

Protecting Communities and Special Places

e-Newsletter December 14, 2013



"The moment we begin to fear the opinions of others and hesitate to tell the truth that is in us, from motives of policy are silent when we should speak, the divine floods of light and life no longer flow into our souls."
~

Elizabeth Cady Stanton

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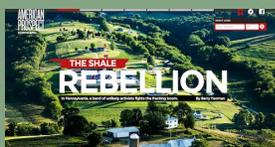
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SPECIAL FEATURE

The Shale Rebellion

from [American Prospects Storyscapes](#)



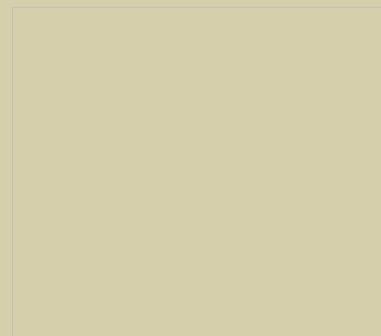
A Year End Present to the Fracking Industry? Quite Likely.

A message from Stephen Kunz, Senior Ecologist at [Schmid & Company, Inc.](#)

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) is proposing to modify and reissue Chapter 105 General Permit 8, as published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on November 2, 2013. Public comments on this proposal are being accepted until January 10, 2014. ***This one is really important, so please take the time to submit comments.***

The proposed GP-8 would allow, without technical review, virtually unlimited impacts to wetlands and streams from "temporary" activities, defined as up to two years, that currently need an Individual Permit, things like large-capacity (24-inch inside diameter) pipelines carrying "pollutional materials," which is undefined, but presumably includes fracking and flowback fluids.

As you may know, projects relying on Chapter 105 General Permits like this receive virtually no review by the PADEP. Indeed, it actually is a "registration" process rather than an approval process. If a project sponsor believes his proposed



[Click the picture to enter The Shale Rebellion](#)

Settle back and read [Barry Yeoman's](#) excellent account of life in Pennsylvania under the occupation of the natural gas industry. You'll hear some familiar stories, see some familiar faces, yet still learn a thing or two along the way.

UPCOMING EVENTS

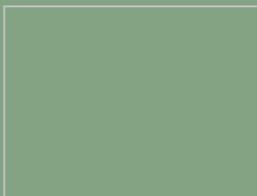
Keep It Wild Holiday Hike

**Christmas Day
December 25**

2:00 p.m.

There's no better way to de-stress from the holiday craziness like a walk in the woods. Join us on Christmas Day at Rider Park for some fresh air and walk the Katy Jane trail.

[Find more information on Facebook](#)



www.KeepItWildrda.org

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Film Screening

"Elemental"

**Saturday
January 25, 2014**

2:00 p.m.

Campus Theater
Lewisburg, PA 17837

[Elemental](#) tells the story of three individuals united by their deep connection with nature and driven to confront

A temporary pipeline winds through a field in Sullivan County.

A. PINCA

Permit, he simply registers to use it--on the

"honor system"--and the PADEP returns a simple "acknowledgment" that the registration was received. No oversight, no public review, and GP registrations are no longer published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

The proposed modification of GP-8 seems to be a veiled attempt to create an umbrella General Permit that can authorize virtually unlimited impacts to wetlands and streams from a wide range of activities primarily associated with oil and gas operations, although of course it is not framed that way.

I have already prepared and submitted [my comments](#) which I shared with the Citizens Advisory Council at their meeting in Harrisburg last month. I am encouraging others to prepare comments, too. Feel free to modify or tailor my comments for your own use, and to circulate them as widely as possible.

