Message

From: Ides, Nan [Ides.Nan@epa.gov]
Sent: 1/8/2018 2:54:09 PM
To: Cohen, Amy [Cohen.Amy@epa.gov]; Bennett, James [bennett.james@epa.gov]; Riccio, Roberta [Riccio.Roberta@epa.gov]
Subject: FYI only - from the: EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines - Monday, January 8, 2018

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

Lawfirm hosts meeting on Millsboro well water A Lewes lawfirm is mobilizing a force of professionals to examine the extent that wastewater from a Millsboro poultry plant has contaminated area groundwater. Chase Brockstedt, a partner with Baird, Mandalas and Brockstedt, said he is assemblying a team that will include an environmental scientist and epidemiologist to help explain contaminants in local well water. He said he hopes a few more scientific experts will attend a 30-minute presentation followed by a question-and-answer session at 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 8, in Millsboro Town Center, 322 Wilson Highway. "The presentation will be about the severity of the plume and how it's traveling in the aquifer," Brockstedt said. Mountaire Farms recently offered to drill new wells for about 88 properties after the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control cited the plant for releasing wastewater with hig h levels of contaminants. Nitrates and fecal coliform both exceeded permitted amounts. Brockstedt said some samples revealed that fecal coliform amounts were 5,500 percent above the permitted levels. A Mountaire spokesman said the plant fired employees responsible with releasing the toxins; the company is also developing a new wastewater treatment plant for the Millsboro facility. "We're not convinced that digging a deeper well is the right fix," he said. "We have contamination that's been going on since 2003." So far, Brockstedt said, he has spoken to about two dozen people about their contaminated wells. Some have shared stories of gastro-intestinal problems, and, he said, concerns about cancer and birth defects have been raised. Brockstedt said he welcomes residents who want to know more about contaminants in their well water. "We want folks in the community to know we're here," he said. "We want to speak with one loud, unified force." For more information, visit www.mountairewaterpollution.com or call 645-2262.

Nan L. Ides
Water Protection Division
Mid-Atlantic Region
Environmental Protection Agency
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19128
Ides.nan@epa.gov
215-814-5546

From: Wzorek, Katherine
Sent: Monday, January 08, 2018 9:16 AM
To: R3 EVERYONE <R3_EVERYONE@epa.gov>; Kline, James <Kline.James@epa.gov>; Gold, Anne <Gold.Anne@epa.gov>; Vowell, Natalie <Vowell.Natalie@epa.gov>; Johnson, Larry-C <Johnson.Larry-C@epa.gov>; Dalzell, Sally <Dalzell.Sally@epa.gov>; Bucci, Anthony <bucci.anthony@epa.gov>
Cc: Wzorek, Katherine <wzorek.katherine@epa.gov>
Subject: EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines - Monday, January 8, 2018

EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines

Monday, January 8, 2018

*** DAILY HOT LIST ***

Editorial: Stop Floods From Turning Superfund Sites Into Toxic Soup

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Anyone who lives near a creek, a river, or the Jersey Shore knows that floods are occurring more frequently and with greater destructive power than just a few years ago. But the likelihood of flooding is not even considered when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency decides when to clean up the area's most dangerous toxic sites. It should be. There are 14 sites right in this region which are so toxic that they are on the Superfund list; they are also in flood zones or areas susceptible to rising seas, staff writer Frank Kummer recently reported. That means floodwaters can spread acids, solvents, pesticides, and known carcinogens like polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) beyond the borders of the toxic dumps. And, it's already happened. During Hurricane Floyd in 1999, floodwaters washed through nearby landfills over lawns and into homes throughout Eastwick, near the Philadelphia International Airport. The region should be ready for the next superstorm, and certainly ready to contain toxic elements from spilling out of dumps and into homes and playgrounds. While the Superfund Act of 1980, designed to identify and clean up hazardous waste sites, was a tremendous accomplishment at the time, weather has changed a lot in the last 38 years. The act needs to be updated with those changes in mind. Even the act's author now says that the likelihood of flooding should be a factor in deciding which toxic dumps to clean up first. Whether a dump is in a flood zone "should be one of the criteria for evaluating them," said former New Jersey Gov. Jim Florio, who authored the Superfund Act when he was in Congress. The likelihood of flooding is considered as a factor only after a toxic site is placed on the fund's national priorities list. While that helps planners figure out *how* to keep poisons from flowing into nearby areas, it comes too late in the process. Flooding should be a consideration for deciding *when* to clean up a site. The Superfund national priorities list uses scores based on a site's threats to the public and the environment. Certainly, a site's vulnerability to flooding is a threat to the public and the environment.

