

Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

You Ain't Seen Nuthin' Yet!

By now you're probably saying "Enough already!!" about articles, including in NPC's newsletter, concerning drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus shale formation.

But ... the gas boom has the potential to profoundly change the character of northcentral Pennsylvania. We'll leave it to others to shout about economic advantages or environmental damage that the wellpads, roads, pipelines, money and population change will do.

NPC has to address the effects of the natural gas boom on properties we have protected or will be protecting. Most conservation easements which NPC currently holds allow the landowner to lease the natural gas beneath their property. About half of the easements limit the gas leases to "non-developmental" or "no surface disturbance" leases, where the gas can only be removed by horizontal or directional drilling from an adjacent property. Other conservation easements limit the amount of land that can be cleared for a wellpad, limit the width of any access road and require NPC's pre-approval for any operations on the ground.

So what are we doing now? As of mid-April NPC has reviewed gas leases for 18 properties; has dealt with seismic testing on three properties and a proposed pipeline that would cross one protected property and possibly a second. In reviewing the leases, NPC typically requires an addendum acknowledging the conservation easement and protecting NPC from any lawsuit.

NPC has developed detailed Surface Use Agreements which we will require a gas company to enter into before allowing operation on a property protected by a conservation easement.

NPC's surface use agreement for seismic testing limits equipment to less than six feet in width mounted on tracks or balloon-type tires, in order to limit ground disturbance. All stakes, flagging and other "stuff" must be removed from the property when the testing is completed.

If the leasing company decides it wants to drill a well on a protected property where the easement would permit a well, it will have to enter into a surface use agreement which gives NPC the right to approve any road, wellpad and pipeline locations. It further requires complete restoration of the site, prohibits the use of any water from the property, and requires all fluids to be stored in tanks, not in ponds, until fluids are removed from the property for disposal. These are only a few of the restrictions in an extremely extensive document designed to protect the conservation values of the property under easement.

For the past few months dealing with the gas boom and its effects on properties which NPC protects has become a major, and seemingly unending, task. We are not alone in being affected by the gas boom. NPC's staff has consulted with other land trusts in Pennsylvania, and even those in Colorado and New York, who are dealing with drilling for gas. We've shared our surface use agreement with land trusts that did not have their own, and offered the language from our basic conservation easement document.

The gas boom isn't going away; in fact it's just beginning, and the citizens of northcentral Pennsylvania "ain't seen nuthin' yet". NPC will be dealing with gas for the foreseeable future.

Conservation & Stewardship Plan Preparing for Review

The West Branch Susquehanna River Water Trail Conservation and Stewardship Plan is almost complete! Alice Trowbridge has been hard at work, writing her winter away.

As reported in the last newsletter the Plan is the next step toward active management of the West Branch Susquehanna Water Trail. The document not only assesses the current condition

Continued on next page



Conserving working farms and forests

Stream Habitat Projects Selected for Funding

The Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and Department of Environmental Protection are working together to provide technical assistance to watershed groups by planning, designing and managing the construction of projects to stabilize stream channels, minimize sedimentation, and enhance water quality. Using techniques that also create fish habitat, the projects will help restore the natural diversity and species richness in Pennsylvania's streams.

In Fall 2008, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission began working with County watershed specialists and watershed associations to identify potential project sites throughout a 14-county region. Information was gathered and submitted to the Fish and Boat Commission on over 65 possible projects. The list was narrowed down, and 22 projects were selected for funding and assistance in 2009.

Staff from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission will visit each of the sites to design plans to address the specific problems in that stream stretch. The watershed specialist and watershed association "sponsoring the project" will then work to secure donated materials and labor to help match the program funding available.

Assessment and monitoring work will be done at a sampling of sites. This study will help document the effectiveness of the structures and methodology and allow for long term analysis of the structures' ability to function.

This summer's construction season will be busy as the Fish and Boat Commission staff work with local volunteers and contractors to get these projects in the stream and on the ground. If you are interested in helping with a project in your County, contact the watershed specialist at your County's Conservation District.

Funding for this project is provided through the Department of Environmental Protection Growing Greener Grants Program and the State Wildlife Grant Program.

