

Protecting Communities and Special Places

e-Newsletter August 9, 2013



**"Meaningful carbon reduction is impossible so long as the fossil fuel industry is allowed so much influence over our energy policies and regulatory agencies."
~ Anthony Ingraffea, Ph.D**

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The Game Changer

Last Sunday's editorial in the Sun-Gazette, "Separating gas drilling fact from fiction--study is a good first step," observes correctly that the positive impacts described at the Congressional Natural Gas Caucus hearing held July 26 at Pennsylvania College of Technology were not surprising, as it was a pro-gas industry gathering. It was, in fact, a propaganda effort, a cheer for the "great economic benefits" the boom in natural gas drilling has brought to us.

There was no significant mention of the potential impacts to Pennsylvania's huge recreation industry or its even bigger agricultural industry. The ultimate goal of the Caucus appeared to be the diminution of the already-too-weak existing regulations governing the overall drilling/fracking process.

UPCOMING EVENTS

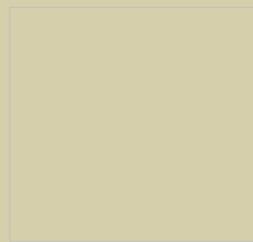
DON'T MISS THE PARADE!

RDA hosts its first float ever in the 9th Annual Grand Slam Parade & Festival in Downtown Williamsport.

**August 14
Parade steps off at
6:00 p.m.**

They always save the best for last!
RDA is in the tenth and final division.

[Check us out on Facebook!](#)



A homeowner's affected water.

IMAGE: ANN PINCA

According to the editorial, the segment of our community that opposes the industrialization of Pennsylvania's rural areas by the gas industry uses "rumor mongering and twisting of facts that the industry has had to endure." Against this statement, consider the vast amounts of money spent by the gas industry in their never-ending campaign to convince the people of Pennsylvania and elsewhere that natural gas drilling is a great benefit and completely safe. To suggest that small grassroots organizations could win this propaganda war by distorting reality is totally ludicrous.

The numerous spills, the compromised water wells as evidenced by recently uncovered Department of Environmental Protection determination letters, the pollution from compressor stations and diesel trucks, the 15,124 recorded violations since 2009, the ravaging and fragmenting of our pristine forests, the serious threat to magnificent places like Rock Run and the wildlife in it: This is the scientific information that the general public must know.



**MSNBC PREMIERES
"THE POLITICS OF
POWER WITH CHRIS
HAYES"**

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 16
8:00 p.m.**

MSNBC will premiere a new documentary, "The Politics of Power with Chris Hayes", Friday, August 16 at 8PM. The documentary looks at how, almost a year after Superstorm Sandy, America and the world dangles on the precipice of future drastic weather and oceanic events resulting from our CO2 laden climate - and what needs to be done to prevent us going into the abyss.

[Take a sneak peak here](#)

TAKE ACTION!

**No Pipeline Through
the Pinelands!**

[Protecting Our Waters](#) asks your help to protect the New Jersey Pine Barrens. A gas pipeline is planned to cut through the heart of this pristine and beloved million-plus acres of forest wilderness, wetlands, streams and lakes. [Sign the petition here](#)
[Look for more ways to help here](#)



A Cinematic look at the Pine Barrens Pipeline Proposed Route

And apparently, the public increasingly does know. [Poll results](#) released last May indicated 58 percent of Pennsylvanians join RDA in support of a moratorium until there is a fuller understanding of the risks - and a better trust in state environmental regulators.

Signed by the RDA Board of Directors

Robert Cross, President
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Jenni Slotterback, Secretary
Ted Stroter, Board editor

Mark Szybist, Board member
Kevin Heatley, Board member
Roscoe McCloskey, Board member

This statement was written in response to the [Sun-Gazette editorial](#) published August 4, 2013, which referred to the Congressional Natural Gas Caucus held in Williamsport on July 26. The Sun-Gazette editorial, written by Editor Dave Troisi, is reprinted below.

