

# Protecting Communities and Special Places



*e-Newsletter April 10, 2014*



**"So, yes, it was ill-timed, ill-placed and ill-conceived."  
"But here's what they didn't do: They didn't hurt anybody.  
The fossil fuels industry can hardly say the same."**

**-Ruth Steck, Good Kids, Wrong Move,  
as was featured in the Sun-Gazette**

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## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

### Truth and Consequences on Dam Run Road

by Barb Jamoska, RDA Board of Directors

As they had hoped, the young protestors who chained themselves to concrete barriers on Dam Run Road made front page headlines on March 21st. They were not, however, prepared for the unexpected consequences of their less-than-perfectly-planned direct action. Fortunately, no one was hurt and valuable lessons were learned. In democracy and in life, both are good outcomes.

I had the opportunity to meet these bright-eyed, passionate and intelligent young folks the Sunday before their protest. I was invited to share my Power Point presentation during a "Voices from the Shale Fields" panel on opening night of the week-long gathering they organized at Camp Krisland. License plates on their cars attested to the fact that they came from all over the country; gathering there to meet with like-minded others, tell their stories, share communal meals, and talk of how they might make the world a better place for themselves and the children they expect to have some day. I was inspired by their vision and hope for a healthier world, and their willingness to forgo the antics of others of their generation, also on spring break, whom during that week were apt to be drunk on Florida beaches. Instead, these kids slept in sub-freezing temperatures in unheated cabins. The planning behind the event, dubbed "Shale Justice Spring Break" was impressive, a full schedule of events and workshops focused on how to make their voices heard and their dreams of a more compassionate and sustainable world a reality.

I was also present at the hearing held for the 5 protestors arrested on Dam Run Road 5 days later, after they blocked a road by attaching themselves to concrete barriers from which they were extracted by emergency responders. I waited for 2 hours in Magistrate Lepley's waiting area, in a seat beside the parents of one of the jailed girls, entering into casual and friendly conversations that took place with State Police, parents of protestors, and a gaggle of their friends from the camp.

State Police Sergeant Triponney gave me permission to quote his opinion on the incident, "Other than blocking the road, this was a powerful direct action. They have the right to

Good day, Readers! :)  
Brooke Woodside here.  
I am excited to introduce myself as the new editor of this wonderfully informative newsletter.  
Born & raised in Lycoming County, these issues really hit home for me and I am very happy to assume this position at the forefront of presenting this valuable information.

An avid outdoor enthusiast, you will find me sharing my love of snowboarding with others for most of the winter, and out enjoying nature through hiking, camping, fishing, floating, swimming, gardening, disc golfing and many other activities throughout the summer.

## SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER

Missed a week?  
Find former newsletters [here](#).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Banff Film Festival

**April 11 & 12**

**Doors Open 6 p.m.  
Films start at 7 p.m.**

The Sierra Club Moshannon Group is hosting the 2014 Banff Film Festival at the State College High School South Auditorium this Friday & Saturday night.

Both evenings will showcase a different selection of films from the 38th Annual Banff Mountain Film Festival. With films spanning from breathtaking landscapes to captivating action sports, attendance will

speak their minds. This is America, thank God for that."

The mother of one of the girls could no longer hold back tears as the kids marched by in their prison jumpsuits, 5 sets of shackles dragging noisily along the plastic flooring, and her daughter trying to look brave as she called out, "Hi Mommy, I love you."

In the days that followed, bail was paid, the protestors were released from prison, email messages were exchanged, the direct action was examined in detail, and an outstanding letter to the editor of the Sun Gazette was published. Ruth Steck's letter, entitled "Good Kids, Wrong Move" can be read here: [Good Kids, Wrong Move](#).

My subsequent correspondence with some of the organizers and participants at the camp included these reflections:

"While bad decision making happens, as groups are able to sit down and talk about it... we realize where things went bad and can avoid that next time."

"I have really mixed feelings about the direct action. And it seemed that lots of people had mixed feelings. Overall, it was a pretty disorganized event, and many of the people that put themselves in a lot of risk were not informed of important details."

The best lessons in life are about accountability, and I'm not saying the protestors should be off the hook without consequences. I am saying that I understand their frustration. The message about shale gas and all of its ramifications is being carefully crafted and deftly controlled by the industry. Turn on your TV, pick up the newspaper, tune into the radio, read the billboards, attend the conferences and assemblies in PA public schools, and you're sure to hear the corporate drum, never straying from its beat: "Energy Independence," "Job Creation," "Economic Opportunity," "Clean American Energy," and even "Environmental Stewardship." Joseph Stalin was right, "If you tell a lie often enough, it becomes true."

The other side of the gas drilling science and conversation, that which RDA strives to bring to you in this newsletter, is rarely seen or heard in mainstream media. Money talks, and here in Pennsylvania - gas money talks loudly and incessantly.

And so, although I'm not about to risk arrest, I do understand the frustration and anger these kids feel. I feel it too, when learning that RDA has been denied access to renting the Community Arts Center as a venue for free public screenings of documentary films. I feel it when PA Senator Gene Yaw, a rural land owner living elsewhere but reaping the financial gain of a gas lease, publishes a myopic editorial entitled "Hardly a Menace." I feel it when Chamber president Vince Matteo refers to deeply committed citizens as "environmental extremists." I feel it when, as happened this past weekend, another friend is suddenly unable to safely drink the water from her well. I certainly felt it last week when the Supreme Court lifted the ceiling on campaign contributions, opening the floodgates for candidates to be placed in office by the corporations who will collect their favors in "yes" votes for industry-sponsored legislation.

