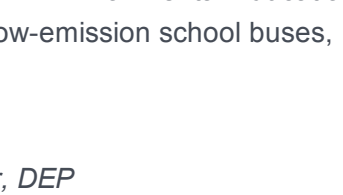




TEACHING GREEN



TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR • PATRICK MCDONNELL, DEP SECRETARY

Welcome, Educators!

I hope your summer is off to a good start. We have news on expanded DEP Environmental Education Grant funding, Pennsylvania native species, federal funding for zero- or low-emission school buses, the Harrisburg falcons' dramatic spring season, and more.

— Bert Myers, Director, Environmental Education and Information Center, DEP

Grants

DEP Expands Environmental Education Grant Funding

Good news! DEP is expanding the Environmental Education Grant Program to increase the number of applicants and environmental education projects supported statewide.

Longer application period: The 2023 Environmental Education Grants round will open a month earlier than in previous years, with applications accepted beginning August 1, 2022. The deadline is December 9, 2022, at 4:59 pm.

Increased funding amounts: Mini Grants are increased to \$5,000 (from \$3,000) for local environmental education projects by school, county, municipality, or other defined area. General Grants Level I are increasing to \$30,000 (from \$20,000) for large-scale regional and/or statewide environmental education projects.

General Grants Level II remain at a \$85,000 ceiling for non-formal environmental education programs designed to widely engage teachers and youth at three levels: county, state and national. Teachers and students from at least 60 Pennsylvania counties must directly participate in the project, and at least 30 percent of the project participants live and/or work within an Environmental Justice area.

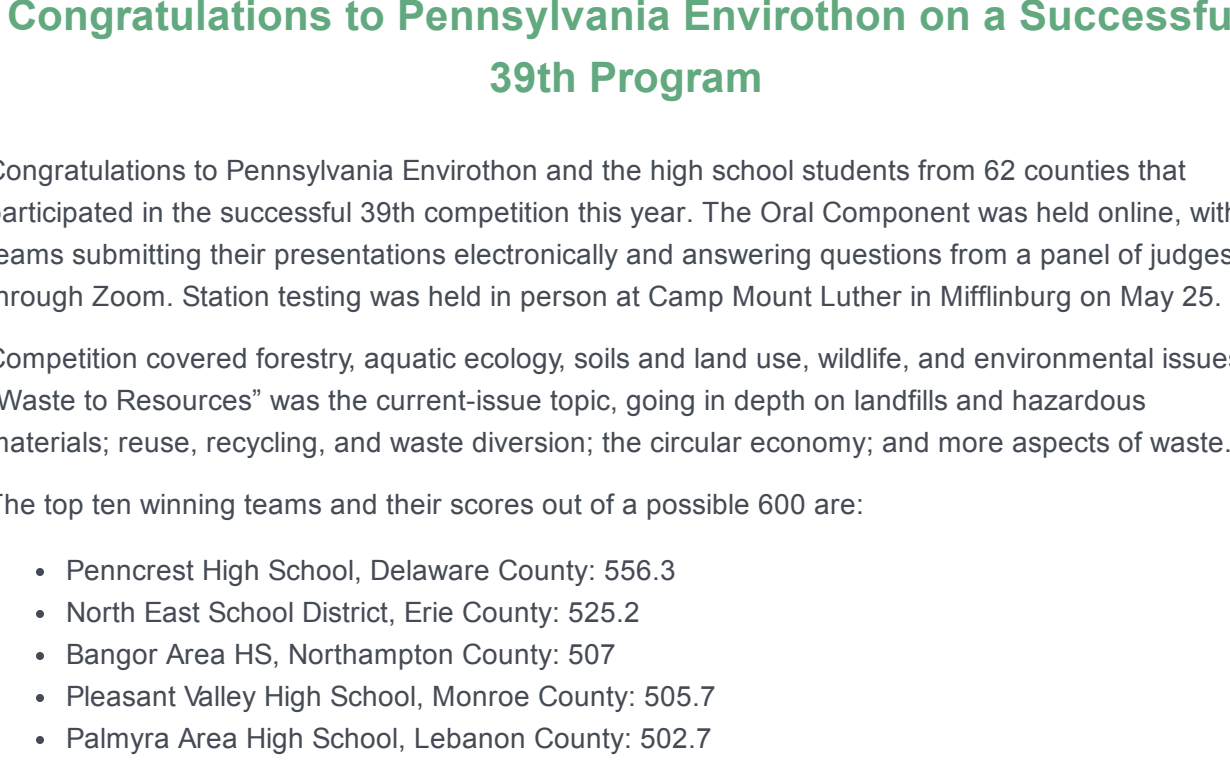
Expanded expense coverage: Funding for people costs is increased to 50 percent (from 35 percent), and projects that get a General Grant can now use up to 30 percent (formerly 10 percent) of total grant funds to purchase program-specific technology. In addition, lodging and boat, kayak, and paddleboard rentals are now also included among expenses eligible for grant funding.

