

Protecting Communities and Special Places

e-Newsletter November 15, 2013

IMAGE: Richard Karp



We have an obligation to protect the environment. It's not a choice; it's an obligation. It's a civil right for the people of Pennsylvania."

~ Rep. Rick Mirabito

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CONTEST !!!!!

NAME THAT BREW!

Check out details for our contest on [Facebook](#) or at the

Will Pope Francis "Keep It Wild?"

Recent photos of Pope Francis [found on Twitter](#) have captured the imagination of anti-fractivists around the world. Seeing the pope pictured with T-shirts bearing anti-fracking messages gives hope to those working to end hydraulic fracturing that the pope [will speak out](#) on today's environmental issues. It's a thought not so far-fetched for a pope who noted in a public address that "these days we do not have a very good relationship with creation, do we?" and [chose his name](#) after Francis of Assisi, who in Pope Francis's own words was "the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation."

[Click here](#) to see the images of Pope Francis.

Can Pennsylvania's Threatened and Endangered Species Survive House Bill 1576?

By ANN PINCA

Controversial legislation to change the designation process for threatened and endangered species in Pennsylvania moved forward this week when the members of the House Game and Fisheries Committee [voted 16-8](#) to approve [House Bill 1576](#), also known as the Endangered Species Coordination Act. Republican Representative [Garth Everett](#) of Lycoming County made the motion for the bill and voted for its approval. According to Rep. Everett, (as quoted by Democratic Representative Greg Vitali of Delaware County), "Every group and industry I know that moves dirt wants this done."

Opposition is fierce between supporters who claim the bill provides better transparency, consistency and needed oversight through the [Independent Regulatory Review Commission](#) (IRRC), while those opposed insist that the bill adds politics to a scientific process and lessens the authority of the agencies charged to protect Pennsylvania's wildlife.

end of this
newsletter!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Date!

The next
Keep It Wild Hike is

December 8

Watch for details soon!



Stop the Tireburner Fundraiser

**Tuesday,
November 19
6:30-9:30 p.m.**

Milton, PA

**Food, fun, wine,
cocktails**

\$50 / person

RSVP date has passed,
but if interested, email
brice8@gmail.com or
call 570.220.8122
ASAP to see if you can
still join in the fun.

[Look for additional
information here](#)

Shale Drilling and Public Health: A Day of Discovery

**Saturday,
November 23, 2013
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Heinz History Center,

Supporters of the legislation predictably include those who would benefit from relaxed regulations concerning the protection of sensitive species--commerce groups, home builders, and mineral extraction companies. Last August, the Marcellus Shale Coalition, Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania, and Pennsylvania Independent Oil and Gas Association sent a [joint letter](#) of support for the bill, commending its Republican sponsor Representative [Jeff Pyle](#) of Armstrong County for his legislation.



Rep. Greg Vitali explains the problems of HB 1576 at last week's press conference.



Rep. Mirabito: Don't Weaken Endangered Species Protections

That comes as little surprise, as it is clear from his comments where wildlife stands with Rep. Pyle. According to a [WITF](#) article, Pyle indicated after Wednesday's committee hearing that "conservationists shouldn't get carte blanche if the result is stifled industry." He referred to the charters of the Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission, pointing out that "they're not allowed to make any decisions based on economic reasons." Pyle opined that "in today's economy, and with jobless figures the way they are, it [the economy] has to be considered. There's a balance to everything." Pyle expressed his sentiment more clearly on conservation last May in reference to the possible listing of three bat species by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. He was [quoted in a Lancaster news publication](#) as saying, "I'm not willing to sacrifice tens of thousands of jobs to save their little bats."

Certainly balance is not how those opposed to HB 1576 see it. Pennsylvania's environmental, conservation, and sportsmen groups all stand united in their assertions that through its intentional added political influence, this bill will unbalance the fragile existence of sensitive wildlife by ultimately reducing protection for threatened and endangered species.

