



Halloween display seen on Rt 87 north of Montoursville in proximity to compressor station, metering station and CNG filling station. Property owner is extremely agitated by the fact that the companies working all around him will not admit to any potential for damage, error or mishap in their operations.

Greetings!

We have a very important issue for you this week. We discuss the upcoming elections, where the right candidates could help us attain the *future* we want for Lycoming County. Thanks to the investigative reporting of PennLive, we also look *back* at the myriad of problems posed by shale gas operations. Hopefully we can learn from our past to create a better future.

Our first order of business: the upcoming election. Two races are especially crucial to the future of PA and the life of all residents. The first is the PA Supreme Court race. The second is the Lycoming County Commissioners' race. Because of the prominence of the local race, RDA invited the five candidates for Commissioner to respond to four questions. The candidates' unedited replies are offered here in the order received. This is a crucial election for Lycoming County residents, as the county's Comprehensive Plan will be finalized, determining to a great extent what life will look like here over the next five to ten years. Be sure to come out and vote next Tuesday, November 3rd and make your voice heard.

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### In Other News

PennLive just released the 'Shale Bargain' series, the result of a six-month long investigation which found state regulators relied heavily on energy companies to police themselves, and in the process, ignored citizens' constitutional right to clean air and water. [Click here](#) or check out the article to the right. Don't miss this jam-packed and insightful series of articles about the Marcellus Shale boom

There is an open comment period regarding the Susquehanna River Basin Commission's proposed new rulemaking. SRBC would like the authority to issue "general permits" for certain activities rather than take the time to carefully examine specific locations and circumstances and receive public input. [Click here](#) or check out the sidebar for more information.

DEP's Clean Power Plan is another important issue deserving of your attention and comment. A local training with PennFuture is planned for tomorrow, October 27th and a hearing with DEP will be held locally on November 4th. [Click here](#) or refer to the right column for further details on both events.

A reminder to those of you who made a reservation to join us for the *Keep it Wild* Community Dinner at the Herdic House this Thursday, October 29th: happy hour is 6-7, dinner will be served at 7pm. Dress is casual & we hope to see lots of *Keep it Wild* tees at the event.

Thank you for taking the time to peruse this publication.

Have a wonderful week,

**Brooke Woodside**  
**RDA Member, Managing Editor**

Visit our website at: [www.rdapa.org](http://www.rdapa.org)

## RDA Questions the Candidates

There are five candidates vying for three positions as Lycoming County Commissioner. On November 3rd, voters are permitted to vote for two. Candidates are: Jim Dunn (D), Rebecca Burke (I), Jack McKernan (R), Rick Mirabito (D), and Tony Mussare (R). In order to help RDA members make an informed decision at the polls, we asked each candidate a series of four questions and promised to publish the responses in this newsletter. Four of the five candidates responded to our request. We did not receive a reply from Tony Mussare. Answers from the four candidates are listed below in the order received. Responses are unedited, but many are trimmed to fit in this issue. Click the link below each response to view each document in its entirety.

### QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES - LYCOMING COUNTY COMMISSIONER

#1 - A significant portion of Lycoming County's zoning, subdivision and land development, which is applicable in 21 townships, is administered by the Lycoming County Commissioners. What changes, if any, would you make to the current zoning or subdivision and land development ordinances?

#2 - To date, DEP has over 240 documented cases of private and public water supplies impacted by unconventional drilling for natural gas. If elected, what steps would you take to protect Lycoming County's water resources?

#3 - What impact do you believe the proposed Draft 2015 State Forest Resource Management Plan will have on the forests of Lycoming County and what changes, if any, would you propose to the plan during the current comment period?

#4 - Lycoming County is currently updating its Comprehensive Plan. What is your

### PennLive's 'Shale Bargain' Series Shows PA Regulators Fail to Protect Environment During Marcellus Shale Boom

They struck gold.

It was a river of energy under our feet so large it promised to end America's dependence on foreign oil.

The Marcellus Shale would provide a seemingly endless supply of natural gas that would boost Pennsylvania's economy and, in a recession, create jobs in great numbers.