DEP Environmental Education Grants support formal or non-formal environmental education projects that address one or more of these priorities:

- Water quality: Education programs promoting effective ways to reduce non-point source and source water pollution to improve water quality;
- Climate change: Education projects that promote practical solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the negative impacts of climate change, including floods, green to groundwater, pests, disease, agricultural disruptions, and potential threats to human health;
- Environmental Justice: Education programs that engage youth and/or adults living or working within Environmental Justice areas.

For more information, visit the [Environmental Education Grants web page](#) or check out this [Environmental Education Grants Fact Sheet](#) (PDF).

Please consider sharing this news widely with your networks! If you have any questions about the grant program or suggestions for outreach we can do to spread the word about the expanded funding availability, please contact us at RA-epEEgrants@pa.gov.



Federal Funding Available for Electric or Low-Emission School Buses

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Clean School Bus Program is using \$5 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding to offer rebates over five years (FY 2022-2026) to help schools replace diesel school buses with healthier electric or low-emission school buses. These school bus upgrades will result in cleaner air on the bus, in bus loading areas, and in communities.

Who can apply for rebates:

- Public school districts and other state or local government entities that are responsible for purchasing and/or providing school bus service to at least one public school system;
- Tribes, tribal organizations, and tribally controlled schools that provide school bus service to one or more Bureau of Indian Education-funded schools or purchase school buses;
- Nonprofit school transportation associations; and
- Eligible contractors who sell clean school buses, zero-emission buses, charging or fueling infrastructure, maintain clean or zero-emission school buses, or arrange financing.

Visit the [Clean School Bus Program website](#) for important dates and eligibility requirements. Review the program guidance for full details, and apply by August 19, 2022. (SAM.gov entity registration required.)



Shout Outs

Congratulations to Pennsylvania Envirothon on a Successful 39th Program

Congratulations to Pennsylvania Envirothon and the high school students from 62 counties that participated in the successful 39th competition this year. The Oral Component was held online, with teams submitting their presentations electronically and answering questions from a panel of judges through Zoom. Station testing was held in person at Camp Mount Luther in Millifinburg on May 25.

Competition covered forestry, aquatic ecology, soils and land use, wildlife, and environmental issues. "Waste to Resources" was the current-issue topic, going in depth on landfills and hazardous materials; reuse, recycling, and waste diversion; the circular economy; and more aspects of waste.

The top ten winning teams and their scores out of a possible 600 are:

- Penncrest High School, Delaware County: 556.3
- North East School District, Erie County: 525.2
- Bangor Area HS, Northampton County: 507
- Pleasant Valley High School, Monroe County: 505.7
- Palmyra Area High School, Lebanon County: 502.7
- York Home School Association, York County: 487
- Carmichaels Area High School, Greene County: 486.7
- Bradford Area High School, McKean County: 479
- Homeschoolers for Christ, Indiana County: 464.7
- Canton High School, Bradford County: 455.7

The DEP Environmental Education Grant program awarded over \$65,000 and technical expertise to support this longstanding statewide program. Technical expertise was also provided by the Pennsylvania Departments of Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, and Education; the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and Game Commission; and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.



2022 Pennsylvania Envirothon First Place winners: Penncrest High School, Delaware County

Nurture Nature Center Develops Young Climate Leaders



The Nurture Nature Center, based in Easton, Pennsylvania, used its \$3,000 Environmental Education Grant to implement "Youth Leading the Way: An Education and Leadership Program in the Lehigh Valley." The program used science and art to engage youth in leading the way on climate action.

