6	6
Number of people enrolled in the iConservePA database ²	N/A	1,000	52,000
Get Outdoors PA recreation programs conducted	1,053	1,783	2,904
Environmental education and interpretive program attendance	364,368	362,888	401,907

¹Point State Park reopened May 2008; attendance is slightly up system-wide.

²Launched in April 2008.

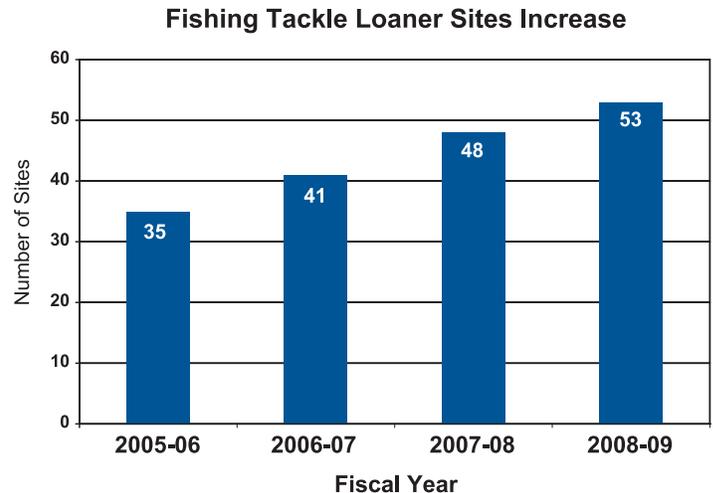
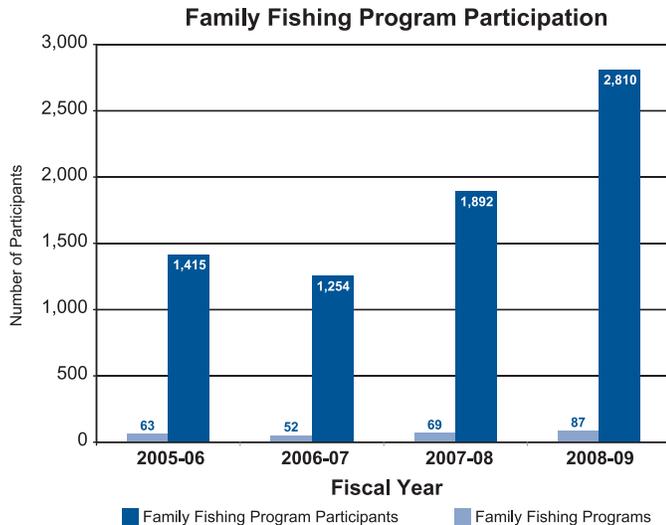
The department is expanding the Urban Youth Adventure Camps and creating follow-up programs with urban community partners for continued contact. The department completed its five-year update to the state recreation plan and will begin to implement the recommendations in 2009-10, with emphasis on creating a statewide trail system and interactive Web site. Continuing and expanding these programs is dependent on funding.

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Outdoor Recreation (continued)

In addition, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission in 2008-09:

- Awarded nearly \$51,000 to 10 organizations to implement programs to increase fishing and boating knowledge and participation, and also conducted 87 Family Fishing programs that served 2,810 people.
- Registered 5 new Fishing Tackle Loaner Sites that loan, for no charge, fishing rods, reels and terminal tackle, and provide free instructional material.



Key Objective: Improve boating and fishing access and opportunities.

Why this objective is important: More than 1.5 million people fish and an estimated 2.5 million people boat in Pennsylvania each year, and they generate an overall estimated annual economic benefit of nearly \$3.4 billion.