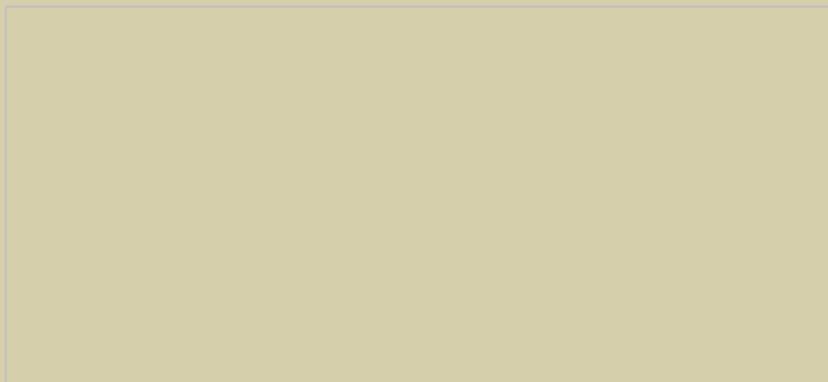
Given the timing of the public comment period for this GP-8 rule change--at the end of the year when most people are busy with Holiday activities--I assume PADEP is doing its best to keep this one under the radar, and to give a nice present to the folks in the fracking industry.

Remember, you have until **January 10, 2014** to submit your comments.

Comments can be emailed to: RA-GP8Comments@pa.gov
or mailed to:

Kenneth Murin, Chief
Division of Wetlands, Encroachments, and Training
PADEP Bureau of Waterways Engineering and Wetlands
P.O. Box 8460
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8460

Editor's note: Mr. Kunz's message was edited for for this article.



some of the most pressing ecological challenges of our time.

[Find more information](#)

Pennsylvania Community Rights Workshop

Who decides what happens in your community, and how did it get that way?

February 21, 6-9 p.m.
February 22, 9-4 p.m.

Susquehanna University

Sponsored by [Shale Justice](#), presented by [CELDF](#)

Space is limited to 40 participants!

[Click here for information](#)

Much as we would like to believe that best management practices are always used and that the oil and gas industry really does have safety, health, and environmental impacts as uppermost concerns in daily operations, our Pennsylvania experience tells us otherwise.

A [2010 article](#) details several spills, including two by Range Resources that occurred while pumping flowback through temporary pipelines, resulting in thousands of gallons of wastewater spilling into creeks and causing fish kills. One spill [took place at a tributary](#) to Brush Run, a high quality stream in Washington County that [DEP noted in documents](#) required "special" protection. A [recent article](#) looks back to another spill in 2010 that "may or may not" have happened. The incident was only discovered through legal proceedings that turned up documents suggesting a possible cover-up of a spill that was never reported by a contractor working for Range.

Unfortunately, these are just a few examples of the many spills that take place during the course of unconventional natural gas extraction. While it is bad enough to have "temporary" pipelines full of toxic chemicals criss-crossing our state for up to two years at a time, it's even worse to think that the technical review of the siting, construction, and operation of these pipelines that could bear potentially devastating impacts will be lessened in any way. It is oversight, transparency, and consequences for wrong-doing that are in the best interests of Pennsylvania's people and environment, certainly not a watered-down honor system for an industry that has yet to prove it can be trusted.

TAKE ACTION!

Environmental Quality Board Opens Public Comment Period on Proposed Oil and Gas Regulations

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Environmental Quality Board announced today that the public comment period for a proposed regulation for environmental protection performance standards associated with oil and gas activities will open on Saturday, Dec. 14.

Comments can be submitted either online, via email, in written form, or verbally at a public hearing. Seven hearings will be held across the state, and two informational webinars will be

DEP Webinar On December 20 Covers Proposed Changes To GP-8 Stream Crossings

The Department of Environmental Protection will hold a webinar on December 20 starting at 10:00 a.m. to provide information on proposed changes to the [GP-8 covering temporary stream crossings](#) and environmental testing and monitoring activities.

To register for this event, visit the [GP-8 Webinar](#) webpage.

Ted Stroter gives a talk about the natural gas industry at Riepstine's Pub.
IMAGE: RICHARD KARP

Old Loggers Ale Officially On Tap

Friends and members of RDA joined in to have some fun and refreshment at the Tapping Party at Riepstine's Pub in Williamsport this week. The evening celebrated the creation of Old Loggers Ale, a unique amber ale brewed for the benefit of the Loyalsock State Forest and RDA. Good food, good music provided by Doug McMinn, and of course the fine Old Loggers Ale served up in Keep It Wild pint glasses provided for an evening of good conversations and dancing, too.

