

A crystal clear stream in the Loyalsock State Forest, Lycoming County - Photo credit: Brooke Woodside

Greetings!

Anyone who has ever visited the Loyalsock State Forest (LSF) in the Rock Run area knows the wild and scenic treasure we have in the acreage known as the Clarence Moore lands. This week, Save the Loyalsock Coalition sent a letter to Governor Wolf urging him to use his power to help us protect it. RDA was one of 15 organizations to sign the letter, as featured in this issue.

On the 22nd of June, Pennsylvania's DCNR leased 173.9 acres of the Loyalsock Creek to Inflection Energy. While this is not a water withdrawal permit, it certainly does increase the potential for harm to this Exceptional Value resource that is increasingly surrounded by drilling, fracking and other forms of gas development. The lease will be good for the next five years. [Click here to view the official contract.](#)

Our second feature revisits the recent EPA study on fracking's role in water contamination. Could it be that the EPA did not find "widespread and systemic contamination" of water supplies because the agency itself suffers from internal systemic contamination? The article is written by an environmental engineer retired from the EPA, so it presents a knowledgeable interpretation of all the issues with the study, from start to finish.

The third article discloses potential plans for the Wellsboro Johnston Airport, located near the PA "Grand Canyon." Waste disposal company Clean Earth (very ironic) plans to fly in about 400,000 tons of drilling waste, then use the treated drill cuttings to extend an airport runway located near a tributary to the Pine Creek Gorge. Fortunately, people are not yet sold on the idea of giving potentially radioactive waste the chance to run off into the gorge.

"In Other News" kicks off with an article detailing declining property values due to a neighboring compressor station. This brings forth a challenge that many more homeowners may soon be facing as additional compressor stations are built or expanded throughout the state.

In This Issue

[Protect the Loyalsock EPA Contaminated?](#)
[PA Grand Canyon SRBC Public Hearing](#)
[In Other News](#)
[Join RDA!](#)
[Newsletter Archive](#)

Events/ Action Points

[Submit a Comment to EPA One Mile Minimum Petition](#)
[Support Wolf's Budget Plan](#)
[Stop Fracking in CA](#)
[Virtual Fracking Tour](#)
[Protect our Public Lands](#)

In Other News

Proximity of Compressor Station Devalues Homes by as much as 50%

Homeowners living near the Millennium Pipeline Company's 15,000 horsepower compressor station on Hungry Hill Road in Hancock, New York have seen the value of their homes decline by as much as 50 percent since the industrial facility was constructed in the midst of what used to be a quiet, rural community.

Some important "Action Points" are also included for your participation.

This issue closes with a public hearing notice from SRBC.

Thank you for taking the time to catch up with RDA.

Enjoy the sunshine,

Brooke Woodside

RDA Working Group, Managing Editor

Visit our website at: www.rdapa.org

Still Fighting to Protect the Loyalsock

Save the Loyalsock Coalition Urges Gov. Wolf to Protect the LSF

July 14, 2015 - (Harrisburg, Pa.) - With hundreds of thousands of citizens enjoying Pennsylvania's public lands this summer season, the Save the Loyalsock Coalition is urging Gov. Tom Wolf to use his power to prevent gas drilling on the at-risk Clarence Moore Lands of the Loyalsock State Forest, which are not protected by the Governor's recent moratorium on new leases.

In January, Gov. Wolf issued Executive Order 2015-03 to once again prohibit new leases for oil and gas development in our state parks and forests, reversing a decision made during the Corbett administration. The Coalition appreciates past statements the Governor made regarding the Clarence Moore Lands, indicating that he is open to exploring the legal options available.

The [Save the Loyalsock Coalition](#), comprised of statewide and local conservation, recreation, fishing and outdoors organizations, has worked since 2012 with its more than 100,000 members combined to protect this last unfragmented forest in Lycoming County.

