**Earth Day Protest at Northwest Regional DEP Office, Meadville PA**

**Participating Groups and Speakers **

Allegheny College Students for Environmental Action

Students for Environmental Action is a medium for students from all majors to contribute their interdisciplinary knowledge to foster an understanding of our environment, including the physical, economic, political, and cultural conditions in which we live. This is achieved through a variety of activities that range from protests and rallies to clean-ups and petition signing, movie screenings and potlucks, our annual fashion show and so much more.

Mission statement: “Helping students to protect the environment through service, activism, and education.”

Benedictine Sisters Erie PA

Corporate Commitment:

A corporate commitment is a vision or goal that we agree to promote as a community and as individuals no matter where we are or in how many diverse ministries we might be engaged.

The corporate commitment of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie is:

As Benedictine Sisters of Erie we commit ourselves to be a healing presence and prophetic witness for peace by working for sustainability and justice, especially for women and children.

Elk County C.A.R.E.S. (Citizens Advocating Responsible Environmental Stewardship)

Elk County C.A.R.E.S. is a group of concerned citizens in Elk County PA that advocate for a healthy, sustainable environment by informing and raising awareness about the hazards of gas well drilling in our communities; including the impacts to our water quality, air quality and human health.

Fracking Truth Alliance

Fracking Truth Alliance is an informal community for residents of Lawrence and Mercer County who are concerned about hydraulic fracturing of Marcellus and Utica Shale in our area. The goal of Fracking Truth Alliance is to serve as a reference for people who would like more information about what is happening locally with fracking and what we can do to try to ensure that it will be done safely--or to get it banned altogether.

*“People are sick, animals are dying; our basic civil rights are being violated by psychopathic individuals who hide behind corporate charters and refuse to accept any responsibility for the pollution and destruction of our environment.”*

Maggie Henry, Lawrence County Organic Farmer

Maggie runs an organic farm less than a mile from the Kephart well in North Beaver Township, Lawrence County. Beyond concern for the business she painstakingly built up over the last years, she worries about nearby gas drilling because lives in an area that already severely impacted by abandoned well sites from oil and gas drilling in the “Bessemer Oil Pool” that date back a century and more. She fears these abandoned wells will act as conduits bringing methane gas and fracking fluids to the surface. Maggie possesses a map a map from the DEP that shows there are between 1,000 and 1,500 wells in the area, most of which are uncapped and abandoned and many of which have been plowed under by the farmers. Maggie, as well as a hydrologist she has consulted, believes PADEP should not have issue permits to drill in the area.

*“People buy my food because they know that it is literally the purest that you can get....“This threatens my air, my water, my farm, my livelihood,” – Maggie Henry, The Farmer’s Wife – Henry Organic Farms*

Mike Bagdes-Canning and Tim Bagdes-Canning, Cherry Valley Borough Council, Butler County

*“We are engaged in a battle for our communities. Who has a right to determine what our homelands look like: the people that live and love there or strangers looking to extract a profit? Who is in a better position to protect our communities: those with a stake in its long term health or those looking for a short term pay off. We, Marcellus Outreach Butler, would posit that any procedure that may irrevocably harm air, water, and soil is a price too steep. Any government that is not looking out for the long term health of communities is not worthy of our support.”*

PA Clean Water Action

Clean Water Action is a one million member organization of diverse people and groups joined together to protect our environment, health, economic well-being and community quality of life. Our goals include clean, safe and affordable water; prevention of health threatening pollution; creation of environmentally safe jobs and businesses; and empowerment of people to make democracy work. Clean Water Action organizes strong grassroots groups and coalitions and campaigns to elect environmental candidates and solve environmental and community problems.

Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and Air <http://www.pacwa.org/>

Access the List of the Harmed: <http://pennsylvaniaallianceforcleanwaterandair.wordpress.com/the-list/>

The Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and Air is a group of concerned citizens in Western Pennsylvania with the common goal to protect and preserve our natural resources from the dangers of Hydraulic Fracturing in the Marcellus Shale Play. Through public meetings and the media, we are committed to spreading the word about the hazards of chemical pollution of our water, air, and land; the increased demand for fresh water sources; the strains on public services and infrastructure due to increased traffic and population; and the negative impacts from pollution and development on wildlife and nature.

Mission: To raise awareness of the dangers of Hydraulic Fracturing on public health and the environment and to halt any activity that threatens the quality of life of residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Stephen Cleghorn – Paradise Gardens and Farm LLC

On November 24, 2012, Dr. J. Stephen Cleghorn, owner of a 50-acre organic farm in Pennsylvania, became the first landowner in the United States to use a conservation easement to recognize and protect the rights of water, forest and wild ecosystems. The easement bans activities, like hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, which would violate those rights, and elevates the rights of nature above the power claimed by extractive energy corporations to despoil the environment.

Earlier in the year, on May 10, 2012, Dr. Cleghorn declared Paradise Gardens to be “A farm inviolate” as he blessed the land with the ashes of his beloved late wife, Dr. Lucinda Hart-Gonzalez.

*“The legacy of Rachel Carson in Pennsylvania is now a dead letter in Pennsylvania given the cozy alliance between the shale gas industry and the department that is supposed to protect Pennsylvania's environment for future generations. DEP has become so corrupted and politicized that its core mission has been lost altogether. If Rachel were alive today, she'd demand that her name be removed from the building in Harrisburg where DEP is headquartered. And she'd be here with us kicking DEP's butt. Since she cannot be here, it is our job to stand up and protect Pennsylvania.”*