



The need for DEP's recent drought watch declaration is very much in evidence by Loyalsock Creek water levels.

*"Our economic system and our planetary system are now at war."
-Naomi Klein, This Changes Everything*

Greetings!

"Responsible drilling?! Isn't that a bit of an oxymoron?"

Recent conversation spurred uncertainty regarding the name of our organization, and so it seems an explanation is in order. Today it appears an oxymoron indeed, but that is not and never was the intention.

RDA started out as a watchdog group to show the negative impacts of gas operations that were not being adequately publicized by our local newspapers or representatives. We hoped this endeavor would assist in getting effective regulation and oversight of the gas industry so that it would in turn become more "responsible."

To many, all the wonderful promises the gas industry made in the beginning (relieving our dependence on foreign oil, bringing lots of jobs and money into the local economy, etc.) made it seem like a really good thing. Some of our members even signed leases, counting on responsible companies to carry out the promises made by the land men's wonderful presentations. But the truth continued to unravel before us. Thanks to the research of RDA founder and first president Jon Bogle, Josh Fox and his Gasland films, PA DEP's increasing list of gas industry violations and various negative impacts/problems of the industry that made headlines, we could see first-hand what we were actually up against.

With the industry lining the pockets of some of our legislators, it has been an uphill battle for true environmental protections that make sense for Pennsylvania's citizens. And sadly, instead of being good neighbors and environmental stewards, some companies find it more economical to not follow the best procedures or regulations and instead pay the fines if/when they are found out.

Now, with the gas industry's actions during our drought watch, the potentially radioactive waste about to be utilized for a local roadway, the royalty woes the good people of Bradford County are facing, the terror unleashed on the Sioux tribe in North Dakota and the record-breaking "frackquake" in Oklahoma, it is more apparent than ever how incredibly IRRESPONSIBLE the industry has been and continues to be.

So I encourage you to get more involved. Share the information in this newsletter. Contact your local officials and let them know the drought watch water withdrawals are not welcome in your community.

In This Issue

[Drought Denial](#)
[Lycoming County Future](#)
[Gas Waste Road Project](#)
[Events](#)
[In Other News](#)
[Well Count - Lycoming](#)
[County](#)
[Petitions](#)
[Join RDA!](#)
[Newsletter Archive](#)

Events

Save the Loyalsock Event

Sunday, October 2
 Old Logger's Path
 Loyalsock State Forest

Plan to visit the Loyalsock State Forest during the most colorful time of the year. More details to follow in the next newsletter coming out in approximately two weeks.

RDA Working Group Meeting

Wed, Oct 12 - 5:30 pm
Cloud Nine Restaurant
Montoursville, PA

Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend. We welcome your active participation and are in need of help for special projects, publicity, research and other endeavors. Please come join us and see what the RDA Working Group is all about. Attendance at a meeting is not an obligation to join the

Participate in the Ten-Year-Plan for Lycoming County. Submit comments to DEP regarding the third feature story below (it's not too late to do so). Attend your local township/borough meetings & stay abreast of what's planned for your neighborhood. Get vocal & fight for the future you would like to see for you, your children and your children's children.

Thank you for caring and staying informed!

Sincerely,

Brooke Woodside
Managing Editor

[Click here to visit our Facebook page.](#)

Despite Drought Watch, Water Tankers Keep Rolling Along

While DEP declared a [drought watch](#) in 38 counties, including Lycoming and Sullivan, two energy companies have been running water tankers non-stop, pulling millions of gallons from the Loyalsock Creek: an Exceptional Value waterway.

Inflection Energy's (IE) frack water filling station operates from its Costello "Nature Boy" well site on Route 87 in Upper Fairfield Township, Lycoming County, in a residential area. Entrance to the site is 3/10 of a mile from Loyalsock Valley Elementary School. Activity continues during the hours that school buses and commuters are on the highway and on weekends and holidays.



The 1,700,000 gallons of water IE is allowed to withdraw from the Loyalsock Creek daily, when available, is being used to frack gas wells such as this one on Yeagle Road. Here, tanker trucks at the site pump creek water into holding pools. Next, the water is mixed with sand and chemicals and forced with great pressure down the well bore.