The extraordinary 25,000-acre tract of the Loyalsock State Forest known as the Clarence Moore Lands includes irreplaceable natural and recreational resources such as the Exceptional Value watersheds of Rock Run and Pleasant Stream, the Old Loggers Path hiking trail, and a National Audubon Society-designated Important Bird Area.

"Unbroken wilderness areas across our Commonwealth are being increasingly reduced due to gas development infrastructure," said Larry Schweiger, president and CEO of [PennFuture](#). "Keeping the Loyalsock's unique Clarence Moore Lands safe for citizens to hike, fish, and experience while protecting rare and endangered species' critical habitat are values shared by countless Pennsylvanians. We urge the Governor to help keep this treasured part of Penn's Woods protected for our lifetimes and beyond."

Joanne Kilgour, executive director of the [Sierra Club, Pennsylvania Chapter](#), noted that, "Over the past several years, Pennsylvania's landscape has been permanently altered by gas development. Gov. Wolf's moratorium on new leases of state parks and forests was an important step toward protecting non-leased public lands, and we appreciate that action. Today, we call on the Governor to again stand up for the lands and citizens of the Commonwealth and exercise his legal authority to protect one of the region's last intact forests."

[Responsible Drilling Alliance](#) board member Mark Szybist added, "The Clarence Moore lands are unique, for what they offer to Pennsylvania and its citizens, and because of a highly unusual legal situation the

[Click here to read more from the Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy.](#)

Internal Documents Expose Fossil Fuel Industry's Decades of Deception on Climate Change

A new report reveals that some of the top carbon polluters were fully aware of the reality of climate change but continued to spend tens of millions of dollars to promote contrarian arguments they knew to be wrong.

The report by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) includes a leaked American Petroleum Institute (API) communications team campaign memo – co-written by representatives from API, Chevron, Southern Company and a handful of fossil fuel industry-funded think tanks – which lays out a plan largely based on the tobacco industry's deception strategy famously encapsulated in an internal memo that asserted "doubt is our product."

[Click here to read more.](#)

Water and Wildlife may be at Risk from Fracking's Toxic Chemicals

Hydraulic fracturing uses a host of highly toxic chemicals – the impacts of which are for the most part unknown – that could be contaminating drinking water supplies, wildlife and crops, according to a report released Thursday by a California science panel.

The long-awaited final assessment from the California Council on Science and Technology said that because of data gaps and inadequate state testing, overwhelmed regulatory agencies do not have a complete picture of what oil companies are doing.

[Click here to read the full story as printed in the LA Times.](#)

Buy This Fracking Album

An exciting new musical compilation has just hit the market. It began as a Pledgemusic campaign to raise funds for the album, but has since been produced and released. The album is packed full of various "artists," described as follows:

[ar-tuh-vist] - People who push

Commonwealth has a unique opportunity to protect them. Indeed, under Article I, Section 27 of the state Constitution, that opportunity is also a duty -- and we call on Governor Wolf to confirm his commitment to it."

[Click here to view the letter sent to Governor Wolf.](#)

Contacts: Elaine Labalme, PennFuture; email: labalme@pennfuture.org

Joanne Kilgour, Sierra Club; email: joanne.kilgour@sierraclub.org

Widespread and Systemic Contamination Found - at the EPA

[by Weston W. Wilson, The Hill](#)

Despite a press release from EPA proclaiming there is no widespread groundwater contamination due to fracking, EPA now says that their new study of the nation's natural gas boom should not be seen as proof that hydraulic fracturing is being safely done.

"That is not the message of this report," said EPA science adviser and deputy administrator Thomas A. Burke. "The message of this report is that we have identified vulnerabilities in the water system that are really important to know about and address to keep risks as low as possible."

The oil and gas industry has claimed repeatedly that fracking is safe, alleging there's never been a single case of groundwater contamination from fracking.

People who live near fracking wells report a very different picture from devastating health impacts to contaminated drinking water and air pollution.

In 2010, Congress told EPA to study these claims. In 2011, EPA responded, announcing it would do a widespread investigation of the entire industry including the systemic release of toxic gases during fracking.

