

**NIE** Connect with your environment  
Learn about environmental issues, in your community and how you can get involved.



ANNA McCARTNEY/Contributed photo

Tackling the spread of invasive species requires teamwork.

## Workshop looks at creek vegetation

By ANNA McCARTNEY  
Contributing writer

If you are one of 250 people who own property along Elk Creek in the Lake Erie watershed, you should have received a letter in the mail that you want to be sure to open.

The letter from the Lake Erie Watershed Cooperative Weed Management Area (LEW-CWMA) has important information about a workshop for chosen landowners on Feb. 21 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center. By attending the workshop, you will learn how you and your property can benefit from the LEW-CWMA programs, which include education and funding for controlling invasive species that are negatively impacting farmland, working forests and recreational land, and reducing the aesthetic value of these landscapes.

Invited landowners own property that overlaps in whole or in part with one or more of the natural heritage areas along Elk Creek identified through the Erie County Natural Heritage Inventory (CNHI).

Because plants can spread beyond property lines, it will take a combined effort by both private landowners and public land managers to control invasive vegetation and conserve the natural conditions of important places in the Lake Erie watershed. Likewise, as private landowners try to improve their properties and limit the spread of aggressive invasive plants, they often must seek the cooperation of adjacent landowners, whether public or private.

A short presentation will be followed by an opportunity for asking questions and discussion. Snacks and beverages will be served. Please RSVP by Feb. 6 to Marti Martz at 217-9011, extension 104, or mam60@psu.edu. Contact PA Sea Grant Coastal Outreach Technologist Tom Cermak with any questions at 217-9011, extension 106, or tjc29@psu.edu.

**ANNA McCARTNEY**, a communications and education specialist for Pennsylvania Sea Grant, can be reached by e-mail at axm40@psu.edu.



## Pfeiffer-Burleigh kids back wider walkway

Six 10- and 11-year-old students attended their first Erie Zoning Board public meeting at Erie City Hall on Nov. 11 to share their concerns about the walkway along the west Erie bayfront, near the former GAF Materials Corp. site.

They attended the hearing because they like to go fishing in the city, which is close and convenient to them, and they want the walkway to be safe. "We are concerned that people might trip on the gravel and rocks or sprain their ankle," one student said. They also believe the walkway is not wide enough and more space is needed for people who are fishing, jogging, biking, running and walking. Their advice was to remove the gravel and rocks and make the walkway wider.

All are Pfeiffer-Burleigh Elementary School students who also participate in environmental classes at the Neighborhood Art House and the Pennsylvania Sea Grant Great Lakes Great Stewards program.

They shared their comments about the experience:

The Zoning Board Hearing was a great experience for a child and the debate was good. But when it was time for the group from



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**Students share their concerns at a City of Erie Public Zoning Board meeting.**

the Art House to go up to the mike, I had butterflies. We did a great job speaking about the walkway by the old GAF property. It really should be 12 feet wide and there should not be gravel and stones. Christian and I spoke nice and clear and loud enough for people to hear us. I was glad that we went to City Hall; we did have an awesome reason to be there.

— **Rickaylaha Ransom**, 11 years old

It was our first time at a public meeting. We were so nervous that we couldn't even spell our last name for the recorder. We worked so hard on our testimony and we were upset with the vote of the Zoning Board.

— **Samuel Kakulu and Nathan Martinez**, 10 years old



GOVERNORCUOMOFICKR

Even though travel on Interstate 90 was extremely hazardous and the road was officially closed from Rochester to the Pennsylvania state line during the November blizzard, people ignored the warnings. Because every entrance wasn't immediately blocked, drivers continued to take to the road. This only stranded more people, made clearing the roads impossible and hampered rescue crews trying to free stranded motorists.

# Weather or not

Follow this checklist for winter travel in Erie region

By ANNA McCARTNEY  
Contributing writer

Do you check weather forecasts and road conditions to decide if you should venture out in winter weather?