A neighbor reported recently that there were fifteen trucks lined up at 7 am when he went out to walk his dog; he heard trucks from at least 6:15 am until 7 pm and thinks the trucking goes on throughout the night. They typically depart in groups of five, he said.

Meanwhile, upstream at Forksville, Chief Oil and Gas has been hauling water with tankers lined up round the clock, at another withdrawal site approved by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC).

group.

In Other News

Drilling Companies Neglect Landowner Royalty Payments

When the Marcellus Shale gas boom was taking off, Bradford County welcomed it with open arms. With more than 1,000 active wells, this region in north-central Pennsylvania became one of the most heavily drilled places in the state.

But the enthusiasm turned to anger, and many people now allege they're being cheated out of royalty money by drilling companies.

"We've had enough," says Bradford County Commissioner Doug McLinko (R). "This has been going on for years."

[Click here to read more from StateImpact PA.](#)

5.6 Magnitude "Frackquake" Rocks Oklahoma

On September 3, 2016, residents near Pawnee, OK were jolted by a 5.6 magnitude earthquake as a result of oil and gas production activities. The quake officially ties another 5.6 wastewater temblor from 2011 in Prague, OK as the largest human-made earthquakes ever in the United States.

in Oklahoma, it is now well understood, the tremors are a result of fracking and underground wastewater injection - and that is the position of the US Geological Survey and the Oklahoma Geological Survey.

Oklahoma used to be one of the least earthquake prone places in the US, registering only about two quakes per year over 3.0 in magnitude. But now, the Sooner State is the most seismically active place in the country, having surpassed Northern California.

[Click here to read more from EnviroNews PdIs.](#)

The companies are not just withdrawing continuously from the Loyalsock despite the drought watch - they are doing it BECAUSE of the drought watch, in a full court press to pull as much water from the stream as possible before levels fall further to the point that SRBC finally shuts them off.

Inflection's SRBC application said it planned to handle low water conditions by storing water in three impoundments that would be connected by pipeline to the water withdrawal location. One of those impoundments, which holds 2.5 million gallons, is at the Costello site. The second impoundment, the Stunner Smith well site outside of Warrensville, up Chaapel Mountain Road, holds 14.5 million gallons and appears to be full, but shows no sign of water hauling activity. The third impoundment, intended to hold 19 million gallons and shown on plans submitted with the application as located along Carey Hill Road, was never built.

This means all IE pressure to withdraw and truck as much water as possible is being focused on the Costello site, with entrance and exit from Route 87, a road used daily by everyone who lives and works up and down the Loyalsock Valley.



Tanker trucks pull out of IE's "Nature Boy" site on to State Route 87.

Inflection applied for the Costello site permit and nobody attended the SRBC hearing except the gas industry. Inflection notified the required landowners on the creek immediately next to the water intake, but did not contact the neighbors who live surrounding the well and water withdrawal site, some of whom are IE leaseholders.

Meanwhile, up the road in Forksville, not far from Worlds End State Park, among many Loyalsock Creek places treasured for low impact recreation and nature tourism, tanker trucks have lined up constantly to haul water from Chief's approved withdrawal site.

Public opposition to that permit application induced SRBC to visit the valley and hold a public meeting at a local firehouse. SRBC knew people were very upset at the idea of granting Chief Oil and Gas the right to withdraw water from a beloved stream. Security was tight, with people scanned by metal detectors as they entered and a former state police officer among those on hand to keep the peace. People lined up for three hours to express their concerns; SRBC listened attentively, with courtesy and compassion. One tiny woman with snow white hair said, flat out, "I won't let you do it. I will be out in that creek and you will have to move me if you try to put an intake there."

It wasn't enough to stop the permit being approved. SRBC reduced the amount Chief was allowed to withdraw - the initial request for 2 million gallons per day was physically impossible to withdraw and distribute,

NTSB to Lead Investigation in Recent Natural Gas Explosion

Natural gas pipeline investigators with the National Transportation Safety Board will assume the lead role in determining how an apartment building in Silver Spring, MD blew up and killed seven people.