Scientists say 'dead zones' like those in Chesapeake have grown four-fold across oceans, threaten marine life

BALTIMORE SUN

The Chesapeake Bay has struggled for decades with dead zones — areas in which the water contains little or no oxygen, which sometimes causes massive fish kills. But while the problem has eased here in recent years, it has developed and worsened elsewhere around the globe, researchers say. Since 1950, the number of coastal ecosystems that scientists say are "suffocating" has grown tenfold. The problem has grown four times over in the open ocean, which is generally a more stable and resilient environment. Scientists say ocean oxygen content has declined 2 percent over the past 50 years. Scientists say the trend is another consequence of global warming that threatens to disrupt food chains, destroy habitats and make it harder for some creatures and microorganisms to survive. The extent of the problem was reported in the journal Science last week by an international team of researchers led by and including Chesapeake-focused scientists in Maryland. "This is really a global

issue — it's not just a local issue," said lead author Denise Breitburg, a marine ecologist with the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater. "The severity of the changes that we're seeing are really worrisome." In the Chesapeake and other estuaries, excessive amounts of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus begin the chain reaction that can lead to fish kills. The pollution, which flows into waterways from farms and wastewater treatment plants and urban stormwater runoff, fertilizes growth of algae blooms. When the algae dies and decomposes, microbes use up the oxygen in the water.

Final water settlement hearing falls on 4 year anniversary of Freedom spill

WEST VIRGINIA METRO NEWS

A final hearing on the water settlement case against West Virginia American Water Company and Eastman Chemical is set for Tuesday, the four year anniversary of the Freedom Industries chemical spill on the Elk River. "At that hearing, the judge will consider whether to grant final approval of the settlement," said Charleston attorney Anthony Majestro. "We're very optimistic that he'll do so." The hearing is set for 10 a.m. Tuesday at the federal courthouse in Charleston. So far, nearly 43 percent of residents impacted by the spill have submitted reimbursement claims. That's more than 46,000 homes and businesses that lost usable tap water following the incident. The total class size is around 120,000 "We're obviously very pleased with where we are so far, but that's still on 43 percent, so we want to encourage everybody who hasn't filed a claim to go ahead and do so," Majestro said. The numbers come from a claims report filed Dec. 29 in federal court in connection with the settlement. As part of the settlement, up to $151 million is available for impacted residents. Both WVAWC and Eastman do not admit liability, according to the agreement. On Jan. 9, 2014, the chemical MCHM leaked into the Elk River in Charleston creating a water crisis for more than 300,000 residents in parts of nine West Virginia counties. Majestro said the public's response to the case has been incredible.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Op-Ed: It's Not Fear-Mongering To Appreciate Impact Of Climate Change Hunkered down at home, under a "state of emergency" declared by Governor Christie, there's something serious to be said about the weather we experienced this week. The media coverage is all over the "bombogenesis" happening outside my window, the "bomb cyclone" forecast to "explode" and "monster nor'easter" tackling the entire East Coast, bring temperatures "colder than Mars." While the phrase "bomb cyclone" might sound hyperbolic, we are not experiencing the same weather our parents did when they were our age and they trudged through uphill — both ways! — five miles, in the snow just to get to school. This was not your father's snowstorm — and because of climate change, we may be in for more like it. Individual snow storms (no matter how big) are rarely cataclysmic, but it is not fear-mongering to appreciate the existential impact of climate change: We really are altering the fundamental mechanics of the planet (and in particular, the oceans). As a consequence, individual event frequency and intensity are changing. Some storms are bigger and more frequent, but in some places there is less rainfall – increasing drought.

Editorial: Stop Floods From Turning Superfund Sites Into Toxic Soup Anyone who lives near a creek, a river, or the Jersey Shore knows that floods are occurring more frequently and with greater destructive power than just a few years ago. But the likelihood of flooding is not even considered when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency decides when to clean up the area's most dangerous toxic sites. It should be. There are 14 sites right in this region which are so toxic that they are on the Superfund list; they are also in flood zones or areas susceptible to rising seas, staff writer Frank Kummer recently reported. That means floodwaters can spread acids, solvents, pesticides, and known carcinogens like polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) beyond the borders of the toxic dumps. And, it's already happened. During Hurricane Floyd in 1999, floodwaters washed through nearby landfills over lawns and into homes throughout Eastwick, near the Philadelphia International Airport. The region should be ready for the next superstorm, and certainly ready to contain toxic elements from spilling out of dumps and into homes and playgrounds. While the Superfund Act of 1980, designed to identify and clean up hazardous waste sites, was a tremendous accomplishment at the time, weather has changed a lot in the last 38 years. The act needs to be updated with those changes in mind. Even the act's author now says that the likelihood of flooding should be a factor in deciding which toxic dumps to clean up first. Whether a dump is in a flood zone "should be one of the criteria for evaluating them," said former New Jersey Gov. Jim Florio, who authored the Superfund Act when he was in Congress. The likelihood of flooding is considered as a factor only after a toxic site is placed on the fund's national priorities list. While that helps planners figure out *how* to keep poisons from flowing into nearby areas, it comes too late in the process. Flooding should be a consideration for deciding *when* to clean up a site. The Superfund national priorities list uses scores based on a site's threats to the public and the environment. Certainly, a site's vulnerability to flooding is a threat to the public and the environment.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE (SUBSCRIPTION REQUIRED)