Under pressure from the industry, the EPA began severely limiting the scope of its investigation.

In 2012, EPA withdrew from any investigation of the air pathways of toxic gas release during fracking, despite hundreds of citizens living near wells reporting air pollution and a robust set of scientists confirming ill health consequences.

In 2013, EPA dropped its study of a marquee ground water contamination case in Dimock, Pennsylvania.

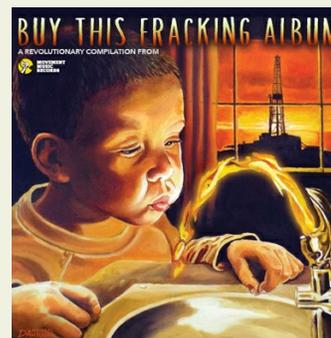
In 2013, EPA dropped its study of ground water contamination in Pavilion, Wyoming and Weatherford, Texas.

After retreating on measuring contamination in already fracked areas, EPA announced it would still conduct "prospective studies" of new sites where baseline ground water data would be collected before fracking occurred. In 2014, EPA dropped all prospective studies.

Having systematically turned its back on groundwater data gathering and analysis, including the groundwater data it had already collected in Pennsylvania, Wyoming and Texas which confirmed water contamination, EPA shamelessly released a draft report this month with the deeply deceptive headline, "no widespread systemic ground water contamination found."

political agendas by the means of art. Anyone who has witnessed artists use the stage as a platform for activism understands the amplification of the power of these messages when they are delivered in song. Movement Music Records seeks to leverage the artists and performers who take advantage of their talent and stage opportunity to broadcast important messages to their audiences and infiltrate them into society at large.

Buy This Fracking Album is a compilation of artists who lend their voice to one of the most pressing environmental issues of our time, hydrofracking. Our collective stance is that we reject this method for corporate advancement and place our value on the life of every individual in the present and future.



[Click here to purchase/listen to samples from the album on Amazon.](#)

Submit Your Comment to the EPA - Fracking Contaminates Drinking Water

The EPA released a long-awaited study about fracking impacts on drinking water. The oil and gas industry cheered the results because of its skewed methodology and the pro-industry spin that accompanied its release.

While the study did acknowledge what existing scientific data and countless personal experiences have already shown – that fracking does indeed contaminate groundwater resources – its headline and conclusion misleadingly assert that we shouldn't be worried about fracking impacting drinking water.

The study falls far short of the level of scrutiny and government oversight needed to protect the health and safety of the many millions of Americans living in watersheds impacted by fracking – nearly 10 million within one mile of a fracked well, according to the study.

[Click here to submit a comment through Food & Water Watch.](#)

Actually, as EPA knows, hundreds of specific cases of ground water contamination have been documented. In 2012, Pennsylvania environmental officials found nearly 9 percent of fracked wells fail during their first year. EPA, itself, found that two-thirds of fracked wells have cement gaps with three percent of these faulty wells drilled through drinking water formations, creating a pathway for contamination.

Considering the connectivity of water, even a 3 percent failure rate from the 1.1 million fracked wells in the U.S. is numerically significant and creates what should be considered systemic risk. Indeed, Schlumberger, a leader in oil-field and fracking technology, says that all wells eventually leak.

Toxic gases released during fracking have been demonstrated to cause ill health, cancer and birth defects. A health study in Colorado found a 30 percent increase in birth defects, including spina bifida and congenital heart failure, for women living within 10 miles of fracked wells. Of course, under pressure from the industry, EPA dropped its study of systemic health risks from toxic gases altogether in 2012.

The growing body of science says that fracking causes water contamination, air pollution and with high leakage rates of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, is a climate disaster. EPA's clean power plan credits utilities for greenhouse gas reductions when they switch from coal to fracked gas. This credit is based on EPA's calculation that the methane leak rate from fracking is 2 percent, and that the heat trapping character of methane is only 25 times greater than CO2 from coal. Both calculations are incorrect and therefore exaggerate the climate benefits of methane. Current information indicates methane is 86 times more heat trapping than CO2 over the short term, and the amount of methane leaked from fracked wells, according to field measurements by NOAA scientists, ranges from 4 percent to 18 percent. Unless the methane leak rate is reduced to less than 1 percent, the political promise that replacing coal with natural gas is better for climate protection is hollow, a hoax.