In our region, storms can turn into blizzards with blinding, wind-driven snow that can last for several days. Knowing when to cancel or delay your trip and being prepared for extremely hazardous conditions can keep you and your family out of unnecessary life-threatening situations.

The following tips can help you make informed decisions.

First, monitor the National Weather Service forecasts, statements, watches and warnings for the latest information at [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) or on NOAA Weather Radio. Then get the road conditions where you will be traveling. In Pennsylvania, traffic conditions and speeds, weather conditions and alerts and NOAA weather forecasts can be found at [www.511pa.com](http://www.511pa.com) or by dialing 511 on your phone. Smart-phone users can add a 511PA mobile app to get the most current, relevant traffic information without taking their eyes off the road or hands off the wheel. This app will automatically repeat advisories every 20 minutes while you remain within range of reported incidents or hazardous/closed roads.

The [www.roadnow.com/i90](http://www.roadnow.com/i90) traffic-road-conditions website gives similar information for Interstate 90 and other roadways across the country. These sites can help you decide to stay put, turn back or get off at a safe location and wait for conditions to improve.

If you must travel, be prepared. Dress to suit the weather since you may need to leave your vehicle. Wear several layers of loose-fitting clothes and hooded, windproof and water-repellent outer clothing, mittens or gloves, a hat and warm, waterproof boots.

Winterize your vehicle and keep the gas tank full. Take a fully charged cell



NWS JEREMIAH WILLIAM

Your choices can make the difference between safety and suffering. Check forecasts and road conditions and stay off the roads until storms pass.



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Roads can quickly become impassible in winter. Don't take unnecessary risks.



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Keep a survival kit in the passenger compartment in case you get stranded.

phone or two-way radio and an adapter to travel into the lighter. Travel during daylight and advise someone of your route and arrival information. Then grab your survival kit and

store it in the passenger compartment in case you can't get to the trunk.

If you become stranded in your vehicle:

• Stay inside and wait for help if you cannot see help

within 100 yards because you can quickly become disoriented in blowing snow.

■ Display a brightly colored flag, preferably red, from the antenna or a window.

■ Raise the hood after the snow stops falling.

■ Run the engine 10 minutes every hour (or 5 minutes every half-hour) to keep warm and to reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. Make sure the tail pipe is clear, and have a downwind window open slightly for fresh air.

■ Leave the overhead light on while car is running.

■ Clap your hands and move your arms and legs occasionally to aid circulation.

■ Drink fluids to avoid dehydration, (no alcoholic or caffeinated beverages).

Your winter driving survival kit should include:

- Whistle
- Waterproof container with candles and matches
- Small, sharp knife
- Red bandanna or cloth to signal trouble
- Pencil and paper
- Fruits, nuts and high-energy foods
- Flashlight and spare batteries (Reverse batteries in the flashlight to avoid accidental switching and burnout.)
- Blankets or sleeping bags

■ Rain gear, extra clothes, mittens, socks and hats

■ Windshield scraper with a brush

■ Shovel and sand or cat litter for traction

■ 30-foot cord to use as homing line if you must exit the vehicle

■ Booster cables

■ Basic tools

■ First aid kit

■ Compass or GPS and road maps

■ Tow cables or chain

■ Road flares and reflectors

■ Metal can for melting snow

**ANNA McCARTNEY**, a communications and education specialist for Pennsylvania Sea Grant, can be reached by e-mail at [axm40@psu.edu](mailto:axm40@psu.edu).

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[www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/index.shtml](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/index.shtml)  
[www.pseagrant.org/](http://www.pseagrant.org/)

Do you know the difference between weather and climate? Weather is what you get, climate is what you expect. If you live in this region, you can expect cold wintry weather and lots of snow. But if you live in Florida or Texas, you expect warmer temperatures. Follow the daily weather map to learn more about how the climate differs across the country.

Does the Erie climate agree with you? Or would you rather move to a warmer climate? Share your ideas for possible publication in the weekly "your space" by sending them to [axm40@psu.edu](mailto:axm40@psu.edu).

