

# Protecting Communities and Special Places

e-Newsletter August 1, 2013



**"Today there is growing recognition that wild nature is in a survival struggle, and that the fate of civilization is bound to the fate of the oceans and the climate."  
~ Douglas Tompkins**

## IN THIS ISSUE

A Call for a Moratorium

Gangplank to a Warm Future

Keeping it Wild on the Sand Springs Trail

DCNR Meeting on the Clarence Moore Lands Brings Disappointment

Take Action!

In The News

Quote of the Day

## A Call for a Moratorium

"Essentially no place is sacred, no landscape safe from the relentless search for energy resources to continue powering a culture based on perpetual growth. Precious wildlands, fragile ecosystems, even our own communities and children's health are at risk."

Post Carbon Institute  
*Energy: Overdevelopment and the Delusion of Endless Growth*

In response to increasing concerns about the impacts of unconventional drilling on the people, animals, plants, natural resources, and climate of our planet, the RDA Board of Directors has issued the following statement:

***RDA calls for a moratorium on all new unconventional gas drilling until the industry shows conclusively that its operations do not endanger public health, safety, and welfare or threaten natural resources.***

Passed unanimously on July 24, 2013

## UPCOMING EVENTS

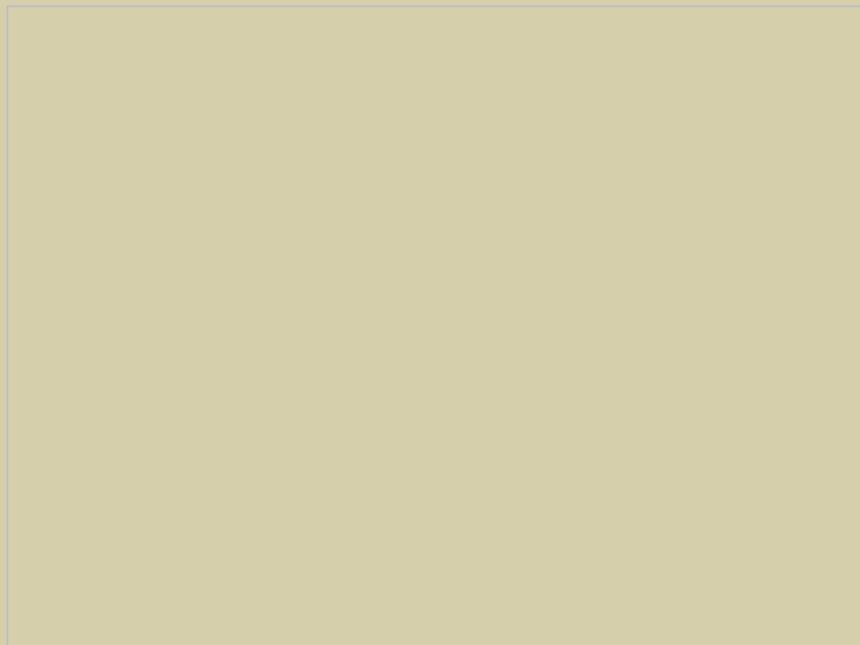
### RDA Joins the PARADE!

RDA will host a float in the 9th Annual Grand Slam Parade & Festival in Downtown Williamsport!

**Wednesday, August 14  
4:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

#### **We need your help!**

Watch Facebook or send an email to [responsibledrillingalliance@gmail.com](mailto:responsibledrillingalliance@gmail.com) for information on how you can help RDA with this year's Little League World Series Grand Slam Parade float.





### Public Lands Watch Training at Worlds End State Park

*Coordinating Public Lands Defense and Advocacy in the Keystone Bioregion*

**August 9-11**

Presented by [Allegheny Defense Project](#) and [Sierra Club, PA Chapter](#)

[Click here for more information and registration](#)



### Keep It Wild Hike

**AUGUST 10 at 1:30 p.m.**

### Worlds End and Cottonwood Falls

Meet at the [Worlds End State Park office](#) to hike this 2-mile moderate difficulty trek along portions of the Loyalsock Trail, Double Run, and the Loyalsock Creek. (Hike #36 in Jeff Mitchell's *Hiking the Endless Mountains*)

Help to **Keep it Wild** by signing the [Loyalsock State Forest petition!](#)

## TAKE ACTION!

### Tell NPR to Say No to ANGA

Tired of hearing those ANGA (America's Natural Gas Alliance) ads on NPR?