A monthly 10-part Youth Climate Leadership Series covered environmental justice, sustainability careers, nature-based solutions to climate change, green schools, renewable energy, and climate change communication. A Youth Climate Art component culminated in an exhibition at the center in April-June 2022, which featured book jackets created by middle, high school, and college students. The jackets, shared with friends, family, and classmates, tell local climate change stories, offer solutions, and link the story to the science.

After the project, 90 percent of participants reported they are taking action to be more sustainable, compared to 40 percent prior to the project. [Learn more about the program from this presentation by Dr. Kathryn Semmens, Project Leader and Science Director.](#)

"First Waves" Sparks Environmental Connection in Youth in Johnstown

The Johnstown Canoe Club used its \$2,718 Environmental Education Grant to sponsor "First Waves: The Bowscrew," a series of three educational workshops to empower youth ages 14-18 with skills and knowledge to improve their lives and create lasting positive impacts on the environment in the region.

[First Waves](#) provides STEAM education for youth in underserved areas and is a program of the nonprofit organization Watersmith Guild, which improves watersheds and lives through arts and adventure programming.

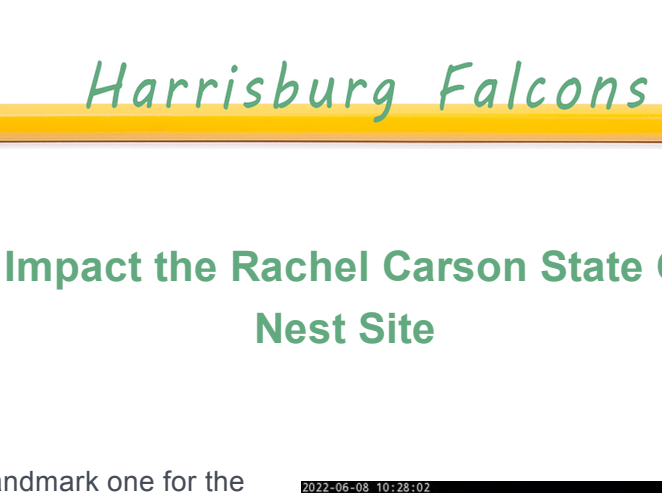
The students worked with professional instructors and mentors to become environmental stewards and proficient paddlers through activities including tree planting, water sampling, stream biology, and whitewater paddle boarding.

Hands-on education in filmmaking and digital media enabled them to create a film about their experience that inspires an appreciation for watersheds and the power of outdoor connections for personal and community growth. Video production was done in conjunction with the Pittsburgh Center for Arts and Media, Malhari Media, and the Watersmith Guild.

The First Waves film [In Our Own Backyard](#) premiered at the Stonycreek Rendezvous in Johnstown.



Children's Institute of Pittsburgh Gives Planter-Building Demonstration



The Children's Institute of Pittsburgh used its \$2,947 DEP Environmental Education Grant to partner with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy on a planter-building demonstration for youth. The institute helped to show students how to build planter boxes that will be used for various flowers and herbs in an accessible community garden at the intersection of Frankstown and Bennett Community Gardens in Pittsburgh. This project enables students with autism and multiple disabilities to build work skills and create and maintain green spaces.