Lawmakers were hungry for the gas trapped in rock as deep as 9,000 feet below ground and quickly set energy policies aimed at balancing economic growth with environmental protection.

But the scales tipped too far in favor of industry.

Ten years into the natural gas boom, a PennLive investigation uncovered systemic failures on the part of state regulators to enforce environmental, health and safety standards for the multi-billion-dollar industry.

Reporters spent six months reviewing thousands of documents, interviewing dozens of officials and residents, and traveling to towns and well sites throughout Pennsylvania to examine the oversight of Marcellus Shale development.

PennLive found a state Department of Environmental Protection that relied heavily on energy companies to largely police themselves and, in the process, ignored citizens' constitutional right to clean air and water.

The department designed to "protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment" failed on a basic level to adhere to its mission.

[Click here to read more 'Shale Bargain' stories from PennLive.](#)

vision for the future of Lycoming County, and how would you accomplish your goals?

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## JIM DUNN

#1 - Article 1, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution ensures the citizens of the Commonwealth the right to clean air, pure water and the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment.

If elected to the office of Lycoming County Commissioner, I will strengthen our land-use regulation to support our environmental rights amendment. Lycoming County has the planning and mapping documents necessary to facilitate better protection of our natural resources, but lacks leadership from the County Commissioners to implement these much-needed ordinance amendments.

#2 - As Armstrong Township Supervisor, I protected the public water supply for the residents served by the water systems for Williamsport Municipal, Montoursville, and Sylvan Dell with the region's first Source Water Protection Ordinance, the only one in Lycoming County. I worked with PennDOT to eliminate the construction activities that could have impacted our water quality during the Route 15 Corridor Safety Improvement Project. I serve on the North Central Source Water Protection Alliance, advocating for water resource protection regionally (such as in the Triple Divide Watershed).

#3 - I have a vision for Lycoming County to be the recreational center for the state, and I have a no-nonsense plan to achieve that status. Recreational tourism, as well as timber harvest, is a sustainable and approved use for our public forest. With proper planning, we can maintain timber hauling roads as part of an expansive, regional trail network. Timber harvest operations are exempt from many regulations, but not from storm water management. Proper design and maintenance of timber harvest roads can be part of the permit application process and will lead to an expansive recreational trail system in our public forest and also serve to better protect our water resources.

#4 - The Lycoming County Comprehensive Plan is the guiding document for the coordinated development of our county. It should include plans for transportation, housing, cultural, historic, natural resources, provisions a dequate to protect water supply and the interrelationship between all of the plans. In reviewing the Lycoming County Comprehensive Plan, the most glaring omission is the lack of a dequate provisions to protect our water supply as required in Section 301(b) of the Municipalities Planning Code.

A source water protection ordinance for Lycoming County needs to be a priority and the model ordinance I used in Armstrong Township would work well. I currently serve as the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Armstrong Township, as a member of the Lycoming County Planning Commission, and as the Citizen Planner Representative to the American Planning Association. I am familiar with the current Lycoming County Comprehensive Plan. Armstrong Township is the only township in the Multi-Municipal Plan to accomplish all of its goals in the current document.

[Click here to read Dunn's entire response.](#)

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## REBECCA BURKE

#1 - In 2009, our County Planning Commission began work on updating zoning ordinance to ensure we had the best possible regulations in place for oil and gas exploration and development. After 20-24 months of hard work, the Zoning Ordinance Amendment was adopted February 2011. It has been recognized in Harrisburg as the first of its kind in Marcellus Play and has served as a model for

## Well Count

New permits were issued in Lycoming County for the following Townships. Click on the blue titles below the company name for more detail on each well:

Eldred Township:  
[Inflection Energy PA, LLC](#)  
[BENNETT P1](#)

Upper Fairfield Township:  
[Inflection Energy PA, LLC](#)  
[EICHENLAUB B P1](#)

### State of Pennsylvania

Total wells permitted -  
16,835

Wells drilled/being developed  
- 9,555

Drinking water wells tainted  
by gas drilling in Lycoming  
County - 12

## SRBC Proposed Rulemaking

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission is proposing to make regulatory changes to improve its administrative processes and add regulatory clarity. The major focus of these changes is to revise and simplify the Commission's transfer regulation, explicitly add provisions for the modification of a Commission approved project, and establish a process for the Commission to develop general permits.