Call [NPR](#) and tell them to

## Gangplank to a Warm Future

By ANTHONY R. INGRAFFEA

ITHACA, N.Y. - MANY concerned about climate change, including President Obama, have embraced hydraulic fracturing for natural gas. In his recent climate speech, the president went so far as to lump gas with renewables as "clean energy."

As a longtime oil and gas engineer who helped develop shale fracking techniques for the Energy Department, I can assure you that this gas is not "clean." Because of leaks of methane, the main component of natural gas, the gas extracted from shale deposits is not a "bridge" to a renewable energy future - it's a gangplank to more warming and away from clean energy investments.

Methane is a far more powerful greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, though it doesn't last nearly as long in the atmosphere. Still, over a 20-year period, one pound of it traps as much heat as at least 72 pounds of carbon dioxide. Its potency declines, but even after a century, it is at least 25 times as powerful as carbon dioxide. When burned, natural gas emits half the carbon dioxide of coal, but methane leakage eviscerates this advantage because of its heat-trapping power.

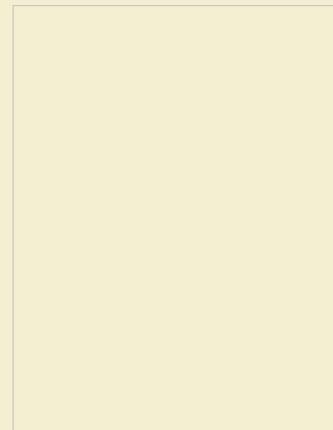
And methane is leaking, though there is significant uncertainty over the rate. But recent measurements by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at gas and oil fields in California, Colorado and Utah found leakage rates of 2.3 percent to 17 percent of annual production, in the range my colleagues at Cornell and I predicted some years ago. This is the gas that is released into the atmosphere unburned as part of the hydraulic fracturing process, and also from pipelines, compressors and processing units. Those findings raise questions about what is happening elsewhere. The Environmental Protection Agency has issued new rules to reduce these emissions, but the rules don't take effect until 2015, and apply only to new wells.

A 2011 study from the National Center for Atmospheric Research concluded that unless leaks can be kept below 2 percent, gas lacks any climate advantage over coal. And a study released this May by Climate Central, a group of scientists and journalists studying climate change, concluded that the 50 percent climate advantage of natural gas over coal is unlikely to be achieved over the next three to four decades. Unfortunately, we don't have that long to address climate change - the next two decades are crucial.

To its credit, the president's plan recognizes that "curbing emissions of methane is critical." However, the release of unburned gas in the production process is not the only problem. Gas and oil wells that lose their structural integrity also leak methane and other contaminants outside their casings and into the atmosphere and water wells. Multiple industry studies show that about 5 percent of all oil and gas wells leak immediately because of integrity issues, with increasing rates of leakage over time. With hundreds of thousands of new wells expected, this problem is neither negligible nor preventable with current technology.

Why do so many wells leak this way? Pressures under the earth, temperature changes, ground movement from the drilling of nearby wells and shrinkage crack and damage the thin layer of brittle cement that is supposed to seal the wells. And getting the cement perfect as the drilling goes horizontally into shale is extremely challenging. Once the cement is damaged, repairing it thousands of feet underground is expensive and often unsuccessful. The gas and oil industries have been trying to solve this problem for decades.

The scientific community has been waiting for better data from the E.P.A. to assess the extent of the water contamination problem. That is why it is so discouraging that, in the face of industry complaints, the E.P.A. reportedly has closed or backed away from several investigations into the problem. Perhaps a



drop those deceptive ANGA ads; tell them you think ANGA ads undermine the content and seriousness of NPR reporting.

NPR's Corporate Sponsorship person is John King at 202-513-2093; the Corporate Sponsorship office is responsible for NPR's funding source decisions.

## IN THE NEWS

### Jobs Jobs Jobs

Last week, the [Congressional Natural Gas Caucus](#) held a hearing in Williamsport to highlight the economic benefits of natural gas as a [game changer](#). Those, like the [Hallowich family](#), who have lost their homes and prior way of life to this industry would probably agree that it's a game changer - but for completely different reasons, none of which were allowed to be mentioned at this one-sided media event that allowed no public comment or rebuttal to the information presented.