The development suggests there were problems in a service line going into the building.

[Click here to read more from The Washington Post.](#)

Government Steps in After Judge Denies Tribe's Request to Stop the Pipeline

The beginning of September brought true terror for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and supporters as [attack dogs and pepper spray were used](#) against their peaceful protest.

Next, adding insult to injury, a federal judge [denied the tribe's request for an injunction](#); however, the Department of Justice, the Department of the Army and the Department of the Interior stepped in and issued the following statement regarding Standing Rock Sioux Tribe v. US Army Corps of Engineers:

"We appreciate the District Court's opinion on the US Army Corps of Engineers' compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. However, important issues raised by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and other tribal nations and their members regarding the Dakota Access pipeline specifically, and pipeline-related decision-making generally, remain.

Therefore, the Army will not authorize constructing the Dakota Access pipeline on Corps land bordering or under Lake Oahe until it can determine whether it will need to reconsider any of its previous decisions regarding the Lake Oahe site under the National Environmental Policy Act or other federal laws.

even with trucks lined up to fill and deploy every two-and-a-half minutes, 576 trucks per day, nonstop, year 'round. Perhaps the initial request was inflated to provide a negotiating position for Chief, who received approval to pull amounts ranging from 690,000 gallons to 1.5 million gallons per day.

In both locations, if stream flows fall below a certain point as measured by the gauge at Loyalsockville (not at the actual withdrawal sites) the companies are required to "pass by," and stop withdrawing water. Loyalsockville is 26 miles downstream from Chief's operation and about 3.6 miles upstream from Inflection's. The showers during this dry summer have been "hit or miss," or localized: rainfall at Loyalsockville has not necessarily occurred upstream, so the gauge does not always accurately reflect conditions there.

SRBC said additional gauges would not make a difference for decades, as the agency relies on "historical data" to make its determinations. So while residents catch running water in pitchers, take shorter showers, let gardens and plants die rather than watering, and use other measures to conserve, the water tanker trucks keep rolling.



A water tanker fills up at the Borough of Montoursville.

If the Loyalsock Creek becomes off limits, will the Borough continue to sell drinking water to the industry so the fracking can continue?

An observer in the upper Loyalsock, involved in both conservation and watershed protection, says that in 25 years he has never seen stream levels this low, yet Chief is continuously hauling away tanker trucks filled with water, and has been all summer.

Chief floated the idea of building pipelines to distribute the water it pulls from the Loyalsock as a way of reducing the dangers and quality-of-life impacts of continual heavy truck traffic, but it has not done so.

One important lesson municipalities should learn from this is that in planning for potential land uses, water withdrawal by itself may not seem like an intense use. Water storage, either in tanks or impoundments, especially if linked to the withdrawal by pipeline, may seem innocuous. But the bottom line is that water withdrawn and stored ultimately needs to get where the industry wants to take it, for the millions of gallons it takes to frack each well, each time it is fracked, and the way those companies are going to get it there is through incessant heavy tanker hauling for water distribution -regardless of the impact on residents and resources. And it does not appear that DEP, DCNR, PFBC, PennDOT, or the SRBC can or will do anything to stop it.

Another valley resident, a retired career conservation professional, is

Therefore, construction of the pipeline on Army Corps land bordering or under Lake Oahe will not go forward at this time.

[Click here to read more from the US Dept of Justice.](#)

National Academies Panel Urges Overhaul of Energy Policies

The United States needs to put a price on carbon dioxide and other pollutants and overhaul energy policies to help avoid catastrophic climate change and other public health calamities, according to a report released on September 8 by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

The multiyear analysis concludes that policies must change for nearly every energy technology, from nuclear power to solar photovoltaics. Otherwise, prices won't fall enough with clean energy sources to be deployed at levels needed to curb pollution, concludes the report, which was funded by the Department of Energy and included contributions from multiple universities, companies and nonprofits.

Multiple US senators requested the study.