Still, there is a way out. As Stanford Prof. Mark Jacobson's 2010 paper in Scientific American shows, we can run our world on 100 percent renewable energy. We don't need natural gas. 100 percent renewable energy is not a pipe dream. It relies on a mix of energy conservation, solar, wind and hydro primarily. And it can be done today with current technologies.

This conversion will not only reduce health and climate risks, it will put money in the pockets of Americans. Additionally, a robust 100 percent renewable energy solution would reduce national security risks from climate change -- the greatest threat to American national security, according to the Pentagon.

Woodrow Wilson observed that if big business is to escape government regulation, it would have to strive to capture or own government.

Industry's pressure on EPA resulted in this pitifully limited investigation and the disingenuous press release. One is led to wonder, has Obama's EPA been kidnapped by America's fossil fuel hustlers?

Wilson is an environmental engineer retired from the EPA.

Project would bring 400,000 tons of drilling waste to PA's 'Grand Canyon'

[by Marie Cusick, StateImpact Pennsylvania](#)

One Mile Minimum: Keep Oil and Gas Operations Away from Our Schools!

Clean Air Council's "Protect Our Children" campaign just scored a major victory! As you may remember, Rex Energy has been trying to frack next to the Middlesex schools for over a year now. After the school board told them they couldn't frack on their land, Rex found someone with property next to the schools who agreed to let them frack there instead. The Council's legal team got involved last October, and the case has been working its way through the legal process ever since.

The judge agreed with us and ordered an immediate halt to all fracking around the schools until the case is decided. Although the case is far from over, this is a big step in the right direction.

If you'd like to get more involved, check out the Protect Our Children Coalition's website and sign the petition to DEP telling them fracking should be kept at least a mile away from all schools.

[Click here to sign the petition.](#)

Tell Harrisburg to Support Governor Wolf's Original Budget Plan

PennEnvironment has prepared a petition supporting Governor Wolf's originally proposed budget plan.

The GOP budget that was passed last week lets frackers off the hook for their pollution, holds back the state's clean energy programs, and keeps Pennsylvania as the only state in the nation that doesn't charge an extraction tax.

[Click here to sign the petition.](#)

Stop Fracking in CA

A petition created by stopfrackinginca.org has been started to end fracking and extreme oil extraction in California.

Scandal after scandal has given Californians concrete proof that Big Oil is poisoning their state.

First, state regulators discovered oil

July 13, 2015 - As Marcellus Shale gas drilling has proliferated, so has the amount of waste it generates. Last year in Pennsylvania, over two million tons of drill cuttings were sent to landfills.

Cuttings are the waste dirt and rock that come up from drilling wells. The material contains naturally occurring radiation, heavy metals and industrial chemicals.

Over the past three years, a Montgomery County waste disposal company has found a novel way to avoid landfills, by processing and recycling drill cuttings. But critics argue it's simply a way to avoid regulations.

Now plans to put the gas waste next to one of the state's most pristine waterways have sparked a backlash.

Pennsylvania's Grand Canyon

As the manager of the Wellsboro Johnston airport, Craig Musser has a plan to get more air traffic to this rural part of north-central Pennsylvania.

But a lot of people really don't like the idea.

"If I didn't feel it was safe, I wouldn't want to do it either," he says.

He hops in his car and drives to the edge of the runway to show me. So what's all the fuss about?

A Montgomery County waste disposal company called Clean Earth is proposing to haul in 400,000 tons of gas industry waste -- specifically treated drill cuttings. If its plans are approved by state regulators, the company would relocate its Williamsport-based processing facility to the airport grounds. It would pay to lease the land, then use the cuttings to extend the runway by 600 feet, and eventually turn over the processing building to the airport for use as a hangar.

Musser thinks this will help the airport and, in turn, the local economy.

"To bring growth -- an airport is a vital step towards that," he says.

The plan has been met with major push back here in Tioga County -- one of the most drilled-on places in the state.

That's because the airport sits high atop one of the region's most beautiful natural assets, and a major tourist destination: the Pine Creek Gorge. It's often called the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania. The airport's runway is next to a steep embankment that's a half-mile from a tributary to the gorge.

And that embankment is exactly where Clean Earth wants to put the drill cuttings.

Tioga County Commissioner Eric Coolige (R) says drillers have been "a godsend" to the area. But he and many other gas industry supporters (including state Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati, who represents the area) are not sold on this idea.

"My concern is this product has not yet been given a 100 percent OK," says Coolige. "And until it does, I'm not going to be in favor of it."

Ed Osgood is a member of the Pine Creek Gorge Headwaters Protection Group. He also thinks it would be a big mistake to put so much drilling waste next to the gorge.

"We have no long-term, peer-reviewed studies to indicate this material is safe," says Osgood.

wastewater being pumped into their dwindling water supply. Then, scientists found oil companies selling oil wastewater laden with cancer-causing chemicals to farmers for irrigation.

This summer, while California is experiencing one of its worst droughts in history, oil and gas companies are selling contaminated waste water to farmers to use for irrigation. Big Oil not only gets away with poisoning the most important resource to sustain life, but they also earn an extra profit by selling back the poison as a farming tool. It also means all of us are at risk, since California grows 90 percent of the grapes, 95 percent of the broccoli and more than half the bell peppers Americans eat every year - just to name a few of the biggest crops. This is beyond fracked up, and that's why we need to take action.

[Click here watch a short video and sign the petition.](#)

Explore a Fracking Operation, Virtually

The Fracktracker Alliance is now offering a virtual tour of a fracking operation, via their website. Modern oil and gas extraction no longer involves just a well, pump and tank. The process can be so overwhelmingly complex that in lieu of taking a tour in person, it helps to explore each stage through photos.

On the page linked below, you will find a virtual guide to the process of unconventional oil and gas extraction, as shown through the eyes of Community Liaison Bill Hughes. The page is very thorough and informative, and will most likely provide some new information for most interested viewers.

[Click here to be redirected to the Fracktracker Alliance's Virtual Tour.](#)

Protect Our Public Lands from Fracking

Representative Mark Pocan (WI) introduced a bill to ban fracking on all public lands -- the strongest piece of federal legislation against fracking to date. Fracking on public lands means clear-cutting forests for well pads, air pollution, potential water contamination and thousands of trucks carrying water, toxic chemicals and waste.

Our US parks and national forests are irreplaceable. Not only do they

He's worried the waste could run into the gorge when it rains.

"I think the name Clean Earth is ironic," he says. "This is anything but clean earth."



PA Grand Canyon - Photo credit: Marie Cusick, StateImpact PA

Research and development?

Thanks to an exemption in federal law, none of the waste generated by the oil and gas industry is considered hazardous. No matter what's in it. Clean Earth declined multiple interview requests for this story but says in a statement it's been handling the waste "with the highest integrity." The company has already disposed of 172,000 tons of it in recent years thanks to a special permit from the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

In 2011, Clean Earth got the permit to do research and development to examine the beneficial re-use of drill cuttings. The idea is to do something with it, rather than send it off to a landfill. Clean Earth takes the muddy cuttings that come out of gas wells, mixes it with cement and tests it, before placing in old, polluted industrial sites known as brownfields.

Steve Socash has been in charge of reviewing the permit for DEP. "We're still evaluating the information at the current time," he says. "We haven't completed our review of Clean Earth's conclusions."

Since 2011, Clean Earth has put drill cuttings in an abandoned coal mine and two brownfields around the state.

And this has really rubbed some people in the waste business the wrong way.