**Separating gas drilling fact from fiction -
Study is a good first step**

August 4, 2013
Williamsport Sun-Gazette

The participants at the recent Congressional Natural Gas Caucus hearings recently at Pennsylvania College of Technology said the economic impact of shale production is a "game changer."

That's hardly a surprising observation coming from a largely pro-gas industry gathering, but the economic realities of recent years support the conclusion.

Without the Marcellus Shale drilling boom in our region the effects of the recession of recent years would have been devastating. With that boom, the region is competing and at least holding its own. That's an accomplishment, given the amount of resistance, rumor mongering and twisting of facts that the industry has had to endure, a reality not lost on those at the caucus.

Rep. Glenn Thompson, a Howard Republican representing some of our region, said lawmakers need correct information to make responsible decisions about the gas industry, particularly scientific data. Unfortunately, lawmakers get a lot of misinformation that, over time proves to be inaccurate.

A good example involves hydraulic fracturing, which is routinely blamed for contaminating drinking water. A landmark federal study recently completed shows no evidence that chemicals from natural gas drilling contaminated drinking water aquifers at a western Pennsylvania drilling site.

The Department of Energy results came after a year of monitoring and represent the first independent look at whether the potentially toxic chemicals used in fracking pose a threat to people during normal drilling operations.

By injecting fluids tagged with unique markers more than 8,000 feet below the surface at the gas well bore, researchers were able to establish that potentially dangerous substances stayed about a mile away from surface drinking water supplies, which are usually about 500 feet below the surface. We would prefer that scientific information such as this be favored by the general public over the agenda-laden film-making that has been passing for fact among the anti-drilling crowd for years.

Correct environmental regulations must be meticulously and fairly enforced and information gathering continued to assure an ongoing, safe drilling process. If that path is followed, the economic game-changing outlined at the caucus is there for the region to take.

**New Phone
Number!
Contact RDA at
888-332-1244**

**DEP Extends
Comment Period On
Proposed Permit
Review Public
Participation Policy**

The Department of Environmental Protection announced an extension of the public comment period for its draft Public Participation Policy for the Permit Review Process. The policy is open for public comment until:

August 27, 2013

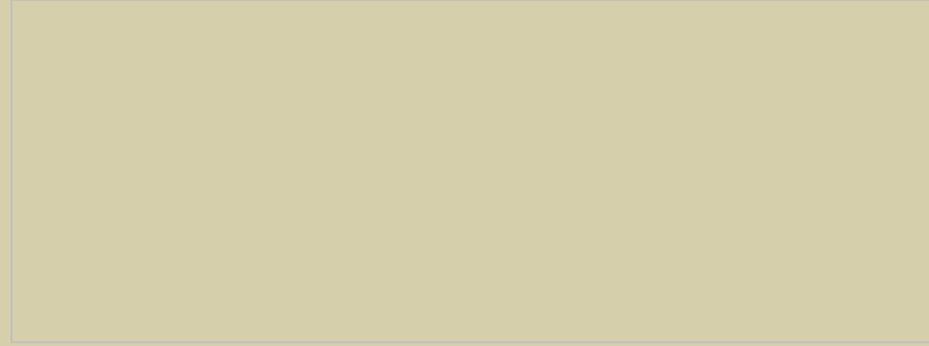
[Read here for more information](#)

IN THE NEWS

This Week's Scoops

"Know your customer" is always good business advice, but Chesapeake Energy may have taken that a bit too far when they were found to be selling natural gas to CEMI, a Chesapeake subsidiary owned entirely by - yes, Chesapeake. It's one more way that landowners lose out on royalty payments from Chesapeake.

"No" always meant "no" when I was growing up, but it seems that the Public Utility Commission and the PA DEP aren't happy with the "no" they received from the Supreme Court. The agencies filed a joint request this week to submit their Act 13 appeal to the Supreme Court again. Seems they think they'll have a better chance the second time around now that Corbett-appointed Judge Corraele Stevens



Cement trucks line up at a well pad.

IMAGE: ANN PINCA

**Keep It Wild Hike
Worlds End and Cottonwood Falls**

August 10 at 1:30 p.m.

