

# Conservation Committee Report

Volume 10 Issue 2

By Jack Walters, ACSL Conservation Chair

February 2008



## The Conservation Pledge

I give my pledge as an  
American to save  
and faithfully defend from  
waste,  
the natural resources of my  
country;  
the soil, the water, the air,  
the minerals, the plant life and  
the wildlife.

This is my Pledge!

### ***Inside this issue:***

**\$1.2 MILLION  
INVESTMENT TO  
PROTECT PA.'S WILD  
RESOURCES**

**Page 3**

**Making homes greener  
and safer from radon**  
**Page 5**

**Western Pennsylvania  
Conservancy Sells  
Property to Fisherman's  
Cove Conservation Group**  
**Page 6**

## DOE Report: Alaska North Slope Has Plenty of Potential

Report Examines Future of Oil and Natural Gas Resources in Arctic Alaska

The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Fossil Energy has issued a comprehensive new report *Alaska North Slope Oil and Gas: A Promising Future or an Area in Decline?* To answer this question, the report examines the potential for Arctic Alaska to remain a major contributor to the Nation's domestic energy supply under different development scenarios.

Future projections were viewed from two perspectives, an oil-centered near term (2005 to 2015) and a long term (2015 to 2050) marked by the emergence of gas as a major factor in exploration and development activities. Key findings of the report indicate that the future for Alaska North Slope oil and gas

(continued on page 2)

## RECYCLING GRANTS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT LOCAL COLLECTION PROGRAMS

More than 10 Million Residents Served by Recycling Programs

Municipal recycling programs that boost Pennsylvania's economy and protect its environment are invited to apply for the latest round of recycling development and implementation grants.

"Recycling is an important tool in improving the state economy, protecting its environment and reducing energy consumption," Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty said. "Pennsylvania is already a leader in recycling and, to keep the state's programs strong, we are investing in local programs to help them become financially self-sustaining."

To be eligible for recycling development and implementation grants, applicants must submit a plan that includes actions and strategies for optimizing a

(continued on page 4)

## Alaska North Slope Has Plenty of Potential

(continued)

resources ranges from very promising to limited depending on how many of the following assumptions apply:

An Alaska North Slope natural gas pipeline is operational by 2016.

Oil and gas prices remain near current high values.

Federal and Alaskan fiscal policies remain stable and support the huge investments required.

Reserves in known fields increase through discovery of new pools, application of new technology, or higher oil prices.

The 1002 Area of Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is opened for exploration and development.

Exploration is allowed in the most prospective areas of National Petroleum Reserve Alaska.

The Beaufort and Chukchi Seas are available for exploration and development without major restrictions.

If all assumptions were to occur, an additional 36 billion barrels of oil and 137 trillion cubic feet of natural gas would be added over current reserve estimates. This result would help limit oil imports and increase America's energy security.

From an exploration perspective, the North Slope is not a mature petroleum province and may provide oil, and potentially natural gas, for years to come. Thus far, most natural gas produced during oil production has been reinjected to enhance oil recovery. With the decline in oil production and a stranded reserve of no less than 35 Tcf of recoverable natural gas, interest is building toward transporting the resource to domestic markets.

The contribution of North Slope oil has slipped from 25 percent of U.S. domestic production in 1988 to about 17 percent today. The certainty of a gas pipeline is expected to increase exploration across the North Slope and should result in new discoveries and infrastructure expansions that extend the life of the Trans Alaskan Pipeline System (TAPS) beyond 2050. An early shutdown of TAPS would potentially strand about one billion barrels of oil reserves from the fields analyzed.

The two-volume report, which was prepared by the Office of Fossil Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory, consists of a summary report that offers a set of hypothetical scenarios and a full report that contains extensive detail. Together they outline the possible future for an area that covers the geographical region of Arctic Alaska north of the Brooks Range, from the Canadian border on the east to the Chukchi Sea Outer Continental Shelf on the west.

Source: U.S. DOE

## GOVERNOR RENDELL ANNOUNCES \$1.2 MILLION INVESTMENT TO PROTECT PA.'S WILD RESOURCES

Governor Edward G. Rendell today said more of Pennsylvania's native plants; fish and animals will be conserved with the investment of \$1.2 million in the Wild Resource Conservation Program.

"Pennsylvania is blessed with a wealth of species, and we have a duty to conserve these treasured natural resources for future generations," Governor Rendell said. "These grants to environmental groups, educators and researchers committed to the study and examination of wildlife resources are part of our ongoing efforts to improve and enhance our environment."

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources administers the Wild Resource Conservation Program, which is providing 26 grants through the state's Growing Greener program. The program works with the Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Fish and Boat Commission to operate the program.

