

Pennsylvania's Black Fly Suppression Program

Welcome to Pennsylvania's Black Fly Suppression Web Site

The goal of the Pennsylvania Black Fly Suppression Program is to reduce adult black fly populations to tolerable levels during the spring and summer recreational season using environmentally compatible methods. The program involves monitoring and treatment of approximately 1500 miles of 45 Pennsylvania rivers and streams. DEP biologists and student interns conduct black fly monitoring, laboratory identification of samples, data entry, treatment operations and management of aerial spray contracts. Treatments are done by helicopter, using *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis (Bti)*, a naturally occurring soil bacterium, to selectively target only four black fly species in the *Simulium jenningsi* species group that bother people. More than three million Pennsylvania residents benefit from this program in thirty-one participating counties. The program provides relief from adult black flies so residents and tourists can fully enjoy outdoor recreational activities in Pennsylvania.

JOINING THE PROGRAM

1. Citizens report adult black fly (gnat) problems to county personnel or PA-DEP.
2. County Commissioners must submit a written request to join the program to DEP.
3. Black Fly Suppression Program personnel conduct an extensive one-year countywide survey of black fly larval, pupal and adult populations to determine the need for a control program.
4. DEP provides results of the survey, data analysis, recommendations, and treatment cost estimates for the county and state, if a control program is recommended in the County.
5. If County Commissioners choose to participate, and adequate funding is available, a County Agreement is signed and executed.
6. PA-DEP Water Pollution Biologists begin monitoring and treating black fly populations the following season under a new or existing aerial application contract.

PROGRAM FUNDING

1. State/County cost-sharing of treatment operations, as set forth in County Agreement.
2. All administrative and monitoring costs are paid entirely by PA-DEP, at no-cost to the County.
3. Commonwealth funding for the Program is achieved through an annual state budget appropriation.
4. Counties are invoiced for the local share of the project at the end of each treatment season.

Content Last Modified on 3/23/2007 8:17:58 AM