



Seneca Pad T - Sugar Camp Mountain Road, Loyalsock State Forest north of Trout Run, PA - Photo Credit: [PEDF](#)

Greetings!

Do you find the above image disturbing? If so, there is a very important meeting coming up this Thursday in Williamsport. Check out our featured article below to learn more about what's happening with our state forests and what you can do about it.

Thank you to all of you who attended the RDA Community Dinner and also to those of you who were able to join us for our first *Keep it Wild* hike of the season! Both events are described below in case you missed out on the fun. Our next hike is coming up next month. We hope you can join us.

Our first "Other News" story to the right describes Fracktracker's recent experience with oil and gas drilling activities in Europe. The group listened, presented and explored what's happening over there, and came back with a very informative report. The second story is an exclusive Public Herald interview with John Nicholson, one of the activists behind the recent 'Monday Night Football' protest. The interview is very interesting and provides some links in case you would like to help out the cause. There are also many active petition/comment opportunities in the sidebar.

Thank you for caring and staying informed.

Have a wonderful week,

Brooke Woodside
RDA Member, Managing Editor

Visit our website at: www.rdapa.org

In This Issue

[The Future of Our Forests](#)
[RDA Community Dinner](#)
[A Forest to Explore](#)
[Join RDA!](#)
[Newsletter Archive](#)

Events/ Action Points

[DEP Clean Power Plan](#)
[Keep Fracking Out of UN Talks](#)
[Reauthorize LWCF](#)
[Plug the Fracking Leaks, EPA!](#)

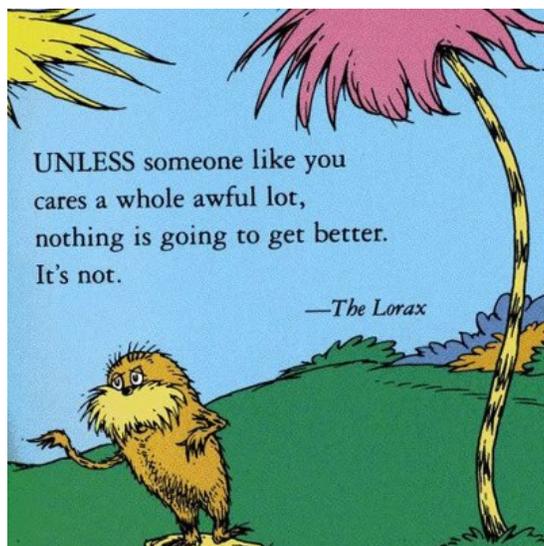
In Other News

A Fresh Look at Oil and Gas Drilling from Europe

Fourteen days is not nearly enough time to fully understand the complex differences between oil and gas drilling issues and policies in the United States and several European Union countries. The EU's drilling policies, geography and the industry's level of activity are quite distinct from those of the States in some cases.

Still, as part of the [Our Energy](#)

The Lorax needs your help!



In 1992, years before "Marcellus Shale" was a household word and the first unconventional gas well ever drilled and fracked, Pennsylvania developed an excellent, forward-looking plan for forest management entitled, [Penn's Woods, Sustaining Our Forests.](#) The document states:

Today, more than 17 million acres...of the Commonwealth is covered by a quality hardwood forest, perhaps unequaled in the world. These forests...employ more than 100,000 people...they're home to dozens of rare plants and endangered species. And they provide protection for more than 25,000 miles of streams used for drinking water and recreation. Our forests provide all this, while facing a dramatic increase in recreational activities that have become vital to the state's tourism industry. With so many demands, it became clear we needed a plan to ensure our forests would continue to provide these benefits for future generations.

Today, our forestland is under siege by a threat unseen 23 years ago. The PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has drafted a new and onerous plan to manage Penn's Woods, a plan that all but abandons the agency's core mission as a trustee of commonwealth lands and guardian of citizens' rights under Article I Section 27 of Pennsylvania's Constitution.

