

# the BRIDGE

*Environmental Connections Start Here*

September 1, 2021 | Volume 21.3



## MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals is to promote environmental education, research, planning, assessment, review, and management through the formation and operation of a nonpolitical multidisciplinary professional society.

Inside this issue:

- Page 2: [Welcome new members!](#)
- Page 2: [Since we last chatted...](#)
- Page 2: [Environmental Sciences Awards](#)
- Page 2: [Looking ahead...](#)
- Page 2: [2021 Annual Conference](#)
- Page 2: [Awards Applications](#)
- Page 3: [Environmental News Releases](#)
- Page 3: [Did you Know?](#)
- Page 4: [Pennsylvania Endangered Species](#)
- Page 4: [Pennsylvania Invasive Species](#)
- Page 4: [PennDOT requests help](#)
- Page 4: [PAEP Board](#)

PAEP is a member of NAEP, the national organization for environmental professionals. Click below to view news from the national perspective.



## Profiles of Board Members...

Hi everyone!

This issue, PAEP's Secretary Radhika deSilva posed the following interview questions to current PAEP President Deborah Poppel.



### ***Where do you currently work and what is your position?***

I work as a Senior Project Environmental Scientist with RK&K, a civil engineering firm based out of Baltimore. I recently relocated from the King of Prussia to Allentown office. When not working, I enjoy all sorts of outdoor pursuits, especially kayaking.

### ***How did you learn about PAEP? Why did you get involved? What motivates you to continue your involvement and now serve as President of PAEP?***

I first learned of PAEP through a regulatory update seminar held jointly by the Eastern Section and SWEP (Society of Women Environmental Professionals) way back in 2002. I then attended a networking happy hour and was encouraged to join by then-President Bill Zemaitis. I feel like I have been involved with PAEP to some extent or another for the majority of my career in the environmental industry. The connections I have made with other professionals who work in this field have been invaluable.

### ***Can you explain what you do at work? What is a typical workday like?***

My educational background is in ecology and I am a Certified Wildlife Biologist, so my primary areas of expertise are in natural resources. Although I get out in the field less now than I did earlier in my career, I do still conduct wetland delineations and habitat assessments for threatened species - particularly turtles. Most of my days are typically spent evaluating impacts from transportation or utility projects on waterways, interacting with engineers regarding permit needs, and writing reports that support National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation. A typical workday is now mostly spent in my home office!

### ***You are a scientist who is also a mom with a daughter. What attracted you to the sciences and how do you think that being a woman impacted your role as a scientist?***

I've been interested in wild things and wild places ever since I was a child. I always knew that I would be involved in science, whether it was in the medical field or natural history. As a kid, growing up it was during a time when girls who liked outdoorsy pursuits were labeled "tomboys".

Later on, I gravitated towards like-minded women in the same field of study as me. I have always tried to support other women, through mentoring and networking, who are developing their skills in the environmental profession.

### ***Read more of the interview...***

## Corporate Sponsors for Volume 21.3 of the Bridge



Just \$25 and your company's logo will be featured here in the next edition! (First come, first serve. Only 6 companies can sponsor each quarterly issue).

"the BRIDGE" is the newsletter of the **Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals** and strives to provide its members with current, useful and unbiased information that will improve their ability to offer quality consultation and appropriate solutions to their clients. To make sure you receive these publications, be sure to **allow email from [info@paep.org](mailto:info@paep.org)** to be accepted.



### Welcome new members!

PAEP is pleased to announce the following individuals to the PAEP family:

**Dr. Philip Thomas**, Trout Unlimited  
**Beverly Miller**, PennDOT  
**William Laing**, student

Welcome these new members and invite them to participate in our activities, events, and committees.

### Since we last chatted...



Our monthly webinar program has been a hit...you can check out all the free webinars, available to all our members, on the [PAEP website](#). They can be used to satisfy your PDHs.

#### Past Monthly Webinars – June thru August:

- June 11, 2021 - [Geophysics in Environmental Consulting](#), presented by Scott Wendling.
- August 15, 2021 - [Biological and Economic Benefits Estimation under §316\(b\) of the Clean Water Act](#), William P. Dey, ASA Analysis & Communication, Inc. *Presentation summary:* Review of and determining how to estimate the balance between the costs and benefits of environmental restoration and protection efforts.