How we are doing: In 2008-09, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission:

- Completed easements or acquisitions on 10 properties at a cost of \$595,650, of which the commission contributed \$474,516, providing 6.96 miles of access to Lake Erie and tributary streams.
- Awarded 14 grants totaling \$1,060,500 to local governments and conservancies to design, engineer, develop and rehabilitate public boat launch facilities, and improved access at 14 facilities.
- Reared and stocked more than 3.4 million adult trout averaging 11 inches, 32 million walleye fry, 3.8 million American shad, and 15 other species of fish. The commission also conducted trout opening day angler counts to examine the cost-benefit ratio of stocking, with only one negative result.
- A telephone survey of 1,562 Pennsylvania trout anglers revealed that 84 percent were satisfied with trout fishing in the state, 61 percent release the trout they catch, 93 percent fish in trout-stocked waters at least half of the time, and 49 percent typically travel no more than 15 miles one way to trout fish.
- Added GIS Web site applications for use with interactive mapping, stocking lists, fishing hot spots, steelhead fishing and public fishing easements and acquisitions, biologists' reports, regulatory information, state fish hatchery locations, and driving directions. In addition, replaced county guides and stocking lists with Web GIS applications.

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Outdoor Recreation (continued)

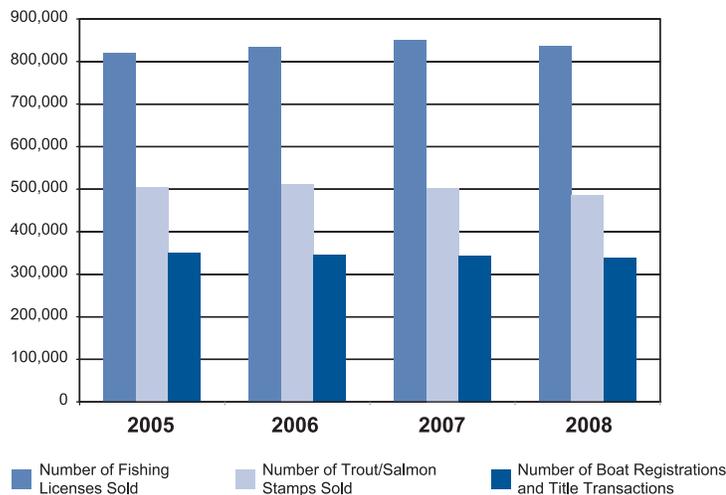
- Issued 32 Aids-to-Navigation plans for bridge construction and demolition projects and tentatively secured five new “primitive” access areas.
- Convened six regional stakeholder meetings to develop a new Statewide Fishing and Boating Access Plan.

Key Objective: Improve marketing and communications to the public about fishing and boating opportunities.

Why this objective is important: An informed public is vital to the protection and management of the commonwealth’s aquatic resources. Residents and visitors take 40 million fishing and boating trips in the commonwealth annually and contribute nearly \$3.4 billion per year to the economy. Sportfishing in Pennsylvania supports 23,000 jobs and generates \$53 million in annual revenue for the state’s general fund through state sales and income taxes.

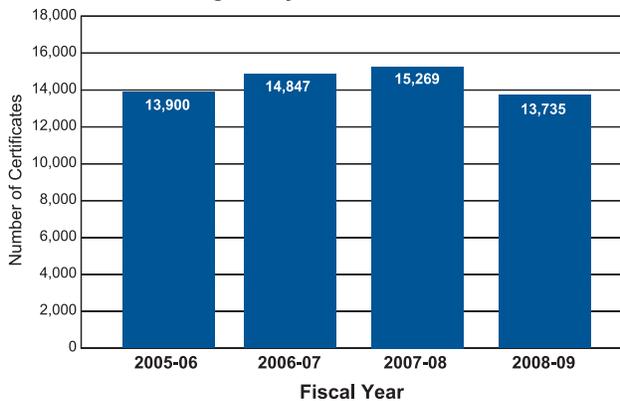
How we are doing: The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission sold 5,078 new fishing license/permit gift vouchers in 2008. Overall, annual fishing license sales decreased 1.8 percent to 834,836 units and trout/salmon permits decreased 3.6 percent to 484,803 units in 2008. Boat registration and title transactions decreased 1.1 percent to 338,058 registered boats.