RDA Board president Robbie Cross provided opening comments, and Board member and chemical adviser Ted Stroter gave a brief but lively talk on the natural gas industry and the benefits and problems it presents. After pointing out his pet peeve of endless gas industry advertisements touting that natural gas is "clean, safe, and American," and

presented.

One of the seven hearings will take place in **Lycoming County**:

**Jan. 13, 2014
6:00 p.m.**

**Pennsylvania College of Technology
Klump Academic Center
One College Avenue
Williamsport, PA**

Anyone who would like to present comments at a public hearing must contact the EQB at least one week in advance to reserve a time. Oral comments are limited to five minutes.

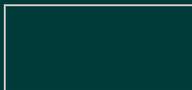
For additional information, instructions on how to view the proposed materials, and to register for a webinar, you can view the [press release here](#).

Join RDA

We welcome your active participation and are in need of help for special events, publicity, research, and other projects.

Contact us for details.

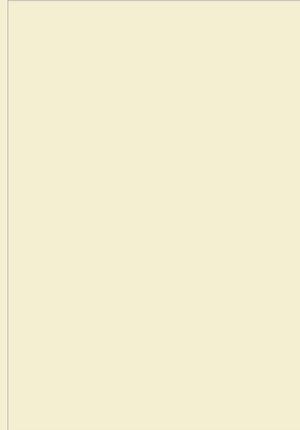
As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, RDA relies on donations for the important work we do. In order for RDA to continue its valuable education and advocacy outreach in 2013, please consider a tax-free contribution to our efforts.



noting that it is anything but that, Stroter urged those present to join in RDA's work.

"We got a big fight here," said Stroter, continuing with the message that RDA needs help. He added that anyone interested in joining in can attend the working group meetings every other Wednesday night in Williamsport or can contribute to RDA to help fund ongoing efforts.

Stroter's final comment was greeted with enthusiastic applause when he made a reference to one of RDA's projects, the Clarence Moore lands of the Loyalsock State Forest. "When it comes to our state forests, let's keep it wild, folks!"



Old Loggers Ale will be on tap at Riepstones until its tap runs dry. A portion of the proceeds from sales will be donated to RDA. Only three barrels were brewed, so sure be to stop by and have your Old Loggers Ale before its gone.

Anyone interested in joining can contact RDA at responsibledrillingalliance@gmail.com or call 888-332-1244 (toll free). For more information, check out the [RDA web site](#), or visit us on [Facebook](#).

Doug McMinn provided music for the evening.

IMAGE: RICHARD KARP

See Richard Karp's [tapping party photos here](#)

www.keepitwilldrda.org

Hike to the Haystacks Keep It Wild Hike #12

By MANDY MAURER

It's here, it's here, it's FINALLY here...SNOW!! There's a special kind of peace and silence in the forest after it snows and it's my absolute favorite time to be in the woods. Only three other people shared my love of snowy hiking last Sunday at the Haystacks, but the four of us were treated to a great

hike through mostly untracked snow.

The ice was starting to form around the boulders in the creek, and those cool ice balls have formed and are hanging on the plants like Christmas balls. I've done this hike many times, but I never get tired of the lulling sound of the Loyalsock Creek or the curious boulders within it. Another beautiful Keep It Wild hike with some fantastic people. I can't think of a better way to spend a Sunday.

See you on the trail!
Mandy

All images by Barbara Jarmoska
See more photos [here](#)

RDA Newsletter

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Please note: The RDA newsletter includes reporting on a variety of events and activities, which do not necessarily reflect the philosophy of the organization. RDA practices only non-violent action in voicing the organization's beliefs and concerns.

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Donations may also be sent by mail to: Responsible Drilling Alliance, P.O. Box 502, Williamsport, PA 17703

Thank you for your support!

Donate