Biodiversity

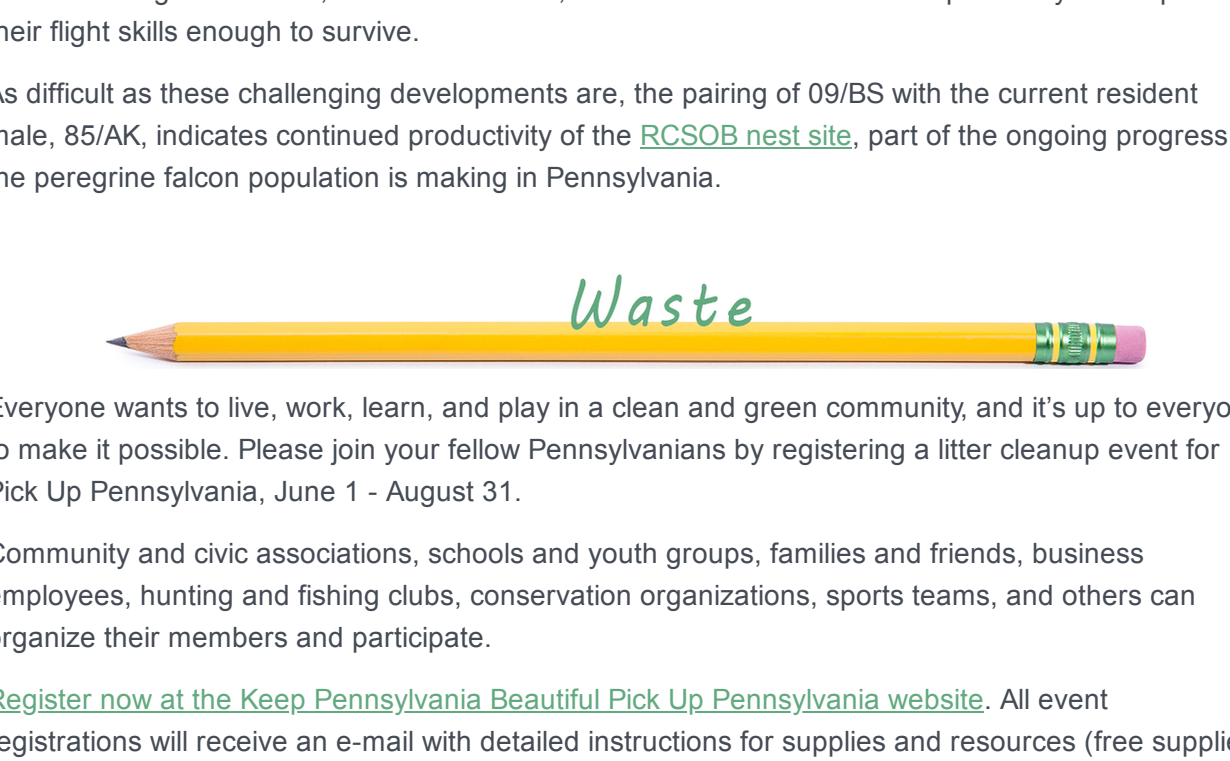
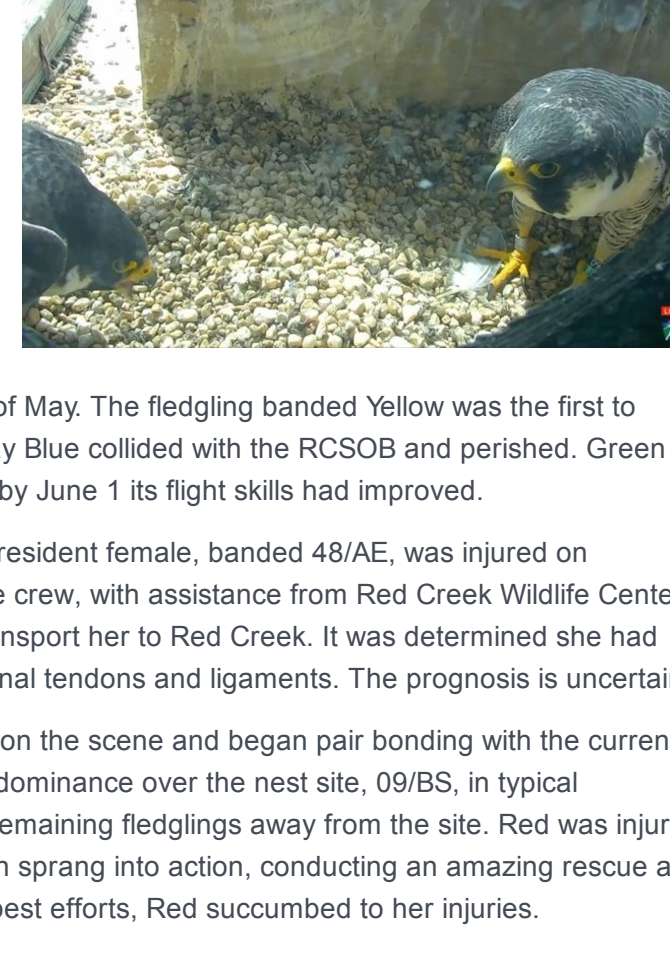
Governor Tom Wolf proclaimed June 17 the first Pennsylvania Native Species Day, and leaders of seven state agencies marked the occasion by [highlighting the importance of protecting native species.](#)

Along with 14 organizations in academia, environmental advocacy, and agriculture and other industries, the agencies make up the [Governor's Invasive Species Council.](#) The council created Pennsylvania Native Species Day to celebrate the diverse ecosystem of native plants, insects, and animals and increase Pennsylvanians' understanding of the increasing pressures on its survival as invasive nonnative species proliferate.