[Click here to read more from E&E Publishing.](#)

Well Count - Lycoming County

New permit renewals and a violation were issued in the following townships since our last publication. Click on the blue titles for more information on each:

Gamble Township
[ATLAS RESOURCES](#)
[STUBLER PAD A 1H](#)
(renewal)

Hepburn Township:
[SENECA RESOURCES](#)
[WALTERS GAMBLE 41H](#)
(renewal)

Cogan House Township
[RANGE RESOURCES](#)
[PERMIT VIOLATION](#)

distressed to see both sites putting heavy pressure on the resource, wondering how wildlife that depends on the creek is withstanding the low water levels from exceptionally dry conditions aggravated by continued withdrawals. He points out that withdrawals affect the entire watershed, because every feeder stream above a withdrawal site drains more quickly than is natural. He questions what Loyalsock Creek's Exceptional Value waterway designation really means, if it is apparently not respected, in itself, and as an important tributary to the Susquehanna and the Chesapeake Bay.

Exacerbating the situation is the distress of living with an upsurge in other industry traffic, including trucks hauling chemicals, wastewater, large equipment destined for NG sites, gravel, and the ubiquitous white pickup trucks. Having had in recent years a blissful return to the way of life that led people to buy homes here, in some cases generations ago, and to rebuild them after the 2011 flood, residents feel a return of the stress the industry's presence brings.

Despite great frustration that SRBC will apparently approve any water withdrawal permit application, in a sense the Susquehanna River watershed is lucky: western Pennsylvania rivers and streams have no corresponding body to oversee or monitor water withdrawal. Even here where there is some attempt to regulate the amount of water withdrawn and when it can be taken, SRBC does not regulate distribution. So the associated issues with getting the water from the stream to the well site are not SRBC's concern - regardless of the damage distribution's impact causes.

The SRBC arises from a compact between New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Because New York has an outright ban on fracking and Maryland has a moratorium, the primary burden is on Pennsylvania: our waterways; the forests, fields and communities through which they flow; the people who live and work and play along them; and the wildlife living already perilous lives dependent on a resource increasingly exploited for the financial rewards of a relative few - some of whom don't even live where the activity takes place. Absentee landowners reap the benefits, while those living where impacts occur are taking the real risks with little or no power to protect their homes and their lives.



An open-air container at the Yeagle Road well holds flowback (frack) water that will be treated and re-used until it is finally hauled to a toxic waste injection disposal site. (Note the netting required to prevent birds from landing in the tank is largely under water.)

So residents are back to the question: stay here or get out? Remain and invest in what may be their only assets, homes and land, or sell and leave before it's too late? With the new Panda "Patriot" NG power plant

(casing & cementing failure)

Petitions

Lycoming County Comprehensive Plan Update Survey

This survey is gathering information about what people care about and what concerns they have about Lycoming County. The survey is anonymous, with no risk or obligation to participate. Your thoughtful answers will help decision makers to improve our community.

[Click here to take the survey.](#)

Stop Construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline

The Dakota Access pipeline is set to be constructed near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota, crossing under the Missouri River which is the only source of water to the reservation. The pipeline is planned to transport approximately 470,000 barrels of crude oil per day. The potential of oil leaks would contaminate the only source of water for the reservation.

While Dakota Access claims oil leaks are unlikely, an oil leak from a separate pipeline in North Dakota was discovered (8/15/16) to have leaked over 500 barrels of oil since the leak began on July 19, 2016. [Click here to read the article.](#) A leak like this from the Dakota Access pipeline would leave the Standing Rock Sioux without any clean water.

[Click here to sign a petition prepared by CREDO Action.](#)

Keep Fossil Fuels in the Ground

Fossil fuels harvested from federal lands and waters are one of the largest sources of global warming pollution in the United States. In fact, nearly 25 percent of all US energy-related emissions come from our public lands,

and the Washingtonville coal-fired plant being converted by Talen Energy to burn natural gas, the market for gas extracted from beneath those who live on the Marcellus Shale will return, as existing wells are fracked and re-fracked - each taking five to seven million gallons of water, every time - to supply the power plants, and new wells are drilled to replace those that stop producing earlier than the rosy predictions initially made to lessors.