Comments on the proposed rulemaking may be submitted to the Commission on or before **November 9, 2015**. The Commission has scheduled a public hearing on the proposed rulemaking, to be held **October 29, 2015**, in Grantville, Pennsylvania.

[Click here for more detail from the PA Bulletin.](#)

## DEP Clean Power Plan

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is currently holding a series of 14 listening sessions across the

other counties and municipalities. Unlike the state's attempt at a zoning ordinance for gas development, the Lycoming County's updated zoning ordinance has never been challenged in court.

Guiding principle for Lycoming County has always been to protect our quality of life while benefiting from the economic benefits industries have to offer. The County's Zoning Ordinance governs about 18-20 of the county's municipalities. Later in 2011, the County also sent the document to all other county municipalities who conduct their own zoning with a adoption instructions.

#2 - The County will adhere to all state and federal guidelines regarding the protection of water quality. It has and will continue to support educational opportunities in conjunction with DEP, Penn State Cooperative Extension, and maintain the appropriate Emergency Management response requirements associated with protecting the environment. For 12 years, I served on the Lycoming Emergency Planning Committee associated with these types of efforts to monitor sites as well as responding to situations of concern. Members of Conservation District are also appointed by the Commissioners and responsible appointments will be made to maintain a balance on the board in the best interests of county residents.

#3 - The State Forest Management Plan Draft was not available for review due the DCNR website maintenance update. However, the opportunity to learn more about the project will be available November 12 at the Genetti Hotel in Williamsport. Perhaps the website will be accessible prior to that date for review.

#4 - The County Comprehensive plan, created and adopted in 2006, under my leadership set the stage for infrastructure development in Muncy and Fairfield Township. Infrastructure development enabled several regional headquarters for the gas industry to locate in Muncy and Muncy Creek Townships. Marcellus Energy Park is an excellent example of being prepared to manage growth regardless of any economic force which may be driving that growth. Lycoming County worked to set the stage. Also under my leadership, the county undertook a set of Marcellus Shale Impact studies for housing and sewer and water to supplement the 2006 Comprehensive Plan. The County's Brownfields Program is a direct outcome of this type of advanced planning-it's an example of land stewardship and aaptive reuse.

I believe that the 2016 Comprehensive Plan should further explore and study the impacts so that we are even better prepared for the return of the gas Industry as well as other development. Being mindful that the Comprehensive Plan is a guidance document - it is not regulatory. The zoning ordinance and subdivision/land development ordinance are regulatory documents that implement the vision set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

[Click here to read Burke's entire response.](#)

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**JACK MCKERNAN**

#1 - This past spring I completed a 13 week three part course for Municipal Planning. The course covered planning, zoning and land development. We also reviewed the municipal planning code. I attended all of the classes which were 1 time a week but three hours in length. I think the Commissioners rely upon the planning department and the Lycoming County Planning Commission. I am not aware of any current issues that require changes.

#2 - The gas industry is well aware of the rules & regulations required by DEP. I believe the state regulations and enforcement has done a good job.

#3 - I have not had the time to research that question.

state to hear from you and your neighbors on the Clean Power Plan. The plan is the first ever federal standard on carbon pollution from existing power plants.

DEP is looking for feedback as it prepares an implementation plan to meet carbon reduction targets that addresses Pennsylvania's unique opportunities and challenges. Citizens like you are encouraged to comment, but the industry and big polluters are sure to weigh in. We are working with our partners, including PennFuture, to make sure your voice is heard

Attend a training near you to learn quick and effective ways to make your case to policymakers. You'll receive sample messaging, fact sheets, and talking points; one-on-one assistance crafting personal narratives about the Clean Power Plan; and participate in a hands-on mock hearing to practice your delivery.