At **6:30 pm on Thursday, November 12th**, DCNR will host a meeting in the Terrace Room of the Genetti Hotel in downtown Williamsport to receive citizen comments and input on the agency's Draft 2015 State Forest Resource Management Plan (SFRMP). The 198-page document, as well as information about both the meeting and the procedure for written comments can be found by [clicking here](#).

John Childe, attorney for the [Pennsylvania Environmental Defense Foundation](#), attended a recent RDA meeting to help us understand the industry-slanted language and catastrophic implications of the proposed plan. PEDF has also prepared a list of talking points to assist those willing to attend the meeting and/or submit written comments. RDA has summarized those for you here.

If ever there was cause to take the time to sit and write out your comments to an agency whose decisions will impact the lives of Pennsylvania residents both now and in the future - surely this is it. Please use your own stories of your connection to the Pennsylvania woods and forests, and any of the talking points below that resonate with your personal experience.

RDA hopes to see many of you at the meeting on **November 12th**. If you are unable to attend, please [take the time to send your comments using the information available at this link](#).

[Solutions](#) project, four staff from FracTracker Alliance and Ecologic Institute attempted to understand and share as many lessons-learned in Europe as we could in the first two weeks of September. Our interest covered all aspects of oil and gas development, but focused on those relating to the use of stimulation techniques (hydraulic fracturing - fracking) in unconventional reservoirs.

Even with significant differences between the US and EU, there is still much to be gleaned in sharing our regulatory approaches, community concerns and environmental challenges.

[Click here to read more from the Fracktracker Alliance.](#)

'Monday Night Football' Activist Reveals Story Behind Bank of America Protest

On Monday Night Football, four activists successfully made their way into the Bank of America Stadium with 'Batman' gear, and two rappelled from the bleachers unfolding a banner that read "BoA, Dump Dominion, wearecovepoint.org" shocking the NFL, ESPN and 70,000 person stadium.

One of those rappelling was John Nicholson, a Pennsylvania activist, and team member of Public Herald who took part in the recent 30-month fracking investigation that made public for the first time 2,309 investigation records from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Public Herald caught up with John shortly after his release from jail to find out more about the protest and what he thought it means for fracking in Pennsylvania.

[Click here to read the full interview from Public Herald.](#)

Gas Well Flare Oakland Township, Susquehanna County

Frank Finan captured a very nice daytime image of a gas well flaring in northern PA. I wonder how much of this clean burning natural gas has been wasted by lighting these "candles to outer space?" Click

TALKING POINTS

Draft 2015 DCNR State Forest Resource Management Plan (SFRMP)

DCNR'S ROLE

Article I, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution provides as follows:

The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people.

This article gives DCNR a legal position as trustee of the public's natural resources. There is no acknowledgment of this right and responsibility in the plan; this trusteeship should be clearly stated in the new plan, as it was [in the former, 2003 plan](#).

ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

The plan should be based on the science of ecosystem management, as stated in the [Penn's Woods - Sustaining Our Forests](#) policy. In the early 2000s, the bureau shifted its overall approach to ecosystem management. Ecosystem management can be defined as a holistic approach to resource management where the interdependency of biological and non-biological systems and cycles is the focus. Ecosystem management does not preclude resource use, such as timber harvesting, hunting or other recreational activities. Ecosystem management is the implementation of practices that promote the long-term health of the forest ecosystem as measured by important ecological indicators. The monitoring of these indicators is the means by which successful management is measured. In general, the objectives of ecosystem management are met when monitoring demonstrates that measurable indicators of ecological health are stable or improving, allowing for natural ecosystem dynamics.

MISSION AND VALUES

The policy should not be amended to include values and uses that are not a part of the Bureau of Forestry's mission, which states: *"The mission of the Bureau is to ensure the long-term health, viability, and productivity of the commonwealth's forests and to conserve native wild plants."* NOTE: Providing money for PA's general budget is NOT a part of the mission statement, and responsibility for such income is in conflict with the role of DCNR. Unconventional gas drilling brings unavoidable forest fragmentation; fragmented forests are unhealthy forests. The two cannot coexist.