Pittsburgh Water Authority Offers Free Lead Testing

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

Municipalities Begin Recycling Christmas Trees Over the next few weeks, municipalities around Westmoreland County will convert more than 2,000 Christmas trees into mulch or compost that they'll use on public properties or provide to private landowners. The community reaps a double benefit from the process because the mulch is used on public areas or provided to private landowners, and the trees don't take up valuable space in area landfills, said Ellen Keefe, executive director of Westmoreland Cleanways and Recycling. Once stripped of decorations and tinsel, the trees are biodegradable, and even dropping them in the woods is preferable to putting them in landfills, she said. "It's really foolish to put a live Christmas tree in the garbage," Keefe said. Each tree makes about five pounds of mulch, and the mulch decomposes into humus, with the tree's nutrients returning to the soil, she said. Youngwood recycles about 260 trees each year, said Austin Erhard, a public works employee. The borough has an agreement with its residential waste hauler to leave behind trees borough residents place curbside.

More Need Help With Heat In Western PA The winter of 2017-18 is already shaping up to be a record-setter for natural gas use and demand for heating bill assistance that undoubtedly will follow. With temperatures dropping into the single digits across Pennsylvania, utility companies, charities and government agencies are expecting the requests for assistance to increase in coming months. "We've seen a 30 percent increase in the number of applications and an almost 32 percent increase in the number of grants over this time last year," said Jody Robertson, spokeswoman for the Dollar Energy Fund . The Pittsburgh-based nonprofit is the second-largest program for people who struggle to pay their heating bills during the winter. The largest is the federally funded Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP . "We consider ourselves a program of last resort. We encourage people to go to LIHEAP first," Robertson said. Since Oct. 1, the Dollar Energy Fund has distributed $753,516 in grants to 2,052 households in Allegheny County for utility bill assistance (gas, water and electric) and $73,368 in grants to 211 households in Westmoreland County, she said.

STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA

Phillips: Changing Climate And Philly's Freezing Temperatures It might seem counterintuitive, but the **freezing temperatures** and recent snow storm actually line up perfectly with predictions made by climate scientists for the

Philadelphia region. Average global temperatures are rising, and the Philadelphia area is no exception. Sixteen of the seventeen warmest years on record happened since 2001. But that doesn't mean we won't have cold, wet weather, especially in this region. Christine Knapp is Philadelphia's Sustainability Director. She's in charge of helping the city prepare for and understand a changing climate, which for the Delaware Valley means warmer and wetter weather. "The precipitation is most likely to increase in the winter in the form of snow," Knapp says. That's because warming oceans put more moisture and energy into the atmosphere, creating conditions for stronger storms. Weather patterns send that energy and moisture in a counter clockwise direction to the northwest, where it hits colder, arctic air in the wintertime and if it's cold enough, the moisture becomes snow. Knapp says climate predictions include stronger winter storms. "So when it's going to be snowing more in our

HARRISBURG PATRIOT NEWS

Op-Ed: Reversing Laurel Pipeline Flow Is A Win For Consumers, Reps Christiana & Day Sound economic and energy policies protect and help consumers while promoting local job creation. These are the kind of policies that Pennsylvanians deserve, and expect from their leaders in Harrisburg. The ongoing American energy revolution we are seeing here in the Commonwealth and across our nation is helping to make that expectation a reality. Huge gains in American energy production are generating important consumer benefits in the form of lower prices at the pump - and less energy from overseas, especially OPEC countries. At the same time, shale development is fostering job creation at local businesses large and small, as well as increased community investment and a manufacturing renaissance that positions our nation to be a global powerhouse for years to come.

LANCASTER NEWSPAPERS

Crable: Popular Eagle Cam Now Online For A 3rd Season Despite a nest collapse, the Pennsylvania Game Commission's wildly popular Eagle Cam is back online with 24-hour-a-day live video and sounds from an eagle nest near Hanover, York County. This marks the fourth year of the Eagle Cam. A pair of eagles has used a nest in the tree overlooking a lake near Codorus State Park for more than a decade. Last year, they successfully raised a pair of eaglets.

ALTOONA MIRROR

PA Farm Show: A Farmer Is Important Children and their families are the focus of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's exhibit area at the 102nd Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg. The exhibit features an interactive game of hopscotch, free animal visors for youngsters and a photo booth. *"It is important to teach kids about agriculture early. What better way to learn about agriculture when you are in school? This is a great opportunity to get a good agriculture message to the kids and their families,"* said Bill Zeiders, PFB director of digital media and marketing. Farm Bureau's educational charitable organization, the Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation, is encouraging children to take part in the interactive hopscotch activity, which includes farmer videos. Foundation members are handing out a variety of animal-themed visors featuring cows, sheep, beef cattle, pigs, bees and chickens.