If I were 20 again, looking at a future that could span 60 years or more, would I chain myself to a concrete barrier because it felt like the only way to make my voice heard? I'm not sure. As Pennsylvania plunges full speed ahead into chaotic development of the third and final fossil fuel with nary a pause to consider the actual cost, would I be willing to end up in shackles and handcuffs to proclaim the seeming insanity of our rush to drill? Again, not sure.

The Dam Run Road direct action was lacking in planning and forethought, but the fact remains: when it comes to the long term costs and consequences of unconventional gas drilling and the industrialized build-out it demands, we know not what we do. But we're doing it anyways, driven by the deeply strategized and executed agenda of multinational energy corporations. Well-considered bad actions are most deserving of condemnation, and PA's "open for business" posture and lack of meaningful protection to citizens make our state's rush to drill the greatest poorly planned and executed direct action of them all.

be sure to awaken your inner adventurer and inspire your summer activities.

Details available [HERE](#).

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### Keep It Wild Hike

**April 19  
11 a.m.**

We will return to Sullivan Mountain, Old Logger's Path, hiking right through the heart of the Clarence Moore tracts.

Come join us for a beautiful hike to see what's at stake & why we're fighting to "[Keep it Wild](#)." This hike is about 7.7 miles and should take approximately 3-4 hours.

#### Directions:

From Williamsport, go North on Rte 15 to Trout Run. Then go North on Rte 14 to Ralston. In Ralston, take the second right onto Thompson St and keep going. Thompson St turns into Rock Run Rd. Stay on this road, it splits twice, stay right both times onto Yellow Dog Rd to the intersection of the Old Loggers Path. Look for our vehicles.

From Montoursville, go North on Rte 87 to Hillsgrove. About a mile past Hillsgrove, just before the green metal bridge, turn left on SR4001 towards Lincoln Falls. In Lincoln Falls turn left onto Rte 154. Follow Rte 154 to Shunk. In Shunk, go "left," which is really straight onto SR4002 for about three miles to a left on Masten Rd. Go approximately one mile and go straight onto Ellenton Ridge Rd to the intersection of the Old



*An Earth First activist patiently awaits Anadarko's arrival.*



### THANK YOU to all who supported RDA through this event!!!

First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania successfully executed Raise the Region 2014, an event that helped the community support local nonprofit organizations' fund raising efforts. Blaise Alexander Family Dealerships donated \$125,000 that was used to stretch every donation made to preregistered nonprofits. Thanks to some very generous supporters, the Responsible Drilling Alliance raised over \$2000 through this campaign.

### Clean Air Council Announces new Air Pollution Reporting Tool

*"In Pennsylvania, opponents of gas drilling say regulators are slow and unprepared in responding to air quality complaints."* This is according to the Propublica Article, [In Fracking Fight, a Worry About How Best to Measure Health Threats](#) by Naveena Sadasivam.

Fortunately, the [Clean Air Council](#) has provided an [online tool](#) to make it easier for Pennsylvania residents to report any suspected air pollution coming from natural gas operations. Any suspicious odors, noises or visible emissions can be immediately reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (Regional Office of sender and Harrisburg Office), the Environmental Protection Agency, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, and the Pennsylvania Department of Public Health by clicking [the link](#) and filling out [the form](#) on their website.

The website mentions that multiple complaints will get more of an immediate response than those submitted only once, so be sure to keep the submission form readily accessible and use it each and every time you notice something suspicious. The submission form not only

Loggers Path. You will see some cars and people. We hope to see you there!



**Save the Date**

**Wednesday, April 29**

Lobby Day in  
Harrisburg.

More details to follow.

**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.

Membership levels:  
Adventurer.....\$10  
Explorer.....\$20  
Woodlander.....\$50  
Guardian.....\$100  
Naturalist.....\$500  
Preservationist..\$1,000

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 2014, please consider a tax-free contribution to our efforts.

Please use the Donate button below to send a donation or join online, or [download the membership form here.](#)

presents an easier way to contact all of the above agencies, but also gives the Clean Air Council a better way to document the complaints as well as agency responses. [Click here](#) for the Clean Air Council's online submission form.

**Keep It Wild Hike - Pete's Path - March 16, 2014**

by Jim Slotterback, RDA Board of Directors

Why do we do such things? Several inches of ice covered the steep, rocky trail. Winds were cold and moist and the sky was overcast. This section of the Loyalsock Trail is not for the faint of heart. Most of us fell at least once during our trek and we all struggled on the uphill/downhill section of this hike (which encompassed the majority of it). Why?

I believe this quote from Henry David Thoreau best answers my question: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

This was a difficult path to hike. We chose it because of what it has to offer, what we can learn from it, and why it is important. The ridge line to the East of this trail is leased for gas drilling; and appropriately enough, the hike emphasized what truly matters to us: clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment. We traversed frozen streams, breathed in the cold northern winds, and were afforded awe-inspiring views.



Keep it Wild hikes allow us to engage others that have similar interests, and we almost always have new faces on each journey. No matter where these friends stand on the issues, we can find the common ground that binds us together. Standing up for our community and our environment is not an easy path. But through the slips, falls, bumps and bruises we are occasionally afforded a view: a view of our sweeping landscape, a view of our future, a view of our past, and a view of our community coming together for a common cause. These truly are our "Special Places." Let's [Keep it Wild!](#)



*KIW - Pete's Path Photos courtesy of Richard Karp*

**[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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Contact RDA with questions and comments using either the address below, by email at [responsibledrillingalliance@gmail.com](mailto:responsibledrillingalliance@gmail.com) or by phone at 888.332.1244 (toll free).

For more information, visit the [RDA web site](#), or like us on [Facebook](#).

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

**Thank you for your support!**

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