

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
1721 North Front Street • Harrisburg, PA 17102-2391 • www.srbc.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 23, 2004

CONTACT: Mattie Buskirk
SRBC Marketing & Communications Specialist
Office: (717) 238-0423, ext. 304

**FLOOD FORECAST AND WARNING SYSTEM
USERS' CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR MAY 27**
**Conference Includes Training On Internet Forecast Tools
and National Weather Service Programs**

Harrisburg, Pa. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) today announced that a Flood Forecast and Warning System Users' Conference for the Lower Susquehanna Subbasin will be held on May 27. The conference will take place on Thursday, May 27 at Millersville University in Millersville, Lancaster County, Pa., from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Lower Subbasin includes all or portions of Dauphin, York, Lancaster, Northumberland, Perry, Centre, Union, Berks, Snyder, Schuylkill, Juniata, Lebanon, Cumberland, Franklin and Adams counties in Pennsylvania, and Carroll, Baltimore, Harford and Cecil counties in Maryland.

The Users' Conference is intended for those who respond to flood emergencies, disseminate information to the public, work in flood management, or are impacted by flooding. Participants would include representatives of local, state and federal emergency management agencies; media; local, regional and state planning agencies and flood protection programs; elected officials; chambers of commerce; and business and industry. Registration materials and more information about the conference are available on SRBC's web site at www.srbc.net/flood_forecasting/workshop.htm.

In addition to covering how the existing flood forecasting system works and its benefits basinwide, the conference will include hands-on training to help people get the most of the internet and to raise awareness of the many helpful NWS programs. Conference sessions also will cover how the dissemination of flood forecasts could be improved and elements of a successful local flood forecast system. Participants will receive a demonstration of the National Weather Service's forecasting products, and a chance to critique and provide feedback to improve the Susquehanna River basin flood forecasting system.

Paul Swartz, executive director of SRBC said, "For nearly 20 years, SRBC has played a key role in educating people on the importance of early flood warnings for saving lives and reducing property damages during flood events. This Users' Conference is among the many ways that we, and our partners, reach out to the citizens and businesses that are involved in or rely on the Susquehanna flood forecasting and warning system."

Among the various presenters, the confirmed speakers include Dave Ondrejik, NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist; Krista Nelson, SRBC Environmental Specialist; Bob Hainly, Assistant District Chief, U.S. Geological Survey; Randy Gockley, Director, Lancaster County Emergency Management Agency; R. Dale Gehman, Vice President, Pa. Association of Broadcasters; and Paul Knight, Pennsylvania State Climatologist. Also invited are speakers representing the Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Corderus Creek Watershed Association and WGAL TV.

Three breakout sessions will be offered for hands-on training. They are:

National Weather Service Partnership Programs – This session will include informative presentations about NWS' Turn Around Don't Drown, NOAA Weather Radio and StormReady programs.

Getting the Most From the Internet (Session A) – This will be a hands-on, interactive workshop hosted by representatives from NWS, the Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center and the U.S. Geological Survey, to demonstrate the forecasting tools available on the Internet and best uses for them.

Getting the Most From the Internet (Session B) – This will be a hands-on, interactive workshop hosted by representatives from the PA State Climatology Office, Millersville University and SRBC, to demonstrate the forecasting tools available on the Internet and best uses for them.

The National Weather Service and the Millersville University Center For Environmental Studies are joining SRBC to sponsor the conference.

SRBC is the governing agency established by the federal government and the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland to protect and wisely manage the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin Commission. The Susquehanna River starts in Cooperstown, N.Y., and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Md., where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay.

###