SCRANTON TIMES TRIBUNE

New Owner Of Scranton Sewer System Seeks Key Pair Of Missing Easements

Moving Wastewater Plant Operations Into The Digital Age

Editorial: Renew Tax For Federal Oil Spill Fund President Donald Trump re-emphasized his unwise commitment to fossil fuels at any cost last week, when his administration retracted federal restrictions on oil exploration and drilling along the entire U.S. coastline. Strong state restrictions in many areas and, even more so, the low market prices for oil, likely will prevent any major drilling rush for now. A few days before Trump's announcement, congressional Republican majorities more quietly imperiled the coastlines. Beyond the 40 percent reduction in the federal corporate tax rate that Congress passed last year, lawmakers gave the oil industry another massive tax break.

WILKES-BARRE TIMES LEADER

Engineering Costs To Increase Solomon Creek Flood Project In Wilkes-Barre A new pump station along Brook Street and the additional work connected to it will increase the engineering costs for the Solomon Creek wall reconstruction project by $384,300. Modifying the existing contract with Borton-Lawson Engineering for the wall by $139,300 and entering into a new one for $245,000 with the firm for the pump station are on the agenda for city council's Tuesday night work session. The contracts are separate, but related. And additional sections of the wall between Waller and Vulcan streets will be rebuilt due to the pump station, said Joyce Zaykowski, capital projects program manager for the city. Funding is in place and not an issue, she pointed out Friday. The city committed $4 million to the infrastructure project from a bond refinancing deal last year and since 2014 the state has awarded more than $4.6 million in grants. "We pay for engineering all from the bond," Zaykowski said. "The grants are 100 percent construction." Borton-Lawson, based in Plains Township, was hired in June at a cost of $266,500 for among other services, the design, engineering and preparation of construction drawings. The additional work deals with wall construction, street restoration and storm water drainage related to the pump station near Vulcan and Brook streets. The new contract for the pump station includes design, engineering, permitting and bidding.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)

AP-Levy: Full Of Optimism, Gov. Wolf Prepares For Re-Election Just in time for his re-election campaign, Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf is perhaps the most optimistic person in Pennsylvania. He sees better days ahead for the state's finances, says he's satisfied with his first-term progress and shows no frustration over battling the huge Republican majorities that control the Legislature. Four weeks before he releases his fourth and final first-term budget plan, Wolf seems to see state government's post-recession deficits in the rear-view mirror and touted his work across the political aisle. In an interview with The Associated Press, Wolf did not foresee needing a budget-balancing tax increase in a second term. "What deficit would I be filling with a tax increase?" he questioned Tuesday. Negotiating budgets under Wolf has absorbed an inordinate amount of time and energy over the past three years, including two protracted partisan stalemates over how to deal with massive deficits. Wolf remains less than halfway to his original goal of a $2 billion education funding increase, but having won enough new money for schools that Wolf says districts struggling the most under the state's 2011 cuts in aid are doing better.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

Official who improperly helped Redskins owner cut down trees picked as National Park Service deputy director A former National Park Service official who improperly helped Washington Redskins owner Daniel Snyder cut down more than 130 trees to improve a river view at his Potomac, Md., estate has been chosen by the Trump administration to be one of the agency's highest-ranking leaders. According to an internal email circulated at the Department of the Interior, P. Daniel Smith will assume the agency's deputy director position on Monday. He is expected to replace acting director Mike Reynolds, whose 300-day term has expired. The selection was first reported by National Parks Traveler. Interior and the Park Service did not respond Friday to multiple requests for a comment. "We have a new political appointee," Lori K. Mashburn, Interior's White House liaison, announced in the email obtained by The Washington Post. "Dan should be a familiar face at NPS. He most recently served as Superintendent of Colonial National Historical Park."

Interior Department strikes land swap deal with Alaskan village for road through national wildlife refuge The Interior Department has approved a land swap deal that will allow a remote Alaskan village to construct a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, according to local officials. The action effectively overrules wilderness protections that have kept the area off limits to vehicles for decades. The land exchange, which has been agreed to but not formally

signed, sets in motion a process that would improve King Cove's access to the closest regional airport. The village, with roughly 925 residents, has lobbied federal officials for decades to construct a 12-mile gravel road connecting it to the neighboring town of Cold Bay. In an interview late Friday, City Administrator Gary Hennigh said residents "are encouraged that this administration has a different attitude about this road, and … that the needs of the people in King Cove can be met. At the same time, the special qualities of the Izembek refuge can continue."