State parks and organizations joined in with activities around the state. Organizations included Harrisburg University of Science and Technology; the Pennsylvania Native Fish Coalition; the Regional Science Consortium with Go Native Erie; Longwood Gardens; Natural Lands; Penn State Extension Master Watershed Stewards in Erie, Crawford, and Warren Counties; Murrysville Garden Club; and Penn State Extension at the Philadelphia Flower Show, including Master Gardeners, Master Watershed Stewards, 4-H, and Pennsylvania Sea Grant.

Find the Governor's Proclamation, [resources on native and invasive species](#) that may inform your educational projects, and more at [Pennsylvania Native Species Day.](#)

DEP works with partners around the state to reduce aquatic invasive species, including sea lamprey in Lake Erie and the European spruce-hittin Pymatung Reservoir, and to support native species, including the American eel in the Susquehanna River basin and trees and plants along stream banks.



Education Standards

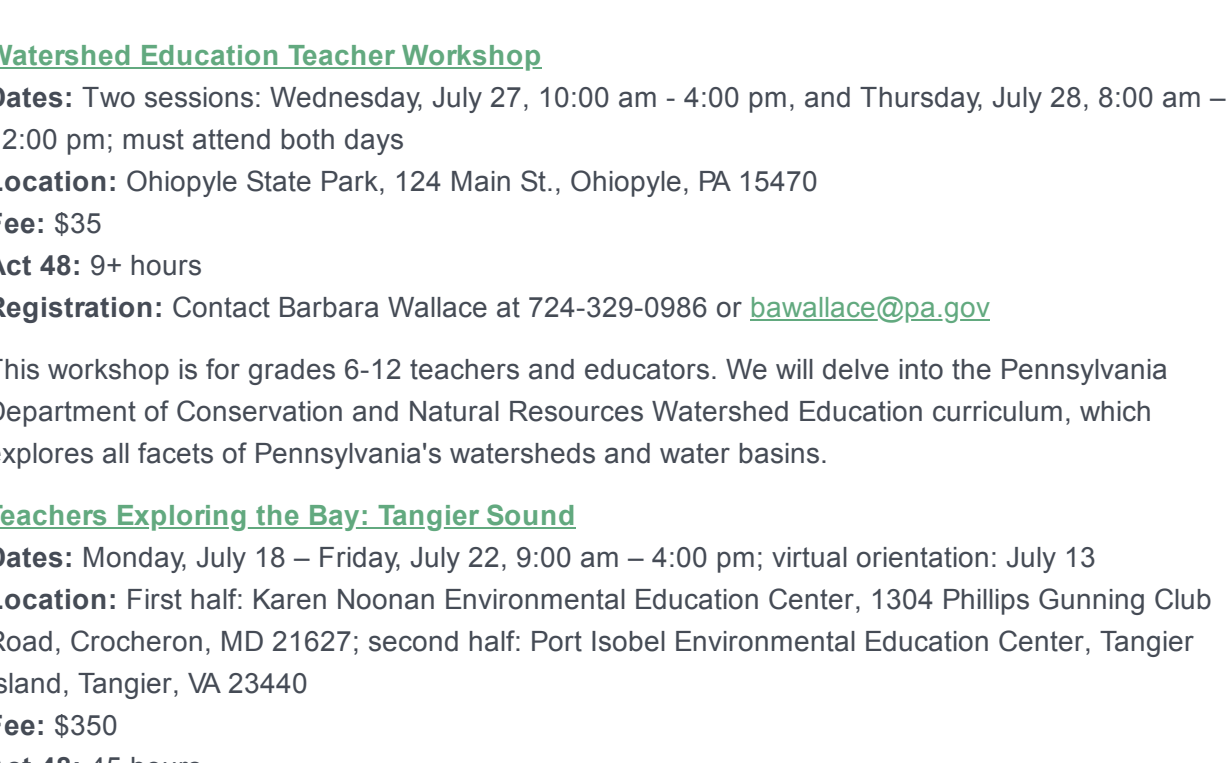
The Independent Regulatory Review Commission approved the final-form amendments to Chapter 4 (new science standards) on May 19. The vote was unanimous (5-0), and commissioners raised no questions relative to the new standards.