GEOLOGIC RESOURCES

In the 2003 SFRMP, the Bureau proposed a moratorium on shallow gas leasing due to the potential negative impacts of forest fragmentation associated with the density of well sites and access roads necessary for shallow gas development. This proposal was met with opposition from the legislature and the oil and gas industry, and subsequently revised. In the new plan, we see a worsening of this incompatibility between the best interests of the forests and the desires of the gas industry. The 2015 plan should incorporate all current impacts to our State Forests from the existing leases for unconventional gas extraction, including the findings contained in [DCNR's 2014 Shale-Gas Monitoring Report](#). The Draft SFRMP acknowledges the Shale-Gas Monitoring Report and recognizes the continued need to monitor, but it does not state any of the current or future impacts, how to address or mitigate these impacts, or where the funding will come from to do so. Referring to geologic resources, the plan states, "Development of geologic resources should occur when it is compatible with landscape goals and functions, avoids sensitive ecological and socially important areas, and minimizes adverse impacts." (The Geologic Resources chapter of the Draft SFRMP begins on page 132 and the Geologic Resources

on the image below to watch this short video.



Coleman Flare - Frank Finan

Well Count

New/renewed 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:

Anthony Township:
[Range Resources App, LLC](#)
[CORSON UNIT 3H \(Renewal\)](#)

Lycoming County

Total wells permitted - 1,455

Cummings Township has highest number of permitted wells - 307

Average drop off in production in Lycoming County gas wells is 90% over the first six months.

DEP Clean Power Plan

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recently held a series of listening sessions across the state on the EPA's Clean Power Plan. The plan is the first ever federal standard on carbon pollution from existing power plants. Thank you to all of you who were able to attend!

DEP is still accepting 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, and the industry and big polluters are sure to weigh in.

Whether or not you were able to attend the listening sessions, you have until **November 12, 2015** to submit written comments. Feedback may be

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The plan should discuss current and long-term plans to deal with the cumulative impacts from the existing leases.

FUTURE NEEDS

The plan should list all DCNR current and projected needs for Oil & Gas Lease Fund (OGLF) money to take care of our State Forests, including completing all backlogged projects for dam restoration, cleaning up acid mine drainage problems, removing or plugging abandoned oil and gas wells and restoring existing wells and well pads to conform to current regulations. The cost of doing this is currently estimated at up to \$1 billion. (The Infrastructure Chapter of the Draft SFRMP begins on page 184, but needs are listed throughout every chapter.)

OWNERSHIP OF MINERAL RIGHTS

The plan should address the fact that funds are needed to purchase mineral rights to preserve the integrity of critical and key tracts of State Forest such as the Clarence Moore lands in the Loyalsock State Forest.

LEASING OF PUBLIC LANDS

The plan should restate and pledge to consider and acknowledge the reasons behind the moratorium on oil and gas leasing of state parks and forests as executed by Governor Wolf on January 29, 2015. This moratorium stated that in order to "protect the lands of the Commonwealth that are held in trust for its citizens and for future generations, and subject to future advice and recommendations made by DCNR, no State Park and State Forest lands owned and/or managed by DCNR shall be leased for oil and gas development." The impacts of existing gas development were noted in the moratorium as follows, "...the complex, interrelated, and significant impacts already identified by DCNR and others include clearing of almost 1,500 acres, degraded wild character and recreational experiences on over 9,300 acres, heavy truck traffic, forest conversion and fragmentation and soil disturbance, invasive species, hiking and snowmobile trail conflicts, loss of scenic vistas, noise pollution affecting recreational experiences and wildlife, and reduction in timber harvest revenues due to road bonding costs..." [The complete moratorium proclamation is available here.](#)

Unconventional gas drilling = forest fragmentation
Forest fragmentation = unhealthy forests
DCNR cannot have it both ways



Forest fragmentation is breaking up our solid tracts of state forest land.

submitted online using [DEP's eComment site](#), by email to 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 to view comments that have already been submitted.](#)

Keep Fracking Out of Any Climate Change Agreement

World leaders are gathering in Paris in December for COP 21 - to reach an agreement to address climate change.