DELAWARE

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

Lawfirm hosts meeting on Millsboro well water A Lewes lawfirm is mobilizing a force of professionals to examine the extent that wastewater from a Millsboro poultry plant has contaminated area groundwater. Chase Brockstedt, a partner with Baird, Mandalas and Brockstedt, said he is assemblying a team that will include an environmental scientist and epidemiologist to help explain contaminants in local well water. He said he hopes a few more scientific experts will attend a 30-minute presentation followed by a question-and-answer session at 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 8, in Millsboro Town Center, 322 Wilson Highway. "The presentation will be about the severity of the plume and how it's traveling in the aquifer," Brockstedt said. Mountaire Farms recently offered to drill new wells for about 88 properties after the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control cited the plant for releasing wastewater with hig h levels of contaminants. Nitrates and fecal coliform both exceeded permitted amounts. Brockstedt said some samples revealed that fecal coliform amounts were 5,500 percent above the permitted levels. A Mountaire spokesman said the plant fired employees responsible with releasing the toxins; the company is also developing a new wastewater treatment plant for the Millsboro facility. "We're not convinced that digging a deeper well is the right fix," he said. "We have contamination that's been going on since 2003." So far, Brockstedt said, he has spoken to about two dozen people about their contaminated wells. Some have shared stories of gastro-intestinal problems, and, he said, concerns about cancer and birth defects have been raised. Brockstedt said he welcomes residents who want to know more about contaminants in their well water. "We want folks in the community to know we're here," he said. "We want to speak with one loud, unified force." For more information, visit www.mountairewaterpollution.com or call 645-2262.

Your soil's resolutions for the new year From last week's article you know that I confessed that my track record for accomplishing New Year's resolutions is less than stellar. I pretty much have given up even trying. However, I did run across an interesting article recently that focused on "getting healthy" which provided much food for thought (get it?). People often make vows to eat better, lose weight, and get active but did you ever think these ideas could be equally as useful when applied to soils? We need our bodies to be healthy and we need our soil to be healthy too. Estimates are that the earth will need to support nine billion people by 2050. Healthy soil is the key to feeding us all. Whether you grow your own vegetables, have a woodland to manage, consider yourself a farmer, or have a lawn, flower beds, and shade trees — soil is our foundation. How do we get our soils to be healthy? The Soil Health Partnership has these tips for you. Watch nutrient uptake. To get the most out of your soil, periodically soil test. This is sort of like you having your blood tested. What are you growing in your soil and what nutrients are needed for the best production? Lime? Nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium? Overapplication of soil amendments can lead to environmental issues and negatively affect your wallet.

DELAWARE PUBLIC MEDIA (NPR)

Trump administration moves to open *Delaware's* coast to offshore drilling Federal officials announced plans Thursday to open up protected areas in the Atlantic Ocean to offshore drilling, drawing immediate criticism from Delaware environmental groups. In a teleconference Thursday, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke unveiled a five-year plan from 2019-2024 opening up 25 of 26 planning areas in federal waters to 47 potential lease sales for oil and gas exploration, including areas in the Atlantic off of Delaware's coast.

MIDDLETOWN TRANSCRIPT

Icebreaker a vital lifeline for frozen Smith Island

DOVER POST

Carper releases statement on expansion of offshore oil drilling Sen. Tom Carper issued a statement Jan. 4 on the Donald Trump administration's decision to revise the 2017-22 Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program (five-year plan), finalized in November 2016, and move to open parts of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the Gulf of Mexico to increased oil and gas drilling. "I have long advocated for an all-of-the-above strategy to meet our country's energy needs, but the Trump administration's decision to open up parts of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the Gulf of Mexico to more oil and gas drilling at this time is completely unnecessary," said Carper. "Just eight years ago, we saw very clearly with the Deepwater Horizon disaster that oil spills do not respect state boundaries and that the severe environmental and financial costs of oil spills last for generations. A spill anywhere along the East Coast could easily affect our pristine Delaware beaches and our vibrant coastal communities that rely on fishing, tourism and recreational activities to drive their local economies," said Carper.

VIDEO: The bay in Lewes was completely frozen on Jan. 7, 2018

DELAWARE STATE NEWS

DNREC to host public meeting Monday, Jan. 8 in Wilmington as listening session on EPA's proposed repeal of federal Clean Power PlanDelaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control will host a public meeting Monday, Jan. 8, 2018 to provide an opportunity for Delawareans and citizens of other East Coast states to comment on the US Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to repeal the federal Clean Power Plan (CPP). The DNREC-sponsored listening session will begin at 10 a.m. at the Chase Center on the Riverfront, 815 Justison Street, Wilmington, DE 19801. The goal of the Clean Power Plan is to reduce carbon pollution from coal-, oil-, and natural gas-burning power plants, all of which have been scientifically-proven as contributing to climate change. As the lowest lying state in the nation, Delaware already is experiencing the detrimental effects of climate change, and both Delaware and the nation will be further impacted by EPA's proposed repeal of the plan. Because EPA has refused to provide a reasonable venue for Delawareans and others along the East Coast to voice their opinions on the proposed CPP repeal, DNREC has chosen to conduct a listening session enabling that opportunity. The EPA has held a public hearing only in Charleston, W. Va., and though additional hearings are planned for the Midwest and California, none are to take place on the East Coast. Comments from the Delaware public meeting will be submitted in the form of a transcript on behalf of all who speak on the proposed repeal to EPA's federal docket EPA-HQ-OAR-2017-0355. "EPA should not take action to repeal this important rule without first hearing from our citizens – and Delaware has stepped up to host this public meeting because EPA is not offering a reasonable venue for citizens' voices to be heard," said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin. "The Clean Power Plan offers the states a vital and flexible tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the nation's fossil-fuel burning power plants. We are hosting the meeting to afford the public the opportunity to participate in the EPA's decision-making process that will directly impact their lives and environment." The federal Clean Power Plan – formally known by its EPA title "Carbon Pollution Emission Guidelines for Existing Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units (EGUs)" – was promulgated on Oct. 23, 2015. On Oct. 16, 2017 the EPA proposed repealing it. More details about the Clean Power Plan can be found on EPA's website, including the final rule, technical analyses, and other supporting information. DNREC's Division of Air Quality, which is hosting the listening session for comment on the CPP, anticipates limiting each speaker to five minutes, but time may be adjusted, depending on the number of people who register to speak. Those who still wish to speak are asked to register by emailing Valerie Gray (Valerie.Gray@state.de.us).