Watch some of the testimony, including comments by Lycoming County Commissioner Jeff Wheeland, here:



For another look at callous greed, read [Cash in on Fracking's Dirty Little Secret](#). But don't despair that all truth is lost to greed - others still [point to the shale bubble](#) and warn of the environmental cost and higher natural gas prices to come.

One of them is energy

full E.P.A. study of hydraulic fracturing and drinking water, due in 2014, will be more forthcoming. In addition, drafts of an Energy Department study suggest that there are huge problems finding enough water for fracturing future wells. The president should not include this technology in his energy policy until these studies are complete.

We have renewable wind, water, solar and energy-efficiency technology options now. We can scale these quickly and affordably, creating economic growth, jobs and a truly clean energy future to address climate change. Political will is the missing ingredient. Meaningful carbon reduction is impossible so long as the fossil fuel industry is allowed so much influence over our energy policies and regulatory agencies. Policy makers need to listen to the voices of independent scientists while there is still time.

*Anthony R. Ingraffea is a professor of civil and environmental engineering at Cornell University and the president of Physicians, Scientists and Engineers for Healthy Energy, a nonprofit group.*

*Published online July 28, 2013. The New York Times; A version of this op-ed appeared in print on July 29, 2013, on page A17 of the New York Edition.*

## Keeping It Wild on the Sand Spring Trail

By MANDY MAURER

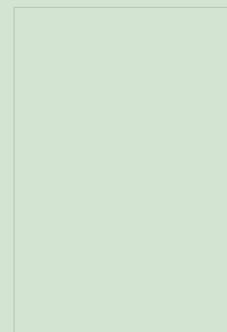
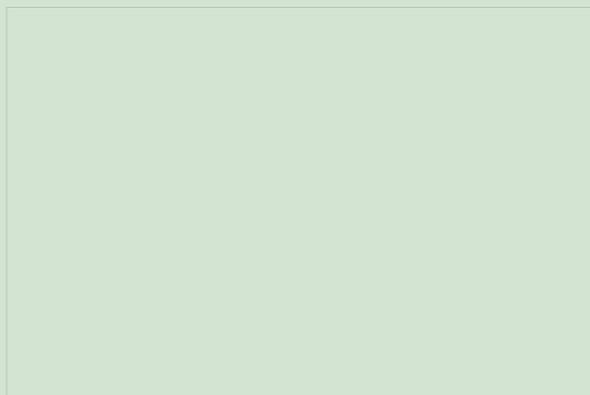
Sunday morning found us keeping one eye on the road and the other on ominous looking storm clouds hanging over our destination, Devil's Elbow Natural Area. Just minutes before pulling into the rendezvous spot, the skies opened up and the rain poured down. Not to be deterred, we continued on to see if anyone else braved the weather for the chance to hike among good friends and rare vegetation.

By 10 a.m. there were three cars filled with hikers in the parking lot, yet the rain continued to dampen our hopes of hiking. We all agreed that perhaps a hot cup of coffee would help warm us up and chase the clouds away. While enjoying our coffee at a nearby convenience store, we coincidentally and happily were joined by a group of young people who frequently participate in Keep It Wild hikes and were running late for today's hike.

Just as quickly as the rain started, it stopped, so the entire group continued on to Devil's Elbow. Under somewhat clear skies, our easy hike of approximately three miles had little to no elevation changes. Thanks to our fearless guide, Jim Slotterback, we were treated to a patch of wild blueberry bushes along the way. Despite our late start, we ended with another memorable and educational Keep It Wild hike. See you next time!

Photos by Richard Karp;  
[See more of his photos here](#)

Check out the Keep It Wild website at  
[www.KeepItWildrdr.org](http://www.KeepItWildrdr.org)



analyst Arthur Berman, who interviewed with the [Delaware Riverkeeper](#) for a [series of videos](#). Watch the latest segment here:



### This Week's Scoops

The [Father of Fracking](#), [George Mitchell](#), passed away last week. Though he unleashed fracking, he also understood the dangers and [called for strict industry controls](#), eventually starting a foundation to address sustainability and environmental concerns, including water issues.

And those water issues are again in the news, as yet [another fact emerges in the Dimock water controversy](#), by way of the LA Times.

