

Save the Loyalsock Coalition Urges Gov. Wolf to Continue his Support for Public Lands by Protecting the Loyalsock State Forest

July 14, 2015

(Harrisburg, Pa.) — With hundreds of thousands of citizens enjoying Pennsylvania's public lands this summer season, the [Save the Loyalsock Coalition](#) is urging Gov. Tom Wolf to use his power to prevent gas drilling on the at-risk Clarence Moore Lands of the Loyalsock State Forest, which are not protected by the Governor's recent moratorium on new leases.

In January, Gov. Wolf issued Executive Order 2015-03 to once again prohibit new leases for oil and gas development in our state parks and forests, reversing a decision made during the Corbett administration. The Coalition appreciates past statements the Governor made regarding the Clarence Moore Lands, indicating that he is open to exploring the legal options available.

The Save the Loyalsock Coalition, comprised of statewide and local conservation, recreation, fishing and outdoors organizations, has worked since 2012 with its more than 100,000 members combined to protect this last unfragmented forest in Lycoming County.

The extraordinary 25,000-acre tract of the Loyalsock State Forest known as the Clarence Moore Lands includes irreplaceable natural and recreational resources such as the Exceptional Value watersheds of Rock Run and Pleasant Stream, the Old Loggers Path hiking trail, and a National Audubon Society-designated Important Bird Area.

"Unbroken wilderness areas across our Commonwealth are being increasingly reduced due to gas development infrastructure," said Larry Schweiger, president and CEO of [PennFuture](#). "Keeping the Loyalsock's unique Clarence Moore Lands safe for citizens to hike, fish, and experience while protecting rare and endangered species' critical habitat are values shared by countless Pennsylvanians. We urge the Governor to help keep this treasured part of Penn's Woods protected for our lifetimes and beyond."

Joanne Kilgour, executive director of the [Sierra Club, Pennsylvania Chapter](#), noted that, "Over the past several years, Pennsylvania's landscape has been permanently altered by gas development. Gov. Wolf's moratorium on new leases of state parks and forests was an important step toward protecting non-leased public lands, and we appreciate that action. Today, we call on the Governor to again stand up for the lands and citizens of the Commonwealth and exercise his legal authority to protect one of the region's last intact forests."

[Responsible Drilling Alliance](#) board member, Mark Szybist added, "The Clarence Moore lands are unique, for what they offer to Pennsylvania and its citizens, and because of a highly unusual legal situation the Commonwealth has a unique opportunity to protect them. Indeed, under Article I, Section 27 of the state Constitution, that opportunity is also a duty -- and we call on Governor Wolf to confirm his commitment to it."

Contact.

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***** Letter to Gov. Tom Wolf *****

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http://www.saveloyalsock.org/Documents/LoyalsockCoalition_20150714_GovWolf_Letter.pdf