WEST VIRGINIA

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Trump to Tap McConnell Aide for Appalachian Post President Donald Trump intends to nominate a member of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's staff as the new federal co-chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission. The White House said Thursday in a news release that the president intends to nominate Tim Thomas to oversee the ARC. Thomas works as a McConnell staff member in Kentucky. He previously worked in former Kentucky Gov. Ernie Fletcher's administration. The agency seeks to create jobs in 420 counties across 13 states, including the West Virginia and Kentucky coalfields. McConnell on Friday praised Trump's selection. He said "with the right leadership" the ARC will continue benefiting Appalachian communities. McConnell has resisted Trump's efforts to shutter the agency. The senator is sponsoring a bill that would move ARC's headquarters from Washington to the Appalachian region.

WEST VIRGINIA METRO NEWS

Final water settlement hearing falls on 4 year anniversary of Freedom spill A final hearing on the water settlement case against West Virginia American Water Company and Eastman Chemical is set for Tuesday, the four year anniversary of the Freedom Industries chemical spill on the Elk River. "At that hearing, the judge will consider whether to grant final approval of the settlement," said Charleston attorney Anthony Majestro. "We're very optimistic that he'll do so." The hearing is set for 10 a.m. Tuesday at the federal courthouse in Charleston. So far, nearly 43 percent of residents impacted by the spill have submitted reimbursement claims. That's more than 46,000 homes and businesses that lost usable tap water following the incident. The total class size is around 120,000 "We're obviously very pleased with where we are so far, but that's still on 43 percent, so we want to encourage everybody who hasn't filed a claim to go ahead and do so," Majestro said. The numbers come from a claims report filed Dec. 29 in federal court in connection with the settlement. As part of the settlement, up to $151 million is available for impacted residents. Both WVAWC and Eastman do not admit liability, according to the agreement. On Jan. 9, 2014, the chemical MCHM leaked into the Elk River in Charleston creating a water crisis for more than 300,000 residents in parts of nine West Virginia counties. Majestro said the public's response to the case has been incredible.

BECKLEY REGISTER HERALD

Former railroad may get new life An almost forgotten railroad could become a big part of a new trail for hikers, bicycle enthusiasts and horseback riders who are interested in exploring the mountains and forests of Mercer and Summers counties. Mercer County Commissioner Bill Archer said both counties are working on plans to develop hiking trails and water trails. The hope is that an old railroad right of way going through part of Mercer County will form a connection with trails in Summers County and beyond. This former railroad line was mostly forgotten until its existence became part of negotiations in the 1990s, Archer recalled. "Back in early 1990 when the commission was working with the Department of Highways to locate District 10 headquarters where it is at Exit 14, a question arose," Archer said. "There was going to be a three-way swap between the federal government, the highway department and the (county) commission." The Mercer County Commission received the property that became the location of the Mercer County Courthouse Annex. The state forestry department got a 23-acre site along Gardner Road which was later converted into a wetland. The state Division of Highways received the property near Exit 14 off Interstate 77; it became the site of District 10's headquarters. While these negotiations were under way, it was discovered that the descendants of the Bluestone Lumber Company, which operated near Exit 14, had the title to a 32-foot-wide narrow-gauge railroad line that ran all the way to Flat Top, Archer said. The county now owns the right of way.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

Scientists say 'dead zones' like those in Chesapeake have grown four-fold across oceans, threaten marine life The Chesapeake Bay has struggled for decades with dead zones — areas in which the water contains little or no oxygen, which sometimes causes massive fish kills. But while the problem has eased here in recent years, it has developed and worsened elsewhere around the globe, researchers say. Since 1950, the number of coastal ecosystems that scientists say are "suffocating" has grown tenfold. The problem has grown four times over in the open ocean, which is generally a more stable and resilient environment. Scientists say ocean oxygen content has declined 2 percent over the past 50 years. Scientists say the trend is another consequence of global warming that threatens to disrupt food chains, destroy habitats and make it harder for some creatures and microorganisms to survive. The extent of the problem was reported in the journal Science last week by an international team of researchers led by and including Chesapeake-focused scientists in Maryland. "This is really a global issue — it's not just a local issue," said lead author Denise Breitburg, a marine ecologist with the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater. "The severity of the changes that we're seeing are really worrisome." In the Chesapeake and other estuaries, excessive amounts of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus begin the chain reaction that can lead to fish kills. The pollution, which flows into waterways from farms and wastewater treatment plants and urban stormwater runoff, fertilizes growth of algae blooms. When the algae dies and decomposes, microbes use up the oxygen in the water.

