

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
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**“EARLY BIRD” REGISTRATION FOR THE
PENNSYLVANIA WATERSHED CONFERENCE
DUE ON SEPTEMBER 5**

Conference Includes Workshops, Youth Summit, Field Trips, and Exhibit Hall

Harrisburg, Pa. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) and the Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds & Rivers (POWR) today reminded the public that “early bird” registration for the Fourth Annual Pennsylvania Watershed Conference will close in two weeks, on September 5. Late registrations will be accepted after that date.

The conference will take place October 3-4, 2003 at the Grantville Holiday Inn, near Harrisburg. It will provide information and networking opportunities to organizations interested in watershed protection and restoration. In addition, this year’s conference includes the first ever Watershed Youth Summit, for teens ages 13-18 years.

Registration materials and more information about the conference and youth summit activities are located on POWR’s web site at www.pawatersheds.org/pawc2003.

The conference agenda includes a variety of activities ranging from basic to technical, presented in formats for adults and youth alike. There will be panel discussions and workshop breakout sessions, with one-on-one assistance available. Dozens of speakers from the public and private sectors will address topics involving land use and water, outreach and resources, stream and wetland restoration, and watershed planning. Kathleen McGinty, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), has been invited to be the opening keynote speaker.

The Youth Summit component will include a canoe and bike trip, opportunities to interact with watershed experts, student presentations, and social activities. “Each year, more youth become active members of watershed organizations, so it’s important to design educational and hands-on sessions with them in mind,” said Paul Swartz, SRBC executive director.

Judy Jordan, executive director of POWR, said “POWR is pleased to, once again, co-sponsor Pennsylvania’s most important conference for watershed organizations. It’s important that we,

as leaders in the environmental community, pool our resources to both educate the public and empower watershed groups to conserve our water resources.”

Prior to the breakout sessions, conference planners have scheduled a panel discussion about effluent trading for the first day, and an innovative skit about water conservation for the second. The breakout sessions include, among others:

- *Guiding Community Economic Development* – A discussion about understanding development issues and economically-viable and environmentally sound land use practices and partnerships. The speakers will include Michael Frank, Heritage Conservancy; Roger Zimmer, Pennsylvania Builders Association; and Alex Graziani, Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County.
- *Revitalizing Your Watershed* – Leaders of local watershed groups will talk about the best ways to use leadership to overcome obstacles and challenges. Participants will include Chip Karasin, Hay Creek Watershed Association; Rudi Erb, Powell and Armstrong Creeks Watershed Association; and Jo Ellen Litz, Swatara Creek Watershed Association.
- *WaterBudget Planning* – A discussion about the concept of developing and using water budgets on local, statewide, and basinwide levels. Jan Bowers from Chester County Water Authority; Stu Gansell, DEP; and Dave Heicher from SRBC will lead the discussion.
- *Media and You* – A training session about the best ways to obtain news coverage for group activities and projects. Valarie Prichett from ABC 27; Jerry Gleason, The Patriot News; and Tim Lambert, WITF Radio will lead the discussion.

The conference will also include a resource room, an informal resource center that will be open throughout the conference. It will have resources available for individual assistance on grants and grant writing, geographic information systems (GIS), abandoned mine drainage, and other topics.

In addition to SRBC and POWR, the conference sponsoring organizations include DEP and DCNR. Additional support and funding has been provided by the Larson Design Group, Gannett Fleming, the Wiconisco Creek Restoration Association, the U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Surface Mining, the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program, Octoraro Native Plant Nursery, Biohabitats Incorporated, Pennsylvania American Water, Wenger Feeds, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Land Studies, and Spotts, Stevens and McCoy, Inc.

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. The Susquehanna River starts in Cooperstown, N.Y., and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Md., where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay.

POWR advocates for the protection, restoration and enjoyment of our commonwealth of water resources, and conducts programs that foster stewardship, communication, leadership and action.

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