The package is now being prepared for submission to the Office of Education. Upon approval, the regulation will be published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin and take effect upon publication. The Legislative Reference Bureau has noted that this package will take a bit longer than usual to prepare for publication due to its volume (nearly 300 pages). For more information:

- [Pennsylvania Standards for Science, Environment, Ecology, Technology, and Engineering \(Grades K-5\)](#)
- [Pennsylvania Integrated Standards for Science, Environment, and Ecology \(Grades 6-12\)](#)
- [Pennsylvania Technology and Engineering Standards \(Grades 6-12\)](#)

Environmental Justice

Equity, Inclusion & 21st Century Leadership



Since the DEI Team joined the Governor's Office, it has consistently shared that diversity, equity, and inclusion is not an outcome. It is sustained culture, policy, and practice change.

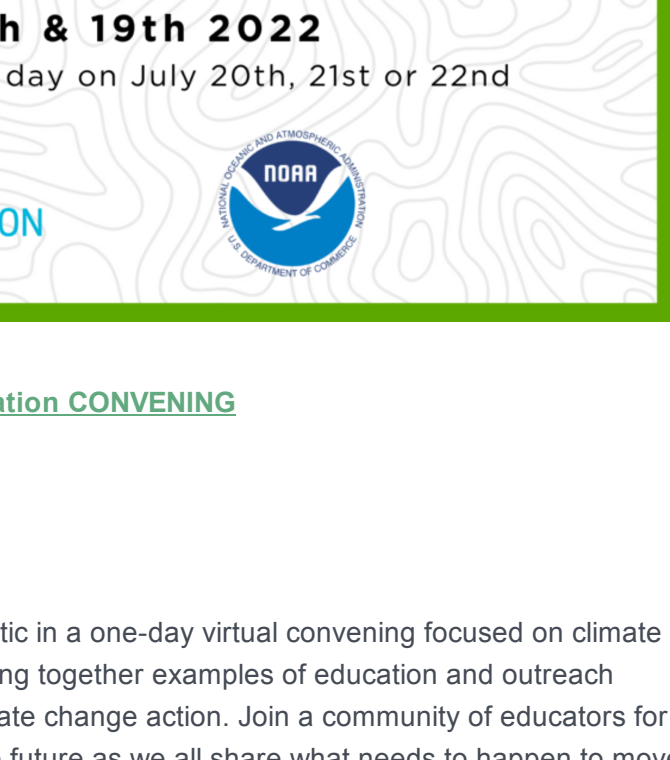
DEI conversations in the commonwealth rely on three important concepts.

- **Human Centered:** Provide services, programs, and policies focused on the lived experiences of all humans.
- **Trauma Informed:** Understands and takes account of the pervasive nature of trauma & promotes practice focused on restoration rather than re-traumatizing.
- **Intersectional:** Every individual has multiple social identities which together provide a multitude of experiences & requires policy and practice that supports the entire person.

Harrisburg Falcons

Big Changes Impact the Rachel Carson State Office Building Nest Site

This year has been a landmark one for the Harrisburg peregrine falcons. Game Commission Biologist Patti Barber banded the four eyasses and gave each a health check at Rachel Carson State Office Building (RCSOB) on May 12. One hatching, banded Red, was determined to have trichomoniasis and was transported to Red Creek Wildlife Center and successfully treated and then returned to RCSOB.



Falcon Watch and Rescue began at the end of May. The fledging banded Yellow was the first to fledge. The next was Blue. Later the same day Blue collided with the RCSOB and perished. Green took its first flight and was rescued twice, but by June 1 its flight skills had improved.

