

## Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) conducts several conservation and partnership programs including River Conservation Grants, managing aquatic invasive species, and providing education programs.

DCNR oversees various community conservation partnership program grants. One category is [River Conservation Grants](#). These grants focus on enhancement and protection of Pennsylvania's waterways. Applications for these grants are submitted under several categories: Land Acquisition and Conservation Funding, which includes lands for the purpose of waterway conservation; Community Recreation and Conservation Planning Funding, which address water-related recreation or conservation needs; Park Rehabilitation and Development Funding, which include physical improvements that enhance water resources; State and Regional Partnerships Funding, which fund a variety of water-related projects; and Riparian Forest Buffer Funding, which aims at increasing trees, plants, and grass buffers along streams statewide.

In 2020, DCNR released a grant investment of just over \$1.1 million to five recipients throughout Pennsylvania for planting trees and income-producing species along streams to help keep nutrients and sediments from the land from impacting water quality. The grants are administered through DCNR's Community Conservation Partnership Program with funding provided by both DCNR and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

DCNR is also working closely with the Department of Health (DOH) on monitoring bacteria. All permitted inland beaches are regulated by DOH under [28 Pa. Code Chapter 18, §18.28](#), Bathing beach contamination. Weekly testing for Escherichia coli (E. coli) density is required based on [USEPA 2012 Recreational Water Quality Criteria](#). The Federal Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act ([BEACH Act](#)) was signed into law on October 10, 2000. This requires the EPA to develop criteria for testing and monitoring recreational water issues. Pennsylvania is one of the states covered by this Act. See the summary of DOH for more details.

DCNR's Bureau of State Parks is also working in a task force of various state agencies to address harmful algae blooms. State parks post advisories and provide information to visitors about active HAB conditions when needed.

DCNR also has an aquatic invasive species program. This program is actively suppressing nuisance and invasive aquatic vegetation in several state park and state forest waterbodies for recreational access and ecological purposes with direct expenses that totaled approximately \$250,000.

The Bureau of State Parks provides [aquatic education programs](#). These programs included Watershed Education (WE) Teacher Workshops (including a WE week-long Institute); Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) Ambassador trainings for non-formal Educators, school administrators, and classroom teachers; Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) and Healthy Water/Healthy People Educator Workshops; programming on invasive plants (including service learning with aquatic invasive plant

removal); programs using water as a lens to investigate land use practices; and school programs that included water quality monitoring.