WJZ- CBS BALTIMORE

Annual Report Shows Improvement in *Chesapeake Bay* Restoration A recent report used 31 different indicators to measure the health of the Chesapeake Bay, and overall it showed great progress for restoration efforts. The "Bay Barometer" reveals impressive improvements led by multiple agencies to restore the ecosystem. "The goals were based on historical best conditions that we recorded in the assessments in order to build those standards in. So therefore, we're striving towards conditions that have been established from the history of what we do have data for," says Peter Tango of the United States Geological Survey. Guided by the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, the report measures water quality, land and water habitats for fish and wildlife, the impact of climate change across the watershed, as well as ways to engage the community in restoration efforts. "The actions we are encouraging everyone to take as good stewards will improve their local streams and rivers that people fish in that people want to have their grandkids be able to swim in without an eye infection," says Kate Fritz of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. "So it's not just about the Chesapeake Bay, it's about all the streams and rivers that feed into the Chesapeake Bay, as well." Several highlights from the report include an abundance of blue crabs as the population rose to a record-breaking number of 254 million. Underwater grasses also showed great growth, reaching 53 percent of the goal to achieve 185,000 acres. Water conditions are also promising — nearly 40 percent of the Chesapeake Bay watershed met quality water standards.

BAY NET

Senators announce federal money for Sea Grant program U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen (both D-Md.) have announced $287,900 in federal funding to the University of Maryland for the Maryland Sea Grant (MDSG) program through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The MDSG program works to protect the environmental and economic sustainability of the Chesapeake Bay through educational and restorative projects. "Maintaining the health of the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland's coastal waters is a team effort. The MDSG program has been an important contributor to this mission by bringing together environmental scientists, students, local business owners and community leaders to preserve our most valuable resources," said Senator Cardin, a senior member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. "This federal investment will help ensure that MDSG can continue to

educate our future environmental leaders and develop sustainable solutions that will keep our Bay and our economy healthy for years to come." "The Maryland Sea Grant Program is an essential partner in efforts to improve the health and quality of the Bay," said Senator Van Hollen, a member of the Budget and Appropriations Committees. "This funding will help MDSG continue their crucial work – from scientific research to community education and outreach. For recreation and for Maryland jobs, a clean and thriving Bay is essential, and I will continue to fight for Bay priorities in the Senate." The MDSG program is administered by the University System of Maryland and is a part of a network of 33 National Sea Grant programs. Locally, the program utilizes educational outreach, scientific research and public awareness to support the preservation and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland's coastal waters. Through these initiatives, the MDSG has contributed $7.4 million to Maryland's economy and helped create 140 jobs and 25 businesses in 2016. Maryland Sea Grant awards grants and funding to support researchers in emerging areas of science. Their recent research has helped develop new approaches in oyster aquaculture businesses and contribute to the increase of the Chesapeake's blue crab population.

CECIL WHIG

Scientists say 'dead zones' like those in Bay have grown across oceans The Chesapeake Bay has for decades struggled with "dead zones" — areas where water contains little or no oxygen, sometimes causing massive fish kills. But while the problem has eased in recent years here, it has developed and worsened elsewhere around the globe, according to new research. Since 1950, the number of coastal ecosystems that scientists say are "suffocating" has grown tenfold. The problem has grown four times over in the open ocean, which is generally a more stable and resilient environment. Scientists say ocean oxygen content has declined 2 percent over the past 50 years. The trend, scientists say, is another consequence of global warming that threatens to disrupt food chains, destroy habitats and make it harder for some creatures and microorganisms to survive. The extent of the problem was reported in the journal Science this past week by an international team of researchers led by and including Chesapeake-focused scientists in Maryland. "This is really a global issue — it's not just a local issue," said Denise Breitburg, the paper's lead author and a marine ecologist with the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center in Edgewater. "The severity of the changes that we're seeing are really worrisome." In the Chesapeake and other estuaries, excessive amounts of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus begin the chain reaction that can end in fish kills. The pollution flows into waterways from farms and wastewater treatment plants and in urban stormwater runoff and fertilizes growth of algae blooms. Once the algae dies, as it decomposes on the bottom of the bay, and microbes use up the oxygen in the water.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