Williamsport

Training:  
**October 27 from 6-8pm**  
1307 Park Ave  
Williamsport, PA 17701  
in the Community Room of the Pajama Factory complex.

Hearing:  
**November 4 from 6-9pm**  
Penn College - Williamsport  
Mountain Laurel Room  
One College Avenue  
Williamsport, PA 17701

Participants wishing to speak at one of these DEP listening sessions must register at 717-783-8727. To participate in one of the trainings, please contact Jay Andrews at [andrews@pennfuture.org](mailto:andrews@pennfuture.org)

If you are unable to attend the trainings and listening sessions or have more to say, you have until **November 12, 2015** to submit written comments. Feedback may be submitted online using DEP's eComment site, by email to [ecomment@pa.gov](mailto:ecomment@pa.gov), or by mail to Department of Environmental Protection, Policy Office, Rachel Carson State Office Building, P.O. Box 2063, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063.

[Click here for more information from PennFuture.](#)

#4 - The comprehensive plan is very broad and encompasses many items of interest. I had attended the first meeting in Trout Run and the last at the JV Brown library. I view this document as a key part of our long term planning for future development and community goals within the county over the next 10 years. The public is being asked to participate in this document. The plan is just a reference piece and is to be used as a guide. My vision for the next four years involves getting our fiscal situation straighten up, prioritize the items of concern, make decisions to correct the issues and plan for the future.

[This is McKerna's entire response. Click here to view the original document.](#)

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## RICK MIRABITO

#1 - As a former elected official with a track record of reviewing what we do in government, I believe it is worthwhile to ask whether there is room for improvement. We may have difficulty building the necessary consensus to update the zoning ordinance because it is time consuming.

If the public has issues of concern, however, we should try to do so. I certainly see my role as an elected official to provide support and leadership to citizens engaged in these grass roots struggles. My record as a state representative --- especially around the issues of Act 13 and drilling in the Loyalsock State Forest -- - demonstrates that I am willing to take on controversial topics to give voice to the public's concerns.

#2 - The primary method that counties may protect their water is under the Commonwealth's Act 167 which requires counties to prepare county-wide, watershed-based storm water management plans and update them every five years. Our last plan was in 2010. Since then there has been a large increase in formerly forested land converted to impervious surfaces, including, but not limited to, well pads, pipeline corridors, impoundment ponds, roads, and approximately twenty compressor stations in the county to date. The construction of these surfaces brings storm water run-off protections, but how well are they actually working? How will our next plan be amended to include these changes? What next steps need to be taken through the Act 167 planning process?

#3 - The state Bureau of Forestry in the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is proposing a series of public meetings to review the Draft 2015 State Forest Resource Management Plan (SFRMP). Under state law, DCNR is required to manage the state forests and parks for the benefit of all Pennsylvanians --- even those not yet born. According to DCNR, the 2015 SFMRP "provides points of emphasis for future management, such as climate change, conservation of wild character, prescribed fire, lakes, river islands, cultural resources, and communication via social media and interpretative opportunities."

The meeting for Williamsport is scheduled for November 12 at the Genetti Hotel. The last time the SFRMP was updated was in 2007. This year's meetings are particularly important because of the large amount of unconventional gas drilling that has taken place since 2007. Thus, this meeting is an important opportunity for grass-roots activists to voice their concerns over issues such as the 25,000 acres of the Clarence Moore lands which are some of the most pristine forest land in Pennsylvania. Even though the gas rights to the 25,000 some acres within the Loyalsock State Forest are owned privately and not by the Commonwealth, there appears to be very unusual circumstances that allows the Commonwealth to deny access to some, if not all, of the acreage for gas development.

#4 - The vision that I have for Lycoming County is to diversify our economy. We cannot afford to rely only on gas and oil production. We have experienced recently the downturn in the oil and gas industry. Local businesses have suffered

## Tell Governor Wolf PA Needs Real Rules Now

Since the shale boom began in Pennsylvania, gas companies have only been required to voluntarily look for and fix air pollution leaks. As one of the world's largest natural gas fields and now the second largest shale gas producer in the country, we need to do better than trust the industry to do the right thing.

