



## Time to wake up and smell the natural gas

### WINTER 2012

#### Index

Gearing up for gas drilling	Page 1
Fishing for young members	Page 4
15-year awards	Page 3
BWA at work	Page 2
Our new office	Page 2
H2Ology	Page 2
In Recognition	Page 3
President's corner	Page 3

#### Membership:

Adopt a Stream  
 •Brodhead Hunting and Fishing Association  
 •Paradise Falls Lutheran Association  
 •Brodhead Creek Regional Authority

Jeanette Peterson  
 John Smith

Who says there's no gas under the Brodhead watershed? Who says we've got nothing local to worry about from Marcellus Shale drilling? Who says the Marcellus is the only geologic formation with gas?

Who says local municipal officials won't face troubling issues from gas drilling elsewhere? And what says they can act even if there is a problem?

Poconos attorney and municipal officials will bring themselves up to speed on drilling issues on Friday, Feb. 10, from 11:30 to 1 p.m. at the Monroe County Bar Association office on Main Street in Stroudsburg. Mark Szybist, staff attorney with PennFuture, will update attendees on the powers and duties of Pennsylvania municipalities under Section 27 of the state Constitution. Details of his presentation will depend in part on what our Legislature has done to the Oil and Gas Act since January 1. Changes are expected to effect municipal powers; drilling interests are working hard to take decision-making power out of local hands.



"I will discuss development of oil and gas in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Code, pre-emption of municipal powers under the pre-amendment Oil and Gas Act, and how our Constitution, establishing that the Commonwealth is the trustee of our natural resources, informs the debate," Szybist said.

The Poconos aren't exempt from the issue simply because Marcellus shale doesn't underlie the region.

"I'd question the commonly held attitude that there is no gas under the Brodhead watershed," Szybist said. "The Marcellus may be too thin to be productive under Monroe County, but there are other formations. As extraction technology continues to improve, and the price of gas rises (eventually it will rise, even though it's been declining in the past few years), there may be reason to explore those formations.

"Second, assuming that there is no gas under the watershed, the watershed is close enough to areas that do have gas that it could be a site of support operations. And pipelines could be put in the watershed to carry gas to markets in New Jersey and southeastern Pennsylvania. And invasive species carried to gas-producing areas by operations activities could migrate to the watershed.

"Third, the watershed is downwind of areas where the Marcellus is being developed, and could see increased air pollution because of the development.

"Fourth, the watershed may be close enough to Marcellus-producing areas that degradation of natural resources in those areas could have some effect on real estate values in the Watershed," Szybist said.

His presentation is sponsored jointly by the bar association and BWA. Lunch costs were defrayed by a donation from MCS, Inc of Williamstown, NJ, sponsors of products for erosion control and stormwater management.

The "lunch and learn" will be at the Monroe County Bar Center, 913 Main Street, Stroudsburg. Cost for non-bar association members is \$45.

For registration details: [dburdge@monroebar.org](mailto:dburdge@monroebar.org).