Kaine supports reconsideration for controversial Virginia pipelines U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., has joined the call for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to reconsider its approval in October of a pair of controversial natural gas pipelines that are planned to cut through Virginia. In a letter Friday, Kaine asked the commission to grant new hearings for the Mountain Valley and Atlantic Coast pipeline projects, which have cleared most regulatory hurdles and could be headed for tree-clearing and construction soon. "The commission approved the MVP and ACP on 2-1 votes when two of the five commissioner slots were vacant," Kaine wrote. "The split decisions were most unusual — 98 percent of FERC orders in 2016 were unanimous. Given that the commission now has a full complement of five members, there is real concern about whether the divided rulings by a partial commission fairly reflect the FERC position."Kaine's letter comes amid mounting criticism of how FERC evaluates the need for such projects, which come with a sizeable rate of return baked in for the developers, and concerns about the use of eminent domain to take private property in the absence of a compelling public need. The agency largely relies on capacity contracts, in some cases with the pipeline developers' own subsidiaries, to demonstrate market demand for the gas. The new FERC chairman, Kevin J. McIntyre, announced last month that the agency will review its nearly 20-year-old policies for certifying natural gas pipelines. There is no indication, however, that the review would affect the Mountain Valley or Atlantic Coast pipeline projects. In an unusual

dissent, FERC Commissioner Cheryl A. LaFleur said she could not conclude that either pipeline was in the public interest.

MISCELLANEOUS

GREENWIRE

Lawyers behind oil and gas bans smacked with court sanctions Environmental lawyers with an unconventional approach to opposing oil and development are on the hook for thousands of dollars in new federal court sanctions. The U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania on Friday reprimanded two lawyers associated with the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF), ruling that they acted in bad faith and pushed "implausible" legal theories to defend a local ban on oil and gas wastewater disposal. Magistrate Judge Susan Paradise Baxter found that CELDF Executive Director Thomas Linzey and attorney Elizabeth Dunne, who has worked with the group, must pay more than $50,000 to cover part of a Pennsylvania energy firm's legal bills from litigation over the ban. "An attorney's zealous advocacy for the protection of a client's interests is certainly appropriate; however, the legitimate pursuit of justice imposes important obligations on counsel to ensure that the Court is not a mechanism of harassment or unbridled obstruction," she wrote. The decision is a deep blow to the "local control" approach championed by CELDF and others that want communities to have veto power over hydraulic fracturing, injection wells and other development within their borders. CELDF Associate Director Mari Margil slammed the sanctions as a win for corporations over communities. "At a time when Americans more and more are looking to the courts for reason and justice, today we find neither, as corporate forces once again have been able to wield our institutions of government to punish those working to elevate the rights of communities over fossil fuel corporations," she said in a statement. At issue in this case is one company's plans to dispose of oil and gas wastewater in an injection well in Grant Township, about 80 miles northwest of Pittsburgh. Pennsylvania General Energy Co. had a permit from U.S. EPA to store wastewater there, but township leaders in 2014 approved a ban on the practice.

NEW YORK TIMES

As Trump Appeals to Farmers, Some of His Policies Don't President Trump will head to Tennessee on Monday to appeal to farmers, a key demographic that helped elect him, as he promotes his tax law and previews a new White House strategy to help rural America. But back in Washington, some of the economic policies his administration is pursuing are at odds with what many in the farm industry say is needed, from a potentially drastic shift in trade policies that have long supported agriculture to some little-noticed tax increases in the $1.5 trillion tax law. American farmers are facing some of the most challenging times in a generation. Global prices for their products — including corn, wheat and other commodities — are mired in a multiyear slump, and the rural economy has remained sluggish since the recession. Net farm income has been roughly halved in the last four years, the largest four-year decrease since the Great Depression, the American Farm Bureau Federation says. Many farmers and farm states supported the president, whose campaign made overtures to parts of America that had been left behind economically and felt overlooked in Washington. The farm community has cheered the president's deregulatory agenda, especially a move to rescind tighter regulations on water pollution. Mr. Trump's appearance at the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual convention in Nashville on Monday will mark the first time in 25 years a president has attended. In his speech to the group, the president is likely to touch on the successful passage of the tax bill and his administration's initiatives to combat opioid addiction, White House officials said in a briefing on Friday. The White House is also expected to release a report Monday on reviving rural prosperity, which will outline goals for helping rural areas, including expanding high-speed internet, health services, work-force training and the use of biotechnology. The report stems from an executive order Mr. Trump signed in April.

VOICE OF AMERICA

US EPA Chief Pruitt Reportedly Interested in Attorney General Job U.S. Environmental Protection Agency chief Scott Pruitt, the conservative former attorney general of Oklahoma, is interested in replacing Attorney General Jeff Sessions if that job becomes available, sources with knowledge of the matter said on Friday. President Donald Trump has openly criticized Sessions for months, provoking speculation that the attorney general might resign or be fired. The EPA chief would likely accept the position if it were offered by Trump, a source close to Pruitt told Reuters, speaking on condition of anonymity. Jahan Wilcox, an EPA spokesman, in an email denied that Pruitt was interested in serving as attorney general. “This is not true,” Wilcox said. “Administrator Pruitt is solely focused on implementing President Trump's agenda to protect the environment,” Wilcox added. The White House did not respond to a request for comment. As EPA chief, Pruitt has worked to overturn a number of environmental policies put in place under Republican Trump’s Democratic predecessor Barack Obama and was instrumental in the U.S. decision to walk away from the 2015 Paris global climate change accord.