#### Past Months' Events

- May 21, 2021 – Mini-Golf Event. If your section is interested in holding a similar event in the future, contact J.T. Graupensperger at [jgraupensperger@pennoni.com](mailto:jgraupensperger@pennoni.com) or call 717-620-5922. J.T. is a good resource to help you have a successful event.

#### Environmental Science Scholarships Awarded

- The winners of the 2021 Scholarships have been announced. They are:
  - Gifford Pinchot Scholarship: [Isaac Nulton](#), Pennsylvania State University
  - Maurice Goddard Scholarship: [Poppy Northing](#), Haverford College

### Looking ahead...



We have a number of activities planned in these last few months of the year, beginning with...

#### 2021 Annual Virtual Conference:

- October will be dedicated to our [Annual Conference](#) virtual sessions.
- Ask your firm to be a sponsor for this event. Sponsor information is available at [paep.org](#).

#### Monthly Webinars:

A slew of webinars are planned for the upcoming months. The webinars will be held on Mondays from noon to 1 p.m. The November and December webinars are free to members and will be posted on the PAEP website after they are presented.

- November 15<sup>th</sup> webinar - **On Thermal Evaluations**, presented by John Dimitry
- December 6<sup>th</sup> webinar - **Public Outreach and Environmental Justice Considerations in Transportation Planning and Project Delivery**, presented by Jennifer Crobak, Jon Crum, and Deborah Suci Smith of FHWA

#### Events:

- **Save the date!!!** The annual PAEP/WTS Scholarship Golf Outing is scheduled for September 17 at the Sunset Golf Course in Middletown, PA.



#### Awards Applications Available:

- Karl Mason and Walter Lyon Nominee considerations are being accepted until September 17. There's [more information](#) on the PAEP website.



## Did you Know...?

- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours.
- During the time it takes you to read this sentence, 50,000 12-ounce aluminum cans are made.
- An aluminum can may be recycled *ad infinitum* (forever!).
- We consume over 80 trillion aluminum cans every year.
- More than 20,000,000 Hershey's Kisses are wrapped each day, using 133 square miles of tinfoil. All that foil is recyclable!
- The world's beer and soda consumption uses about 180 billion aluminum cans every year. This is 6,700 cans every second – enough to go around the planet every 17 hours.
- It takes more energy to mine and produce aluminum than any other metal.
- Two percent of the world's energy use is spent on producing aluminum. Producing aluminum from recycled aluminum cans only takes five percent of the energy needed to produce new aluminum.
- Aluminum is dangerous for gilled creatures like fish, because its ions accumulate in the gills and clog them, preventing them from breathing.
- Is it "aluminum" or "aluminium"? Sir Humphry Davy originally called it 'aluminium' in 1808 but changed the name to 'aluminum' in 1812. The British decided to retain 'aluminium' to be consistent with other element names, such as, sodium or strontium. [I suspect it may also have something to do with losing the War of 1812 against its upstart colonies.]

(information courtesy of [earthecho.org](http://earthecho.org), [theworldcounts.com](http://theworldcounts.com) and [kidadl.com](http://kidadl.com))



BALANCE

## Environmental News Releases

Check out the latest articles on environmental issues:

[Jobs Or The Environment? Ahead Of 2022, Pennsylvania Democrats Thread Needle On 'False Choice'](#) - Katie Meyer, WHYY

[PA Senate Committee Letter Asks IRRC to Reject RGGI Carbon Tax](#) - Marcellus Drilling News  
[Gassy Coal Mines as Environmental Commodities? CNX Shows How](#) – Anya Litvak, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Links to other newsletters:

[DEP Newsroom](#) – Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources News Releases

[PA Environment Digest Newsletter](#)

[PennEnvironment](#)

[Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#)

[Conservation Voters of PA](#)

## PennDOT Requests Assistance from Firms Completing PNDI's

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Bureau of Project Delivery is asking individuals/firms who are completing the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program on-line web forms for the PNDI process to identify PennDOT in the PROJECT TITLE BOX (in green highlight below) along with the standard project related identifiers that you typically include (see yellow highlight below). This additional inclusion will allow the reviewing agencies to clearly identify the project as a PennDOT project and route it to the appropriate funded staff. PennDOT and the Agency Staff (i.e. PAFBC, PGC, and DCNR) appreciate your cooperation.

*interview continued...*

**Is there additional work that we need to do to attract women to the sciences and keep them in the sciences, or do you think we have a level playing field now?**

I believe that there will never fully be a "level playing field" until there is mandatory equal pay for equal work. However, to me, the environmental sciences do to be more balanced than perhaps some of the other STEM fields in terms of women pursuing these careers.

**How did you juggle the demands of work and home when your daughter was younger?**

I have been fortunate throughout my career to work for companies that have been supportive of flexible work arrangements, part-time work, and other means of balancing work and home life. I have always tried to make a conscious decision to "turn off" from work once the day is done.

**Your daughter is starting college this fall – congratulations to you both! What advice do you have to offer young men and women starting college this year?**

I feel for those students who missed out on a true freshman year college experience in 2020. I am hopeful that this coming year will be somewhat of a return to normalcy and college students are able to not only gain knowledge academically but make those social connections that are so significant during this time in their life. Joining clubs, organizations, and even becoming a student member of PAEP will help strengthen those bonds. We've learned during this "time of COVID" how critical understanding of science is, and not just for those people for whom it is part of their career. My own daughter is not interested in pursuing a STEM major, and I'm not pushing her in that direction. She will find her own path.

**What is the pie-in-the-sky aspiration you have for yourself?**

I would love to write a novel someday! I'm not sure what it would be about.

**What is the pie-in-the-sky hope you have for the environmental industry?**

My hope is that politics will have less of a grip on environmental regulations and guidance and that things will not keep changing with every new administration, but that probably really is a "pie-in-the-sky" dream!

## PAEP BOARD

**Deb Poppel** – President  
**Vlad Odarchenko** – Vice-President  
**Radhika deSilva** – Secretary  
**Mike Parrent** – Treasurer  
**Danielle Elwell**  
**Barbara Weedon**  
**Fiona Adamsky**  
**Amy Jordan**

*We all are aware of the unintended impacts humanity's activities have had on numerous species throughout the world. Right here in Pennsylvania we have experienced the alarming reduction of once-plentiful species of Flora and Fauna, both terra and aquatic based. Some of these species are being replaced by invasive organisms introduced by accident or purposely into our environment resulting in serious unplanned consequences. Keep your eyes peeled for these species during your daily endeavors.*

## Pennsylvania Endangered and Threatened Species Series

### Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalis*)

PAEP hosted a webinar in May on the Indiana Bat. That webinar can be reviewed and/or downloaded from our Webinars page at [https://www.paep.org/resources/webinar\\_presentations/](https://www.paep.org/resources/webinar_presentations/)

### Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*) and Clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*)

We've featured these two species of clams because they are threatened by our highlighted invasive species, the Zebra mussel. These species are found in the Allegheny River and Delaware River systems. The Riffleshell's largest colony is found in French Creek in eastern PA.

They are not only threatened by the Zebra mussel, but also by sedimentation from development, nutrient runoff from agricultural activities, industrial pollution and navigational impoundments.



Northern Riffleshell



Clubshell

The protection of the habitats of the large colonies is paramount to saving these species. The US Fish and Wildlife Service developed a recovery plan in 1994. You can review it at <https://www.fws.gov/northeast/pafo/pdf/Clubshell%20Recovery%20Plan.pdf>.

*(information obtained from: the USFWS data sheets on these species)*

## Pennsylvania Invasive Species Series

### Zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*)

The Zebra mussel was accidentally introduced in 1988 by ships arriving from the Caspian Sea area. It has been very successful at establishing itself in Pennsylvania fresh water habitats. It has been found in Lake Erie and the waters of the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio Rivers. It's a very small creature – fingernail size – but is causing significant issues where they habituate. They block water intake pipes and attach themselves to the Northern Riffleshell and Clubshell, effectively suffocating them.



Zebra mussel

Preventative measures are limited. The best measure is to keep them out in the first place. Boat inspections and Clean-Drain-Dry campaigns for fishermen, boaters and water enthusiasts are the first and best lines of defense individuals can take from keeping mussels from hitchhiking a ride to new environs. Other secondary measures can be taken, although there are downsides to those methods.

*Additional information can be found at:*

<https://nas.er.usgs.gov/queries/FactSheet.aspx?speciesID=5>,  
<https://earthtecqz.com/zebra-mussels/zebra-mussel-myth-1-zebra-mussels-cannot-be-eradicated/>, <https://stopaquatic hitchhikers.org/prevention/>.

## PAEP

174 Crestview Drive  
Bellefonte, PA 16823  
Phone: 814.355.2467  
Fax: 814.355.2452  
E-mail: [info@paep.org](mailto:info@paep.org)