Public participation seems to be a farce, because nothing stops the industry from getting what it wants, and instead of resources being protected, agencies tasked with protecting them grant permits at the expense of the people who are the true owners of the land, water, environment, and natural resources: the citizens of the Commonwealth, whose constitutional rights are disregarded and disrespected.

It may be legal. But it isn't right.

UPDATE: Just hours before this newsletter's scheduled release, SRBC notified concerned residents that Inflection Energy has been put on "pass by" status and Chief Oil and Gas is on "caution" status, expected soon to be on "pass by." Chief was on "pass by" for a period earlier this summer. SRBC said it reviews stream flow reports daily and compliance inspectors visited the Costello site once in July, twice in August, and twice in September, including yesterday. Forksville was visited twice in July and again in late August. IE has been withdrawing water from its impoundment and both companies have additional water sources. Showers overnight raised flow rates at the Loyalsockville gauge enough for the "pass by" to be lifted, although SRBC notes that levels are dropping again. Residents reported tankers are still going up and down Route 87 every few minutes.

URGENT DEADLINE: Help Plan the Future of Lycoming County

What Does the Future Hold?

As Pennsylvania develops its new Ten-Year-Plan, continued industrialization and gas development hangs in the balance with recreational tourism and the Pennsylvania Wilds. Please express your opinions and concerns by completing this crucial survey before midnight on September 16th.

[Click here to take the survey.](#)

Nearly 4,000 Tons of Gas Drilling Waste to be Used for Lycoming County Road Project

The following is excerpted from [Statelmpact PA](#), by Marie Cusick

Pennsylvania environmental regulators have green-lighted a proposal to use 3,950 tons of natural gas drilling waste for an experimental road construction project at a Lycoming County hunting club.

This approval marks the first time the waste (known as drill cuttings) can be re-purposed as construction material at an area that's not an industrial site. The work is being done by Clean Earth, the same firm that backed out of controversial plans to [put 400,000 tons of drilling](#)

which are completely under President Obama's control.

While the president has taken some positive steps in the battle against climate change, his administration continues to allow dirty energy companies to rake in billions drilling, fracking and mining fossil fuels on our public lands.

On September 15, CREDO Action is joining their climate allies in a massive petition delivery in front of the White House urging the president to end all new federal fossil fuel leasing on our public lands and waters.

[Click here to sign the petition prepared by CREDO Action.](#)

Join RDA!

It costs nothing to sign up for our e-newsletter, but tax-free donations are accepted & greatly appreciated. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to RDA.

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 2016 and beyond, please consider a tax-free contribution to our efforts.

You can send a membership 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.

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

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[waste near Pennsylvania's "Grand Canyon"](#) last year amid a public backlash.

[Click here to join our mailing list.](#)

[Clean Earth does already have an industrial site in Lycoming County under the same R and D permit, one that used the cuttings to cap the waste pit of an active coal mine.]

[Drill cuttings are the waste dirt and rock](#) that come up from deep underground in gas development and may contain naturally-occurring radiation and chemicals. Usually, cuttings are disposed of in landfills.

This latest project involves using drill cuttings on a nearly mile-long stretch of roadway at the Bobst Mountain Hunting Club in Lycoming County. Representatives from Clean Earth and the hunting club did not respond to messages seeking comment.

"We're worried about this," says Bryn Hammarstrom, of the Pine Creek Headwaters Protection environmental group. "This stuff has been miles below the surface for millions of years, and now it's being placed on the surface where it's vulnerable to leaching into the water table."

Clean Earth has until December 15 to complete the road work at the hunting club, says DEP spokesman Neil Shader.

[Click here to read more from StateImpact PA.](#)

[Back to Top](#)

RDA Newsletter

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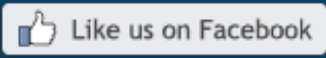


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Please note: The RDA newsletter includes reporting on a variety of events and activities, which do not necessarily reflect the philosophy of the organization. RDA practices only non-violent action in voicing the organization's beliefs and concerns.

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