"All of the projects aided by these grants will make important contributions to the three pillars the Wild Resource Conservation Program uses to support biodiversity in Pennsylvania: research, conservation, and education," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "Whether it's tracking migration of the eastern red bat or charting mussel populations in the Susquehanna River, each one of these studies is invaluable in the conservation of our natural resources."

Launched in 1982, the Wild Resource Conservation Program primarily finances research and protection efforts for native, non-game and wild plant species. Funds from the program have supported the reintroduction of otters, osprey, peregrine falcons and fishers to Pennsylvania; identified new plant and animal species; located rare plant species within the state; researched habitat for migrating birds; and provided educational materials to schools.

In addition to Growing Greener funds, the Wild Resource Conservation Program relies on state income tax refund donations, license plate proceeds and donations to support its work to protect and identify species of special concern.

For more information, visit [www.dcnr.state.pa.us](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us) (under Quick Links, choose WRCP).

Source: PA DCNR

**RECYCLING GRANTS AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT LOCAL COLLECTION PROGRAMS****(continued)**

program's self-sufficiency. The plan should include strategies for reducing costs and generating revenues, provisions for establishing waste reduction and recycling incentives, mechanisms for public outreach and stakeholder input, and methods to document progress.

Grants of up to \$500,000 are available, and applications must be received or postmarked by June 20. Funding priorities for the program include: Incentive-based pricing and collection programs designed to increase the quantities and types of recyclable materials, and reduce the quantity of waste collected;

Curbside, residential collection vehicles that utilize alternatives or supplements to petroleum for fuel;

Multi-municipal collection, processing and materials marketing programs; and

Equipment and education programs to collect and/or process fibrous materials like corrugated cardboard, junk mail and mixed paper that currently is not included in the applicant's recycling program.

DEP commissioned a technical report titled Building Financially Sustainable Recycling Programs to provide assistance to local governments in developing methods and strategies for reducing costs and growing revenues. The report identifies options and practical steps to move programs toward improving financial sustainability. The financial stability of Pennsylvania's recycling programs is important to the state's economy and its environment. In 2005, Pennsylvanians recycled a record 4.86 million tons of municipal waste, saving consumers and industries nearly \$263 million in disposal costs and providing businesses with materials valued at \$577 million. The commonwealth's recycling and reuse industry includes more than 3,200 establishments with total annual sales of \$18.4 billion. The industry employs more than 81,000 people and has an annual payroll of \$2.9 billion. Additionally, these businesses add more than \$305 million in taxes to the state treasury.

The environmental benefits of recycling extend far beyond diverting materials from landfills and incinerators. Recycling saves energy, reduces air and water pollution and conserves natural resources as compared to manufacturing items with virgin materials.

For more information on the grant program or the Building Financially Sustainable Recycling Programs report, visit [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us), keyword: Recycling. Click on "Grants" for a copy of the recycling development and implementation grant application.

Source: PA DEP

## Making homes greener and safer from radon

For people who are shopping for new homes, EPA has some good news. Radon-resistant construction practices are being used more frequently in new homes built throughout the country.

Radon is a cancer-causing naturally occurring gas that enters homes through foundation cracks, drains, and openings. Although you can't see, smell, or taste radon, it can reach harmful levels if trapped indoors. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers and claims 20,000 lives every year.

"It's never too late to reduce your risk of lung cancer. Don't wait another day. Test your home for radon," said EPA Regional Administrator Donald S. Welsh. "And, if you are building a new home, use the radon-resistant construction practices."

Radon-resistant construction techniques help reduce radon infiltration into a home. The techniques include gas permeable layers beneath the home's slab, plastic sheeting, sealing and caulking, a vent pipe to redirect radon, a fan and junction box.

It is more cost-effective to use radon-resistant techniques while building a home, than it is to install in an existing home. For new homes, materials and labor costs are \$350 to \$500 compared to retrofitting an existing home for \$800 to \$2,500. Techniques vary slightly for different foundations and site requirements. The techniques may also increase your home's energy efficiency.

Based on the most recent analysis by the National Association Home Builders Research Center of homes built during 2001, 65,000 new homes incorporated radon-resistant features. This is six percent of the 1,124,000 new single-family detached homes built.

Whether your new home is new construction or not, EPA encourages you to test it for radon. A simple home test costs less than \$25 and testing is the only way to detect radon levels. If your home is not new, a radon mitigation system can also be installed if your radon test levels are above the recommended levels of 4 pCi/l.

Information and an image showing the radon-resistant construction techniques available at <http://www.epa.gov/radon/construc.html>

Source: U.S. EPA

## Western Pennsylvania Conservancy Sells Property to Fisherman's Cove Conservation Group

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) has sold 207 acres in Venango County to Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation (FCPF), an organization formed to protect the Allegheny River watershed. Conditions of the sales agreement ensure the permanent protection of this property, which has both conservation and archaeological significance. The land will be open for public recreational use.