Every stage of the shale gas supply chain leaks harmful pollutants, including methane, a potent greenhouse gas, volatile organic compounds that contribute to smog, and air toxics that have known health risks. Industry has proven that it cannot be trusted to voluntarily fix leaks, as methane emissions have increased wherever industry is left to police itself.

By adopting strong rules to fight methane pollution, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) can save lives, improve health and help curb climate change. DEP must live up to its mission to ensure the health and safety of Pennsylvania's citizens by enacting best-in-the-nation regulations to stop air pollution leaks from shale gas operations.

Please add your name to this petition to tell Gov. Wolf that we need strong rules to fight methane pollution. Voluntary standards don't work because the oil and gas industry can't be trusted.

[Click here to sign this petition prepared by the Clean Air Council.](#)

## Reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund

Back in 1965, Congress made a promise to all Americans to use funds generated from offshore drilling to conserve our precious landscapes and create parks through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). But this Congress broke that promise when they failed to reauthorize LWCF by the

from the boom-and-bust cycle of oil and gas production.

A more diverse economic base would include more tourism and manufacturing. Tourism, in particular, depends on protecting our community assets. We need to develop these assets in a responsible and sustainable manner.

[Click here to read Mirabito's entire response.](#)

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TONY MUSSARE

Did not respond to RDA's questions.

## Keep It Wild Hike - Sand Spring Trail

### Our Keep it Wild hikes are stepping off again!

The Sand Spring Trail in the Devil's Elbow Natural Area exemplifies our Special Places. Located at the northern tip of the Loyalsock State Forest, this pristine area supplies the beautiful cold waters of Rock Run and contains some unique wildlife and flora.

Mark your calendars, and come join us on **Saturday, November 7 at 11 am** as we venture back to where we started from on our very first *Keep It Wild* hike.

The trail is an easy three mile loop, but may be wet with some stream crossings. Bring proper footwear and consider a dry pair of shoes/socks to leave in your car.

Directions: From Montoursville, head North on Rt 87. Drive about 24 miles to Hillsgrove, go through the town and take a left turn onto SR 4001, which is just before a big green metal bridge on Rt 87. Continue out SR 4001 until it intersects Rt 154, then go left on 154. Continue on 154 to Shunk. Stay right in Shunk on to SR 4002, which is also Ellenton Mountain Road. Continue to Ellenton, and when the road splits go to the right on SR 1013 which is still Ellenton Mountain Road. Follow this to the Sand Spring Trailhead.

Please consider joining us and carpooling with a friend or two.



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Sept. 30 deadline. They still have the opportunity to do the right thing by the end of the year.

Tell Congress to reauthorize and fully fund LWCF.

[Click here to sign this petition prepared by PennEnvironment.](#)

### Fracking Associated with Premature Births - Send the Report to Your Lawmakers

A new study released by Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Brown University, UC-Berkeley, and UC-San Francisco shows a scary association between dangerous fracking practices and mothers experiencing premature births and "high-risk" pregnancies.

The study uncovered that women living near heavy fracking have a 40% higher risk of giving birth to premature babies.

Premature births can lead to major medical issues for both mothers and babies. Every time a fracking corporation drills down, the community is left to bear the consequences.

This study is simply too concerning to ignore.

We must ban fracking to protect our families.

[Click here to sign and send this study to your lawmakers, courtesy of Food & Water Watch.](#)

### Join RDA!

#### Sign Up/Make a Donation

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

It costs nothing to sign up for our e-newsletter, but tax-free donations are accepted & greatly appreciated.

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 2015 and beyond, please consider a tax-free contribution to our efforts.

You can send a donation to the address listed at the bottom of this email, [click here to donate via PayPal](#) or [click here to download our current membership form](#) to fill out and send in along with your donation.

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

[www.RDAPA.org](http://www.RDAPA.org)

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## 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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