The next challenge arose when the longtime resident female, banded 48/AE, was injured on Memorial Day. The Falcon Watch and Rescue crew, with assistance from Red Creek Wildlife Center personnel, were able to rescue 48/AE and transport her to Red Creek. It was determined she had dislocated her shoulder and damaged additional tendons and ligaments. The prognosis is uncertain.

A new female, banded 09/BS, quickly arrived on the scene and began pair bonding with the current resident male, 85/AK. As part of establishing dominance over the nest site, 09/BS, in typical peregrine falcon behavior, chased the three remaining fledglings away from the site. Red was injured and the Falcon Watch and Rescue crew again sprang into action, conducting an amazing rescue and transporting her to Red Creek. Despite their best efforts, Red succumbed to her injuries.

The remaining two falcons, Yellow and Green, are now on their own. The hope is they developed their flight skills enough to survive.

As difficult as these challenging developments are, the pairing of 09/BS with the current resident male, 85/AK, indicates continued productivity of the [RCSOB nest site](#), part of the ongoing progress the peregrine falcon population is making in Pennsylvania.

Waste

Everyone wants to live, work, learn, and play in a clean and green community, and it's up to everyone to make it possible. Please join your fellow Pennsylvanians by registering a litter cleanup event for Pick Up Pennsylvania, June 1 - August 31.

Community and civic associations, schools and youth groups, families and friends, business employees, hunting and fishing clubs, conservation organizations, sports teams, and others can organize their members and participate.

[Register now at the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Pick Up Pennsylvania website.](#) All event registrations will receive an e-mail with detailed instructions for supplies and resources (free supplies aren't available in summer), safety information, and a link to report on each event.

Professional Development

Watershed Education Teacher Workshop
Dates: Two sessions: Wednesday, July 27, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, and Thursday, July 28, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm; must attend both days

Location: Chioyple State Park, 124 Main St., Chioyple, PA 15470
Fee: \$35
Act 48: 9+ hours

Registration: Contact Barbara Wallace at 724-329-0986 or bawallace@pa.gov

This workshop is for grades 6-12 teachers and educators. We will delve into the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Watershed Education curriculum, which explores all facets of Pennsylvania's watersheds and water basins.

Teachers Exploring the Bay: Tangier Sound
Dates: Monday, July 18 - Friday, July 22, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm; virtual orientation: July 13
Location: First half: Karen Noonan Environmental Education Center, 1304 Phillips Gunning Club Road, Crocheroen, MD 21627; second half: Port Isabel Environmental Education Center, Tangier Island, Tangier, VA 23440
Fee: \$350
Act 48: 45 hours
Registration deadline: July 11 - see website

How does our watershed impact the ecology and culture of the Chesapeake Bay? Participants will engage in immersive hands-on, field-based investigations exploring the marshes, critters, ecology, and culture of the Bay. The course will focus on ways humans can work to reduce environmental impact, encourage sustainability, and foster environmental literacy. All participating teachers will develop a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience for their students.

Summer Institute for Climate Change Education: Finding Our Collective Strength
Dates: Monday, July 18 - Tuesday, July 19, 10 am - 6:00 pm; Regional Cohort Day, Wednesday, July 20, 10 am - 6:00 pm
Location: Virtual via Zoom
Fee: \$250 (scholarships available)
Act 48: 20 hours of CE; graduate credit available through Hamline University
[Register now](#)

The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office is hosting a cohort of Mid-Atlantic educators in the Summer Institute for Climate Change Education, led by Climate Generation in partnership with NOAA's Climate Program. Gain the skills, tools, and resources to teach climate change concepts and empower students in all subject areas and receive on-going support throughout the year. This year's theme focuses on building the collective strength to inspire hope and action in our communities while connecting you to an engaged and authentic network of educators from across North America.

Virtual Mid-Atlantic Climate Change Education CONVENING
Dates: Tuesday, July 26, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Location: Virtual via Zoom
Fee: Free
Register: www.maccce.org/registration

Join educators from throughout the Mid-Atlantic in a one-day virtual convening focused on climate change education. This one-day event will bring together examples of education and outreach happening across our region focused on climate change action. Join a community of educators for an inspiring day of learning and looking to the future as we all share what needs to happen to move forward on climate change action. Sponsored by NOAA, Sea Grant, Maryland DNR, & the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserves.

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 400 Market Street Harrisburg, PA 17101

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