License Sales and Boat Registrations Decline Slightly

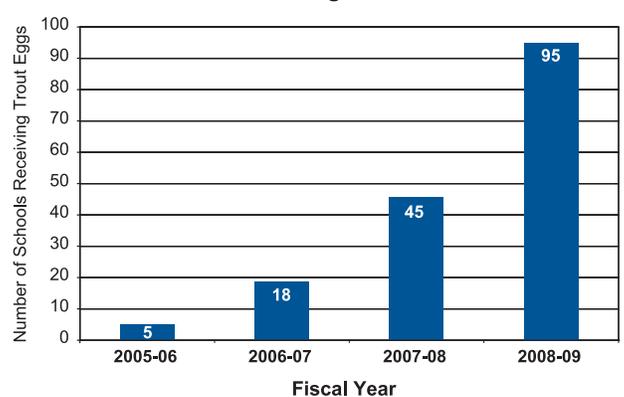


The commission also certified 13,735 students in boating safety education courses approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, and educated students in 95 classrooms about watersheds through the commission’s Trout in the Classroom program.

Boating Safety Education Certifications



Trout in the Classroom Program Educates More Students



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Mine and Dam Safety

Key Objective: Provide for dams and flood protection projects that protect life, property and the environment.

Why this objective is important: A leader in dam safety, Pennsylvania has one of the only state flood protection programs in the country. During 2009, the state continued to take great strides to offer increased security to communities and residents.

How we are doing: The Governor made dam safety and flood protection a cornerstone of the Rebuild Pennsylvania initiative. The H2O PA grant program will provide \$800 million over the next 10 years for critical water, sewer and flood-control projects, and repairs to unsafe dams. The Department of Environmental Protection has awarded nearly \$14 million in grants for flood-control projects and approximately \$47 million in grants to address state and municipally owned dams in need of repair. The Governor also released \$25 million, or more than double the amount typically released, for seven capital flood-protection projects to protect flood-prone communities.

The department has also extended resources to communities that might not otherwise have the funding to purchase equipment to operate and maintain existing flood-control projects. The department invested approximately \$1.1 million in grants, or more than double the amount typically awarded, to reimburse flood-control sponsors for up to 65 percent of project improvements and non-routine maintenance costs and 50 percent for specialized equipment to monitor, operate and maintain their flood-protection projects.

State laws require that high-hazard dam owners maintain current emergency action plans that define the responsibilities of dam owners, government agencies and emergency personnel in responding to threats or concerns ranging from heavy rain forecasts to the discovery of structural problems. When the Governor took office, only one in four high-hazard dams had a current emergency action plan. Today, because of an aggressive enforcement initiative launched in 2004, the state has an 81 percent compliance rate and is on track to reach a 97 percent compliance rate. The national average compliance rate is 53 percent.

Key Objective: Eliminate fatalities and reduce mining accidents by providing mine safety training and inspections.

Why this objective is important: To ensure safe working conditions for Pennsylvania's miners, the Governor and the legislature enacted the first comprehensive overhaul of the state's outdated mine safety law in nearly half a century.

How we are doing: The new law, which took effect in January 2009, incorporates recommendations made following the 2002 Quecreek accident in Somerset County. It allows Pennsylvania mines to remain competitive while holding mine operators responsible for the safety of their mines. Most significantly, the law creates a seven-member Board of Coal Mine Safety chaired by the secretary of Environmental Protection and with equal representation of mine owners and mine workers. The board will have the authority to write new mine safety regulations, which the department is barred from doing and which will ensure the latest technology and up-to-date practices can be implemented swiftly to protect the state's 4,200 underground bituminous coal miners.

The department also made a major investment in mine safety in order to comply with the federal 2006 Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act's requirements. The department completed an additional mine rescue and training facility in Marion Center to provide equipment and mine rescue and safety training to local mines. The department also upgraded mine rescue apparatus and equipment at the Uniontown, Ebensburg and Tremont mine rescue stations.

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