"The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is very pleased to sell this property to the Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation, which shares our conservation goals for this natural, scenic and historic property," said WPC President and CEO Tom Saunders. FCPF President Cathy Kentzel added, "This acquisition and partnership with WPC forms the cornerstone of our organization's efforts to preserve the natural and historic legacy of the region."



WPC sold the parcel for less than its market value in order to enable its purchase by Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation. Purchased by WPC from Robert and Rachel Kerr between 1973 and 1976, the property consists of a wooded plateau and a steep, tree-covered hillside facing the Allegheny River and Sandy Creek. It includes approximately 50 acres of level river frontage. The property is bounded by Sandy Creek and private lands on the west and north and on the east by the Allegheny River. Archaeological and historical studies of the property show that it was intermittently used over the past 9,000 years by the region's indigenous American Indian populations as well as by early settlers and their descendents.

Dr. Sue Ann Curtis, an FCPF director and expert on the region's cultural history, said, "The property provides an important record of economic, social and political change in the region over time and the adaptations made by its indigenous peoples and subsequent settlement by frontier pioneers and their successors. Preservation of this record is a key mission of the Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation."

(continued on page 7)

## **Fisherman's Cove Conservation Group**

(continued)

WPC and The Archaeological Conservancy, a national non-profit organization dedicated to acquiring and preserving the nation's best remaining archaeological sites, will act as co-holders of a conservation agreement on the 207-acre parcel that was jointly developed by the three conservation organizations. Paul Gardner, The Archaeological Conservancy's Midwest regional director, said, "The Kerr site is an intriguing late prehistoric occupation site that has seen little scientific investigation. The Archaeological Conservancy is happy to play a role in permanently protecting it for future generations of Pennsylvanians."

The conservation agreement places permanent restrictions on this land, prohibiting subdivision as well as oil and gas exploration there. A conservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, is a commonly used, effective and legally binding means to protect natural and cultural resources for the benefit of future generations. WPC holds 145 conservation agreements, protecting more than 30,000 acres in Western Pennsylvania.

### **About the Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation**

The Fisherman's Cove Preservation Foundation, established in 2004, is dedicated to the conservation and preservation of land, water, and cultural resources in the Allegheny River watershed and promoting public values and educational programs that recognize the interdependent relationships between people and their environment. The FCPF was founded as a community-based organization to conserve the region's rich natural and historical legacy through the creation of protected greenways and preserves. The Foundation pursues these goals through education, research, environmental restoration, and community involvement programs and activities.

The FCPF consists of community members and professionals with long-standing ties to the land and a commitment to understanding and preserving the natural character and rich cultural legacy of the region. Plans for the Kerr Tract property include working with forestry and other specialists to restore the natural forest plant assemblage, creating habitat for indigenous animal species, protecting the riparian buffer, understanding and preserving the property's culture-history, and using the property as an outdoor classroom to promote public awareness and understanding of the importance preserving the region's great diversity.

### **About The Archaeological Conservancy**

The Archaeological Conservancy, established in 1980, is the only national non-profit organization dedicated to acquiring and preserving the best of our nation's remaining archaeological sites. Based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Conservancy also operates regional offices in Mississippi, Maryland, Ohio, and California.

Every day, prehistoric and historic archaeological sites in the United States are lost forever--along with the precious information they contain. Modern-day looters use backhoes and bulldozers to recover artifacts for the international market. Urban development and agricultural methods such as land leveling and topsoil mining destroy ancient sites. The Conservancy protects these sites by acquiring the land on which they rest and by establishing conservation easements, preserving them for posterity.

### **About the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy**

To date, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy has protected more than 216,000 acres of natural lands in Pennsylvania, which represent nearly half of all land protected by land trust organizations in the state.

(continued on page 8)

**Fisherman's Cove Conservation Group**

(continued)

Now in its 75th year, Pennsylvania's first conservancy continues to partner with grassroots organizations to protect land, restore watersheds and save natural habitats.

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) maintains and operates Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece home, Fallingwater®, which was designed in 1935 and entrusted to the Conservancy in 1963 by Edgar Kaufmann jr. A symbol of living in harmony with nature, Fallingwater offers a wide variety of educational programs to its more than 135,000 annual visitors.

Each year, WPC plants and maintains community gardens and greening projects throughout Western Pennsylvania. In 2007, WPC partnered with more than 5,000 volunteers and dozens of community organizations to plant 140 gardens in 19 western Pennsylvania counties.

Source: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy