

GOVERNOR RENDELL SETS PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE TO CONTINUE CONNECTING PEOPLE, NATURE

Governor Edward G. Rendell today announced that five public meetings will be held across the state to present findings from the recent Governor's Outdoor Conference and solicit additional ideas and recommendations about keeping people connected to nature.

"We need to continue exploring ways to keep people connected to our abundant natural resources," Governor Rendell said. "These meetings will make it easier for people from across the state to learn about the findings from our outdoor conference and contribute new ideas to strengthen our outdoor connections."

"The information gleaned from the conference we held in March, and these post-conference meetings, will be incorporated into a final report by the end of the year with recommendations for action," the Governor said.

The public meetings will be held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on:
May 24, Room 112, Tom Ridge Environmental Center at Presque Isle State Park, Erie
May 31, McGowan Building, King's College, Wilkes-Barre
June 6, Boyce Park Ski Lodge, Monroeville, Allegheny County
June 14, Aldie Mansion, 85 Old Dublin Pike, Doylestown, Bucks County
June 21, Susquehanna Room, Fish and Boat Commission Headquarters, 1601 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg

"I especially encourage young people to participate in these meetings since their insights will be helpful in reversing trends that show their bond to our natural resources is weakening," Governor Rendell said.

The meetings will be structured in a way that participants will be asked specific questions in order to gather additional ideas on how to tackle the most pressing issues.

The presentations made at the meetings also will be available for use by organizations and individuals who wish to inform and solicit ideas from their constituents and stakeholders.

"The conference participants did an excellent job laying a foundation for a broader conversation about protecting and enhancing our natural heritage and relationship with the outdoors," the Governor said. "These issues have the potential to affect so many things, including children's health, the vitality of our rural areas, our quality of life and the future of the state's billion-dollar hunting industry."

Data from the public forums will be compared with the conference data and other feedback collected during the post-conference process. A task force will use all the information collected as the basis for the final report.

Approximately 300 people, including policy makers, business representatives, sportsmen's groups, conservation organizations and representatives of the health and education sectors, participated in the first-of-its-kind Governor's Outdoor Conference, March 18-20, in State College.

The conference Web site will provide full access to the information presented at the conference once it is processed. Online forums will continue to provide opportunities to engage in a meaningful discussion about improving connections between Pennsylvanians and the outdoors. Visit www.connectoutdoors.state.pa.us.