Pennsylvania property owners beware! It didn't take long for drilling operator [EQT to take advantage](#) of Rep. Garth Everett's [sneaky legislation](#), filing 70 lawsuits against landowners in western PA. [Equally tricky is Sunoco Logistics](#), who gained interstate and consequently eminent domain status by virtue of a small segment of its ethane and propane pipeline running through a tiny part of Delaware on its way from western PA to Philadelphia. Just goes to show that no landowners in PA are safe from the impacts of shale gas extraction.

### Join RDA

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

## DCNR Meeting to Discuss Drilling in the Clarence Moore Lands Brings Disappointment

By ANN PINCA

Despite the initial impression that [Department of Conservation and Natural Resources](#) officials were sympathetic to the plight of the Clarence Moore lands of the Loyalsock State Forest and were willing to listen to concerns, a [press release](#) issued before the July 24 meeting ended indicated otherwise.

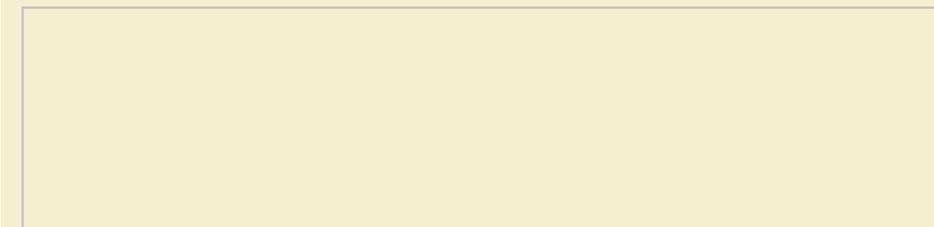
Representatives from several statewide organizations met last week with DCNR Acting Secretary Ellen Ferretti and several other DCNR officials in anticipation of engaging the department in a meaningful conversation concerning drilling plans for this area of the Loyalsock State Forest. Those hopes were dashed by DCNR's obviously pre-prepared press release that clearly indicated the department's intentions to negotiate with subsurface rights owners [Anadarko Petroleum Corporation](#) and [Southwestern Energy Company](#), even though a [unique legal situation](#) provides the department with the means to limit drilling in the Clarence Moore lands.

A [large public outcry](#) has made it clear that most citizens do not want to see drilling in the Clarence Moore lands, a popular recreational area that is home to the pristine water basins of Rock Run, Pleasant Stream, and a favorite hiking trail, the Old Logger's Path.

Ferretti assures in the press release that public comments will be considered. "We have received a large volume of correspondence, phone calls, inquiries from the public and legislators, and read media accounts, all of which have given us a good representation of the concerns and questions from the public," Ferretti said. "We share these concerns and will be incorporating that information into our negotiations with the subsurface owners."

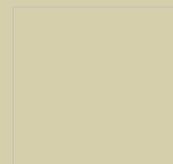
With most citizens in favor of no drilling in the Clarence Moore lands, the DCNR press release containing terms like *negotiations* and *minimizing or mitigating impacts* seems contrary to true acknowledgement of public sentiment. Most citizens understand that industrial impacts from natural gas drilling in a state forest cannot and will not be minimized or mitigated.

The organization representatives included RDA, Keystone Trails Association, Audubon Pennsylvania, Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future, Sierra Club, and Forest Coalition. RDA representatives were both disappointed and troubled after the meeting, knowing by the early post of the press release that their concerns went unheard and will most likely not be addressed by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.



### RDA Newsletter

*Ann Pinca, managing editor*  
*Ted Stroter, RDA Board of Directors editor*  
*Ralph Kisberg, contributing editor*  
*Robbie Cross, President - RDA Board of Directors*  
*Jenni Slotterback, Secretary - RDA Board of Directors*  
*Barb Jarmoska, Treasurer - RDA Board of Directors*  
*Mark Szybist - RDA Board of Directors*  
*Kevin Heatley - RDA Board of Directors*  
*Roscoe McCloskey - RDA Board of Directors*



projects.  
Contact us for details.

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

This weekly e-letter 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 Ann Pinca 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. Readers are also invited to comment to the managing editor regarding contents and to submit articles to be considered for publication in a future issue.

[Return to top](#)

Join Our Mailing List!

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

**Thank you for your support!**

Donate