List by County of the streams that have projects on them:

Bradford County

- North Branch Sugar Creek

Centre County

- Cold Stream
- Elk Creek
- Penns Creek

Clearfield County

- Beaver Run

Clinton County

- Cedar Run

Lycoming County

- Antes Creek
- Little Muncy Creek
- Lycoming Creek
- Mill Creek
- Wallis Run

Montour County

- West Branch Chillisquaque Creek

Northumberland County

- Little Shamokin Creek

Potter County

- First Fork Sinnemahoning Creek

Snyder County

- Mahantango Creek

Sullivan County

- Hoagland Branch

Tioga County

- Asaph Run
- Long Run
- Marsh Creek

Union County

- Limestone Run
- Rapid Run

Conservation and Stewardship Plan Preparing for Review

Continued from previous page

at the various access sites along the West Branch, but also offers recommendations on how to maintain and improve those sites, as well as provides suggestions on stretches of the river that are in need of access.

Alice will be working with the volunteers on the steering committee over the next several weeks to "tweak" and finalize the plan. Once the plan is complete it will be posted to NPC's website.

Alice's background as a landscape architect is allowing the plan to use four "real" sites as case

studies. Alice is working with local committees to develop a sketch plan showing how some (if not all) of the recommendations can be implemented.

For more information about water trails visit the following websites:

www.fishandboat.com/watertrails/trailindex.htm

www.susquehannarivertrail.org/

www.lyhr.org/susriver_watertrail.htm

www.endlessmountainsh heritage.org/rivermap.html

www.lumberheritage.org/bookstore.htm

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY • February 1, 2009 to March 31, 2009

CORPORATE MEMBERS

Many thanks to our corporate members for their support of NPC's mission. Please take note of those businesses which have shown they care about the future of our communities with their corporate memberships and show YOUR support to them.

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GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Alfred W. Buck

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Charles A. Grieb, AIA

Bonita E. Hannis

Honorable Thomas C. Raup

Anne Rice & Rick Matukonis

YEAR END APPEAL

George & Shirley Durrwachter

Lewis & Myla Magent



Thank You...to all of those who continue to support the work of the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

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NPC Annual Dinner Set for May 5

Reservations for NPC's Annual Dinner are due April 27 - the date of the Annual Membership Dinner is **Tuesday, May 5th**. Come out and join fellow NPC members at the Holiday Inn in downtown Williamsport for an evening of good food, fun socializing, exciting project updates, and short business meeting (including the election of Directors).

Annual Membership Dinner Menu...

Tossed Bistro Salad
Marinated Mushrooms
Penne Pasta Salad
Chicken Boscaioa
Beef Scallopini
Eggplant Parmigiana
Chef's Choice of Potato
Seasonal Vegetables
Dessert Assortment

Dinner Reservation Form

Name(s) for
Nametags _____

Day Phone for Main Contact _____

____ People Attending X \$25.00 Per Person = _____

____ I am unable to attend. However, please accept this donation.

If you would prefer to pay for your reservation by Visa or
Mastercard, please contact the NPC office
Monday thru Friday 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

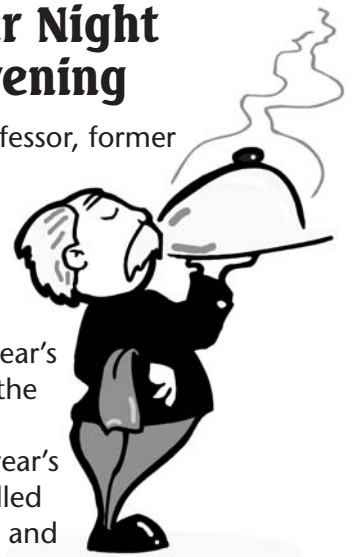
Please enclose this form, along with your check made payable to:

NORTHCENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA CONSERVANCY
PO BOX 2083 • WILLIAMSPORT, PA 17703

Celebrity Waiter Night Another Fun Evening

What do a theatre professor, former county judge, and public relations spokesman have in common? They all donated their tips to the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy during this year's Celebrity Waiter Night at the Peter Herdic House!!

If you weren't at this year's event, you missed a fun-filled evening of food, laughter, and of course singing. Gloria and Marcia Miele were the ever gracious hosts and allowed NPC and its Celebrities to tend bar and wait tables. Thank you to all the waiters for lending their time and talents; to the silent auction donors, Andra DeHart-Robbins, and Bill and Sam Judson; and Blair Brothers Goldsmiths for adding more excitement to the evening. Our Celebrity Waiters were:



- **Jerry Allen**, *Lycoming College*
- **Deb Caulkins**, *Community Volunteer*
- **Rick Mason**, *PennDOT*
- **Joy Reynolds McCoy**, *Attorney*
- **Tom Raup**, *Attorney*
- **Amy Shotwell**, *Verizon*
- **Mark Shuman**, *Clear Channel Communications*
- **Greg Zeitler**, *Sit Happens & Special Olympics Coach*
- **Gail Zimmerman**, *Fish Real Estate*