Pennsylvania's wild trout streams are also at risk. Much effort has been spent recently to identify these streams to garner the extra protection they require, but [according to Trout Unlimited](#), HB 1576 will make it more difficult to designate streams as Wild Trout Waters in Pennsylvania, putting native and wild trout populations at risk.

With lines so clearly drawn between industry and environmental groups, it seems obvious that House Bill 1576 is designed to benefit economic interests, putting profits over protection of wildlife. In fact, Rep. Vitali said in his opening comments at last week's press conference that he's been told that HB 1576 is "the Marcellus Shale Coalition's number one ask of the legislature this term."



Rep. McCarter: Protect Pennsylvania's Natural Resources

With much Pennsylvania land and wildlife habitat being surrendered to

1212 Smallman Street
Pittsburgh PA 15222
(5th Floor)

Sponsored by the
League of Women
Voters of Pennsylvania

FREE
but you must
register to attend.

[Register here](#) or call
1-800-61-SHALE (800-
617-4253)

**My Name Is
Allegany County**

**Saturday,
November 23, 2013**

**The Pajama Factory
Williamsport, PA**

Potluck at 6:30 p.m.
Film screening at 7:00
Discussion at 8:30
Food, drinks, and music
will follow!

Presented by Marcellus
Shale Earth First!

[Find more details here](#)

Pre-release screening!

Groundswell Rising

**Dec. 8, 2013
7 p.m.**

\$10 suggested donation

Pocono Community
Theater
88 South Cortland St.
East Stroudsburg, PA
18301

Screening to be
followed by discussion
and Q&A with the
director and producers.

Seating is limited;
reservations are
essential!
Phone: 570.421.6684

[Find more
information here](#)

Watch the trailer:



Rep. Pyle says Indiana bats in his district were his reason for proposing HB 1576, but Indiana bats are federally protected, so state legislation will not have any affect on measures required for their protection.

the environment." Said Mirabito, "We have an obligation to protect the environment. It's not a choice; it's an obligation. It's a civil right for the people of Pennsylvania."

House Majority Leader Mike Turzai, R-Allegheny, has indicated that he plans to run a vote on HB 1576 next week, possibly on November 19 or 20. Contact your Representative NOW to let them know you want them to protect Pennsylvania's wildlife by voting NO for HB 1576! Copy your Senator on the message or write to them, too, since Senator Joe Scarnati's companion bill SB 1047 is waiting in the wings.

[Find your representative here and your Senator here](#)

The Sullivan County Listening Project: It's Time To Listen

An exciting new project is ready to begin in Sullivan County. After months of planning and fundraising, the Shalefield Organizing Committee (SOC) has met its goals and is ready to send four full-time listeners into the mountains and valleys of the "Gem of the Endless Mountains."

The Listening Project consists of a small team of trained community organizers who will canvas Sullivan County in central PA to assess the impacts of shale gas development on residents. Sullivan County was chosen for the intensity of drilling activity that has occurred over the last five years and the lack of non-profit resources to address local needs.

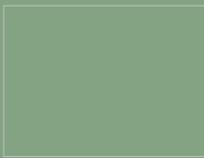
The organizing team includes people native to the area and those who call the region their home. By focusing on listening and relationship building, the project will help SOC learn how to best support strategic, grassroots-led, movement building for human rights. Following the project's completion, SOC plans to share their results with the public and, most importantly, to work with locals to meet the needs of their community.

Listening Project goals include:

- ~ Hear experiences of Sullivan County residents
- ~ Learn about the potential impacts of Shale Gas development on the county's families and communities
- ~ Compile a living history and stories to eventually share with other communities
- ~ Build and expand on relationships with other counties in the Marcellus shalefields of Pennsylvania

development, especially through shale gas extraction and the infrastructure that accompanies it, HB 1576 appears to be just one more attempt to smooth the way for the exploitation of Pennsylvania's resources, with little regard for any wildlife that stands in its way.

