



APWC Newsletter **Spring-Summer 2020**

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Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, our usual meeting schedule is on hold. We are possibly having a meeting in July held outdoors where we can properly social distance. It will be great to get together again! More info to follow.

Recent happenings and Updates:

While APWC has been on hiatus due to Coronavirus, there is still a lot going on. Some of it is even good! On June 25th, Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro released a report on the effects of fracking in our state. This report is the result of two years of investigations that uncovered systematic failures of PA Dept. of Environmental Protection and the Dept. of Health to protect the citizens and the land, air, and waters of our Commonwealth. The report follows the Grand Jury's previous criminal findings of two fracking companies: Range Resources and Cabot Oil & Gas (both headquartered in Texas). They found repeated and systemic violations of Pennsylvania's environmental laws, and multiple failures of government agencies to properly oversee the activities of the fracking industry as a whole. In a press release on June 25 Attorney Shapiro said: "This report is about preventing the failures of our past from continuing into our future. It's about the big fights we must take on to protect Pennsylvanians-to ensure that their voices are not drowned out by those with bigger wallets and better connections. There remains a profound gap between our Constitutional mandate for clean air and pure water, and the realities facing Pennsylvanians who live in the shadow of fracking giants and their investors." All we can say is WOW! What a breath of fresh air in a world that seems so full of bad news. We really hope that you visit the website www.attorneygeneral.gov to read more about this report and the eight recommendations that it makes, or visit the Clean Air Council's website at www.cleanair.org This all leads nicely into our next topic:

PennEast Pipeline: A Winnable Campaign to Protect the Delaware River Watershed

This is the name of a wonderful 30-minute webinar put together by the Clean Air Council and featuring our own Linda Christman of Save Carbon County. It gives you a good summary to date as well as strategies for winning this fight. It is available at https://cleanair.org/penneast-webinar-5-27-2020_edited-1/. Please watch and take action! The more voices rising in protest, the better chance we have!! Remember what an enormous, negative impact this pipeline will have on our area and our quality of life. Our largest industry and jobs producer is tourism-especially ecotourism such as hiking, biking, rafting, and fishing. That is because our area is relatively wild and pristine compared to nearby

like a huge wound, through so many treasured and scenic wild areas. Some of the most iconic are: The Delaware River, Hickory Run State Park, Weiser State Forest, Wild Creek Falls and nearby Beltzville State Park, the Lehigh River, the Appalachian Trail, and of course “our baby” the Aquashicola/Pohopoco Watershed. Also negatively impacted would be preserved open space and farmlands, greenways, wetlands, acres and acres of habitat, and water sources for thousands of people. The opposition to PE has been very determined, and cracks in the armor of the frackers are really starting to show! Although FERC recently rejected the Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) petition for a rehearing on the Phase I project, the good news is that this decision was not unanimous. Commissioner Glick dissented based on the fact that PE has never been required to explore the Green House Gas impacts of their project (FERC never required this). This “denial of rehearing” means that FERC will not require Phase I to be considered as a separate project. However, there is still opportunity to comment to DEP about Phase I. Tell them that: 1) No permits should be issued by DEP while approval is still pending from the Delaware River Basin Commission, and 2) No permits should be issued during the Covid pandemic because large construction projects should wait until a safer time and additional public participation is needed when it is safe to hold “in person” public hearings, and 3) no tree-felling should be allowed until all permits are obtained. So do please comment to your legislators and to the DEP (go to RA-EPPENNEAST@pa.gov Feel free to also include some of the points from the AG’s report-show them we are paying attention and want *action!!*

On a Related Note: We should find out very soon if the U.S. Supreme Court will take up the lawsuit won by the State of New Jersey in the Third Circuit Appeals Court. NJ contended that because states have “sovereignty” granted by the Constitution, PE erred by using Eminent Domain to take easements from state-owned or state-controlled property. The PE route through NJ would have affected 42 such properties. If S.C.O.T.U.S. declines to hear this case it means that New Jersey’s position stands and it will essentially end the threat of PennEast in the state of New Jersey.

A Renewed Effort to Move Our Petition Forward

In December, we were contacted by the Clean Air Council (CAC) regarding our long languishing Petition to redesignate Aquashicola Creek to Exceptional Value (EV), thus giving the creek the highest level of protection. We are currently designated as a High Quality Cold Water Fishery (HQ-CWF), and the creek has a segment that is classified by Pa Fish & Boat Commission as a Class A wild Trout Stream. The entire stream is also a Naturally Reproducing Trout Stream.

CAC is interested in moving our Petition forward and is energizing their membership to write letters of support to the Department of Environmental Protection as well as getting the word out to other environmental groups that they work with. We are planning on putting together a webinar to get the word out as well, with a target date of mid- August. If anyone would like to assist with this project, please let us know.

It would be a great help if our members could take a few minutes to write a letter as well, even if you have done so in the past. We have copies of letters sent by some of our members that are from the original submission in 2008! Since then, there have been some major changes including the defeat of the Alpine Rose Racetrack and the addition of that property to State Gamelands 168, the discovery of a new to Pennsylvania dragonfly on the former Alpine land, and the acquisition of 250 acres along the

stream to the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge. DEP has been informed of these changes as they happened. There is a downloadable letter on our website, www.apwc-pa.com.

On an Educational Note:

Starting around this time of year some bodies of water will experience *eutrophication*. What is that?! You may wonder. This word comes from the Greek word eutrophos which means “well nourished”. That may sound good, but here it is not. This is when a body of water becomes overly enriched with minerals and nutrients. This can easily induce excessive algae growth which will result in decreased amounts of dissolved oxygen in the water. This in turn can result in stress to marine dwelling organisms and even cause die-offs such as fish kills. This decomposition uses up even more oxygen, and the cycle gets worse. So what would cause the excessive nutrients and minerals that started this whole downward spiral? One of the main offenders is often excessive use of fertilizers, so if you use these at all please use sparingly and wisely! Any kind of fecal matter from livestock, dogs, poorly maintained septic systems, large populations of waterfowl, etc. can also add to the nutrient load. Please do what you can to avoid these issues! Pick up after your dog, maintain your septic system, keep livestock out of streams, etc. If you have a problem with waterfowl please follow these guidelines: 1) Do not feed geese and ducks! This only encourages larger congregations. 2) Leave an unmowed buffer strip around the water’s edge. This will act as both a deterrent since the animals do not like walking through tall grass, plus it will provide a little riparian buffer so droppings don’t go directly into the water. And lastly, 3) Try discouraging tactics such as predator decoys and noise makers (think aluminum pie tins hung together in the breeze). If we all did our part in our corner of the world, our world would be better off!

Spring Clean-Up

Due to the Covid situation this year, our regular spring clean up at our “Adopt-A-Highway” site never took place. We would like to organize one sometime in July. We feel that it is something we can do to clean up our little 2 mile stretch of APWC road and help get our name out (or at least make us *look* good since our road will be tidy!) while still practicing safe social distancing. Please get in touch if you think you would like to lend us a gloved hand! All supplies will be provided. Thank You in advance!

In Closing:

In spite of our current situation of lock-down and not much going on, we still have bills to pay. APWC is a small organization-every member is important and every dollar we collect is put to good use! **If your membership is due the first half of the year, there will be a membership form enclosed.** We so hope you will continue to support APWC and our efforts to preserve and protect our watershed and this beautiful part of our planet. We thank you all for your support!!

Wishing You and Your Loved Ones a Safe and Healthy Summer,

Jim Vogt, President and Carolyn Lange, Treasurer and Secretary

Protect your drinking water-protect your watershed