

Outdoor Tourism at Risk
By Edward Wilson, vice president
10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania

In the 12-county Pennsylvania Wilds region of north central Pennsylvania, DCNR has spent more than $140 million over six years to construct elk-watching facilities, build trails, upgrade state parks and enhance the experience of visitors to the region.

Other agencies made complementary investments in tourism marketing, infrastructure improvements and environmental restoration projects.

Research shows that these investments already are paying off in terms of increased visitation, visitor spending, tourism-related employment and tax revenues in a part of the state that desperately needs new economic opportunities.

By rushing to open tens of thousands of additional acres of state forest land to gas drilling, however, the state risks killing the goose that lays the golden egg of tourism.

Excessive drilling will permanently change the aesthetics of the state forests, restrict access to trails, disturb habitat, interfere with hunting and fishing, and generally make our public lands less attractive to visitors.

State forests should be managed to benefit all Pennsylvanians, and that includes extracting resources in ways that are compatible with sound environmental stewardship. Let's not balance the budget on the back of our public land ...

Don’t let what happened in Wyoming happen here!

The Jonah Field is 30,000 acres, and authorized for a total of 3600 wells. Pinedale, (locally called "The Mesa") is about 198,000 acres, and authorized for a total of 900 wells--and there's a proposal to add thousands more.

But as those numbers go up, other numbers are going down. Mule deer usage of winter range in Pinedale has decreased 46 percent over the last five years. Sage grouse populations closest to development areas are threatened. As for antelope, their 6,000-year-old migration corridor between Grand Teton National Park and the Upper Green River Basin is being squeezed. Early studies indicate radio-collared pronghorns are avoiding newly-developed areas.

Links to hunting, fishing and outdoor-interest publications can be found at www.un-Naturalgas.org/hunting.htm

To contact your local action organization, go to: www.DamascusCitizens.org

Hunting and Fishing at Risk

Has your quarry been drinking from drill cutting pits?

Open pit on BoosLaw Road, Smyrna, Chenango County

Gas drilling threatens
WILDLIFE
HABITAT
ACCESS
SAFETY
**Wildlife at Risk**

Drilling waters are toxic. A sagging three foot snow fence will not keep game from open pits of salty water. Migratory birds are attracted to these poisoned "ponds". USDA and state food safety and inspection services quarantine livestock that come into contact with drilling fluids to prevent human consumption of potentially contaminated meat. Wildlife agencies are not taking the same safeguards: hunter-harvested game is being consumed despite possible health risks.

The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, a multi-agency partnership, found in its comprehensive review that habitat fragmentation and sedimentation are two of the major impacts limiting the health of brook trout populations.

Gas development has harmed sage grouse populations in western Wyoming, while in Alaska, geese have been affected. Out west, drilling activities have impacted elk and their habitat, especially during the construction and drilling phases. Drilling activities have forced pronghorn antelope and mule deer to increase their winter ranges.

Conservationists and labor leaders testified that energy development on public land is failing wildlife and squeezing out hunters and anglers. Even where gas companies have halted operations for the season, hunters have been affected. One sporting goods store owner said hunters told him that they lost their traditional hunting spots in areas where drilling activity was proceeding from consuming poisonous material produced from consuming poisonous materials.

Planning to Eat What You Hunt?

**Access and Safety at Risk**

- How will the reservation be affected?
- How will the reservation be used?
- Where will the leased area be?
- Who will test for toxins?
- Will the lease allow for public access?
- What happens if a firearm is fired?
- How will the lease allow for public safety?
- What will the lease allow for hunting?
- Who will test venison for pollutants?
- Will the DEC or NYSDAM decide if hunter-harvested game can be consumed?
- How will the lease be enforced?
- Will the lease allow for infrastructure?
- Where will visitors be allowed to hunt?
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- Who will test venison for pollutants?
- Will the DEC or NYSDAM decide if hunter-harvested game can be consumed?
- How will the venison donation program be affected?
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