That's not the way it should be, according to Democratic Representative Rick Mirabito of Lycoming County. At the press conference last week, Rep. Mirabito said HB 1576 "flies in the face of the legislature's constitutional requirement to protect



The Shalefield Organizing Committee is a group of concerned residents from across eastern Pennsylvania who work to protect human and ecological rights for those living in the shalefields. All too often, the impacts of shale gas development on rural families are invisible to the residents of Pennsylvania's cities and suburbs. By connecting urban and rural communities, SOC is growing a grassroots movement that places direct demands upon those who hold power, and wins justice for shalefield residents.

TAKE ACTION!

Sign up to follow the Listening Project's progress [here](#)
Like us on Facebook [here](#)

The Delaware Riverkeeper asks you to

Watch the video to learn more about the project.

Help Keep Frack Waste off our Rivers!

Comment period closes

November 29, 2013

The U.S. Coast Guard is proposing to allow the shipping of shale gas extraction wastewater by barge on the Nation's rivers.



The Sullivan County Listening Project

A proposed "policy letter" would allow this waste to be carried by barge in bulk under certain conditions as a hazardous material on navigable waterways throughout the U.S.

[Look here for the policy letter and for more information](#)

www.keepitwildrda.org

Keep It Wild Hike #11 Family Friendly Hiking at Rider Park

An enjoyable afternoon took place for several family hikers on the trails of Rider Park in Lycoming County last Sunday. Share in their fun with these images by photographer Richard Karp. [Look here](#) for more photos

IN THE NEWS

This Week's Scoops

State College Update

Despite many questions and objections presented at an [October 30 DEP hearing](#) for the proposed conversion of Penn State's West Campus Steam Plant from coal to natural gas, the State College Planning Commission [has approved the renovations.](#)

Part of the controversy over the conversion was the need for a new gas pipeline, a legitimate



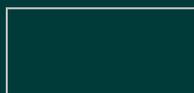
concern in terms of Thursday's [explosion and fire](#) in Milford, Texas, that burned a drill rig and forced the evacuation of the entire town for 24-36 hours. Fortunately, no one was hurt in the blazing inferno caused by a broken liquid petroleum gas line, and [Chevron officials did apologize](#) for the incident.

But it's an unfortunate stretch for Chevron, as an [early morning explosion and fire](#) today at a Chevron refinery in southern Mississippi killed one worker and injured another. Details of the accident have not been released; our sincere condolences go out to the families of the workers who were harmed.

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.



CONTEST! CONTEST! CONTEST! CONTEST! CONTEST!

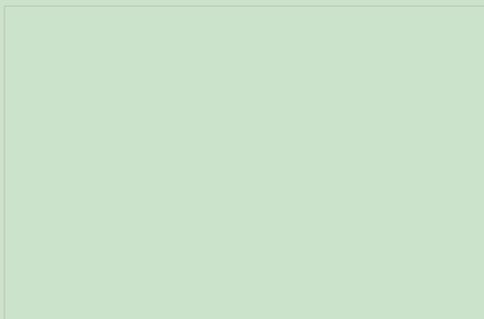
NAME THAT BREW!

We've got some exciting things brewing here at RDA and the first one, as you may have guessed, involves BEER! That's right, RDA has teamed up with [Riepstine's Pub](#) to create a locally sourced organic amber-style ale. Proceeds from the sale of this beer will be used in the ongoing efforts to preserve the Loyalsock State Forest, specifically the Rock Run area that is under threat of natural gas development.

While the beer isn't quite ready to drink yet, we need your help to NAME THAT BREW! Submit your moniker for the brew on our [event page](#) on Facebook or send us an email at responsibledrillingalliance@gmail.com. **All submissions must be in by midnight on Saturday, November 16.**

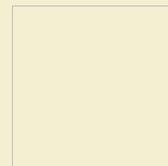
If your name for the brew is chosen, you will win two Keep it Wild pint glasses and a gift certificate to sample RDA's beer and all the other delicious beers on tap at Riepstine's.

Remember: You only have until **midnight on November 16** to enter, so NAME THAT BREW and get it to us ASAP! Winner will be announced next week!



RDA Newsletter

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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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Donations may also be sent by mail to: Responsible Drilling Alliance, P.O. Box 502, Williamsport, PA 17703
Thank you for your support!

[Donate](#)