It is critical that world leaders create a bold agreement to keep fossil fuels in the ground. In particular, fracked natural gas and oil cannot be part of any climate solution.

The oil and gas industry touts fracked gas as a "bridge fuel" and a "climate solution," but this is not true. The industry has spent millions pushing their disastrous pro-fracking message forward, but there is a growing consensus that fracking is inherently dangerous and destructive to our communities and climate.

Send a message to President Obama, your U.S. members of Congress, your Governor and select Mayors who will be attending the upcoming climate talks in Paris and tell them fracking should not be a part of a climate change solution plan.

[Click here to sign this petition prepared by Food and Water Watch.](#)

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 it failed to reauthorize LWCF by the Sept. 30 deadline. The House and Senate still have

RDA Community Dinner

Thank you to all of you who came out and helped to make the RDA Community Dinner a success! It was great to mingle face-to-face with so many wonderful people involved in this important fight. Herdic House Chef Liz Miele served up an amazing fresh local vegetarian meal, and the maple bourbon cheesecake so generously shared around our table was out of this world. (Thanks, Rick!)



Guest speaker Cindy Bower,
photo credit: Richard Karp

Guest speakers included RDA chemical advisor Ted Stroter; RDA board member and Attorney Mark Szybist, and Cindy Bower from the [Pennsylvania Environmental Defense Foundation](#).

Ted kicked off the presentations with a bit of motivational speaking and comic relief. Mark and Cindy then presented two rather pressing issues being featured in this newsletter. DEP's Clean Power Plan and DCNR's State Forest Management Plan. Both have deadlines this Thursday, November 12. See the sidebar and our feature article for more information.

Thanks a gain! Let's keep this good momentum going!

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.](#)

Plug the Fracking Leaks, EPA!

Leaks of fracked gas are really bad for public health and our climate:

-Families near fracking infrastructure have reported much higher rates of asthma, heart problems, liver disorders and even cancer.

-One recent Johns Hopkins University study found that mothers living near fracking sites had a higher risk of premature birth and other complications during pregnancy.

-Methane is the main chemical in fracked gas, and it's 80 times more potent a global warming pollutant than carbon dioxide.

And yet the latest scientific studies estimate that we're leaking at least five percent of all the gas fracked in America.

Fortunately the EPA has proposed some new rules to limit fracking leaks. But the new rules only govern new fracking wells and equipment. Therefore millions of miles of pipelines, compressor stations, export terminals and more will all be left leaking.

We only have until November 17 to convince them to make the rules tougher.

[Click here to sign this petition from Environmental Action to tell the EPA to plug ALL the fracking leaks NOW before it's too late.](#)

A Forest to Explore (Sand Spring Trail)

by Jenni Slotterback, Secretary, RDA Board of Directors

Together we hiked into Devil's Elbow Natural Area, one of five "Natural Areas" in the Loyalsock State Forest. These 440 acres are located at the North Branch of Rock Run.

Under gray autumn skies we explored leaf strewn trails tunneling through deep green hemlocks. We shared stories. Each of us connected to the land in our own way. Everyone became focused as we navigated wet, boggy trail sections through forested wetlands. It's amazing how a walk in the woods can create good spirit and a sense of community.

This land is part of what makes this region feel like home. If you value your forests, please give your input to the DCNR at the public meeting on **November 12th**.

Keep it Wild!

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 &



photo credit: Richard Karp

Mark your calendars: Our next hike will be kicking off on **Sunday, December 6th at 11 am**. We will be returning to the Haystacks in Sullivan County. Stay tuned for more detail in our next newsletter!

[Back to Top](#)

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

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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.

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



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