Hike in beautiful Worlds End State Park this Saturday! This two-mile moderate difficulty hike will take you along the Loyalsock Creek, portions of the Loyalsock Trail, and along Double Run with its numerous waterfalls including Cottonwood Falls. Meet at the Park Office at World's End State Park. This is Hike #36 in Jeff Mitchell's *Hiking the Endless Mountains*.

[Check here for directions](#)

Check out the Keep it Wild web site www.keepitwildrda.org

This month's hike is listed as an activity for the Public Lands Watch Training taking place at Worlds End State Park from August 9-11. [Check here for details](#)

Good Riddance

By RALPH KISBERG

Flags on drilling rigs around the Commonwealth must have been at half-mast after the late July announcement of the upcoming departure of the Marcellus Shale Coalition's CEO Kathryn Klaber. "Katie," as she was affectionately referred to by the boys around the table when the Governor's Marcellus Shale Advisory Commission was gathering input on how best to advance the gas industry's agenda a few years ago, will have her last hurrah at the Coalition's annual love fest, the Shale Insight conference in Philadelphia in late September.

No doubt many of the attendees will be ready with open checkbooks to offer her some real money as a payback for all the vital work she accomplished on their behalf as the gas industry ran roughshod over the landscape of much of rural Pennsylvania - as well as over the lives and property values of many living there.

But being a civic-minded person, perhaps Katie won't just go for the bucks. Perhaps she'll want to perform some penance for her skilled efforts in attempting to dismantle our municipal rights - seeing to it that a severance tax is off the table in Pennsylvania, that the Texas economy benefited foremost from her members' work

joined the bench. Guess time will tell which way justice will swing on this one.

In Congress, [U.S. Rep. Thomas Marino](#) was the chief sponsor of the Responsibly and Professionally Invigorating Development Act of 2013 (RAPID) that passed the House Judiciary Committee in July. Says Marino, "The RAPID Act is a common-sense solution to the outdated and burdensome system currently in place for approving infrastructure and energy project permits."

But NRDC [says that the RAPID Act](#) is the "House Republicans' latest attempt to gut NEPA." As NRDC's Amanda Jahshan points out in discussing some of the bill's measures, "significantly shortening the public comment period and limiting the amount of good information that can inform the public and their decision makers about a project sounds a lot more like steamrolling than 'streamlining.'"

Join RDA

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

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.

up here, that impacted families need to retain legal counsel to attempt to get fair compensation for damages done to their water supply or health by her members, or for ensuring air quality for gas area residents is firmly on a downhill trajectory.

There are a number of prominent positions open around the Commonwealth Ms. Klaber's friends and admirers would be thrilled to see her fill. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, for instance, still needs a Secretary; the [Center for Sustainable Shale Development](#) needs an Executive Director; and [The Heinz Endowments](#) is looking for a senior director of environmental programs. The Governor's prospects for re-election look grim, why not a primary run for topping the Republican ticket?

The latter might be a bit far fetched. After all, who would Pennsylvania's Secretary of the Department of Community and Economic Development, [Mr. C. Alan Walker](#), choose to support if such a contest ensued? As much as Walker appreciates the Governor, he knows that Second Mile thing will be a big albatross around Corbett's neck come general election time. Besides, Walker was quoted by the Associated Press on Klaber, noting she "really helped lay the groundwork for the success of the industry."

Just think what havoc she could wreak on the future of Penn's Woods from the top.

When You Can't Even Pay to Play

[NextGen Climate Action](#) found out that even if you can pay for the advertising, it may not get aired. NextGen [announced this week](#) that it would run an advertisement opposing the Keystone XL pipeline on Tuesday night during President Obama's guest appearance on The Tonight Show. But the local NBC affiliate station had other plans, [rejecting the commercial](#) at the last minute because "the spot was inconsistent with our guidelines of being an attack of a personal nature."

Did the NextGen Climate Action commercial go too far or did influence from the oil and gas industry keep this commercial off the air?

Watch the commercial - what do you think? If you think NBC was wrong to not air the ad, then [let them know here](#).



RDA Newsletter

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

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