In 2013 the Pennsylvania Waste Industries Association, a trade group representing landfill owners, sent a letter to DEP urging it to deny a renewal of Clean Earth's permit. They argued it's not really a small-time research operation, instead it's a full-scale commercial enterprise designed to avoid regulations.

Despite their objections, DEP renewed the permit through 2017.

"A good idea"

Although the agency is still studying the practice, Socash doesn't think people should be alarmed by the idea of recycling drill cuttings.

"DEP believes evaluating drill cuttings to see if they can be beneficially used is a good idea."

provide beautiful recreational areas and essential wildlife habitat, they also protect critical drinking water sources.

[Click here to sign the Food and Water Watch petition asking your Representative to support a ban on fracking on public lands.](#)

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, 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.

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

www.RDAPA.org

Past Newsletters

[Click here to access our newsletter archive.](#)

Join Our Mailing List

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

Earlier this year, [DEP issued a study](#) which found the natural radiation from drill cuttings poses little threat to public health. It said that disposal techniques in landfills were safe. But the study didn't look at the kind of work Clean Earth is doing -- whether it was safe to re-use the waste.

Back in Tioga County, the Pine Creek Headwaters Protection group has been meeting regularly to investigate the airport project.

Group member Bryn Hammarstrom has been upset by the surge in gas drilling in his backyard in recent years, but thinks this project simply goes too far.

"We can't stop hydraulic fracturing," he says. "But we can at least try and make the disposal of the byproducts of hydraulic fracturing done as safely to the environmental and to the population of Tioga County as possible."

DEP says it doesn't know when it will make a decision on the project.



RIP Leo. You will be missed.

SRBC Public Hearing Announcement

The Forksville water withdrawal plan submitted by Chief Oil & Gas will be among the subjects of a hearing by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission on August 6. It is *Item 4* on the official public hearing announcement, linked to below.

Thursday, August 6 @ 7 pm
East Hanover Twp Municipal Building,
Main Hall, 8848 Jonestown Road, Grantville, PA 17028

The Susquehanna River Basin Commission will hear public testimony on the water withdrawal projects listed in the official notice. Such projects are intended to be scheduled for Commission action at its next business meeting in September. The Commission will also hear testimony on amending the Comprehensive Plan for the Water Resources of the Susquehanna River Basin. This will be the only opportunity to offer oral comment to the Commission for the listed projects and other items.

[Click here to view the official public hearing notice from SRBC, which includes the projects scheduled for action.](#)

[Back to Top](#)

RDA Newsletter

Brooke Woodside, RDA Working Group, Managing Editor
Barb Jamoska, Treasurer - RDA Board of Directors, Editor
Ralph Kisberg, RDA Working Group, Contributing Editor
Ted Stroter, RDA Working Group, Chemical Advisor & Contributing Editor
Jim Slotterback, President - RDA Board of Directors
Robbie Cross, Vice President - RDA Board of Directors
Jenni Slotterback, Secretary - RDA Board of Directors
Mark Szybist - RDA Board of Directors
Roscoe McCloskey - RDA Board of Directors
Dianne Peeling - RDA Board of Directors



This biweekly e-newsletter is written and designed by the RDA consultants and Board of Directors and sent to RDA members/subscribers. Every effort is made to assure complete accuracy in each issue. This publication and the information contained herein is copyrighted by RDA and may not be reproduced without permission. All rights reserved. Readers are invited to forward this newsletter in its entirety to broaden the scope of its outreach. There is a forward link below. Readers are also invited to submit articles to be considered for publication in a future issue.

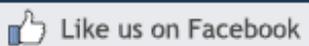
Please note: The RDA newsletter includes reporting on a variety of events and activities, which do not necessarily reflect the philosophy of the organization. RDA practices only non-violent action in voicing the organization's beliefs and concerns.

Responsible Drilling Alliance | responsibledrillingalliance@gmail.com

<http://www.rdapa.org>

Phone: 888.332.1244 (toll free)

Please mail donations to:
RDA, PO Box 502, Williamsport, PA 17703



Copyright © 2015. All Rights Reserved.