



# IROQUOIS MESSENGER

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

## FRACKING AND OIL UPDATES

### NOT YOUR GRANDMA'S GAS WELL!

In the Marcellus Shale, the gas will be extracted from 5,000 to 8,000 feet deep. The gas is not in large pockets so water and chemicals are pumped down under high pressure to shatter the rock (hydrofracking).

Loud compressors run 24/7 to force the gas out during the well's entire lifetime. The constant noise level is equivalent to that of a propeller plane flying overhead.

Well sites are industrial areas of 40 acres for a single well and 640 acres for multiple wells. They contain roads, drill rigs, pipelines, storage tanks, compressors, dozens of tanker trucks, holding lagoons for toxic fluids, bright lights, and buildings for workers.

### HYDROFRACKIN' ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Hydrofracking can harm agriculture, wineries, recreation and tourism. These all bring in more local revenue than gas.

- Property values plummet. Some banks will not give mortgages to properties with leases.
- Road and bridge repair can be extensive. Each well fracking requires 500 to 2,500 tanker truck-loads of water and waste. Truck traffic will continue during production.
- Local job creation is a myth. Most jobs are filled by out of state oil-service specialists.

### EPA HYDROFRACKING STUDY

The EPA recently announced a 2-year study of the process of hydrofracking, a very important step. Sierra Club and other environmental organizations are currently pushing for a moratorium in New York, until the study is completed and released.

### GASLAND SHOWING BIG SUCCESS!

On June 11, Sierra Iroquois, Noon, Onondaga Nation, PAR, and Izack Walton League, brought the award-winning film *Gasland* to the Palace Theater, along with its Director, Josh Fox. The audience nearly filled the theater and participated in a Q and A session afterward, with Fox on the panel.

Thanks to all who worked to make this a success. The film stimulated requests for lawn signs, buttons and petitions. It also spearheaded the formation of Shaleshock CNY, which will provide follow up meetings and initiatives to keep the message growing.

### OIL SPILL ACTION

Congratulations and all our best to Ex-Com member, Jack Ramsden!

He was called by the National Park Service to work on the Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico, starting on June 20th. He responded to an e-mail, looking for available retirees a couple of weeks ago and was hired for an administrative position. He will be working out of an operations center in Mobile, AL, for the next 30-60 days.

## WANT A LITTLE GAS WITH YOUR WATER??

You cannot drink the gas from the Marcellus Shale, or any other Shale. Water, pure water, is the most basic need of our civilization. Once contaminated, watersheds may never recover. Hydrofracking endangers watersheds.

- Water use: Each fracking uses 2 to 9 million gallons of water, taken from streams, ponds and aquifers for free.
- Toxic Chemicals: Each fracking uses a cocktail of chemicals, which are kept secret from the public. The oil and gas industry is the only industry exempted from the Clean Water Act.
- Radioactivity and Heavy metals: The 30 to 80% of the fracking fluid that regurgitates out of a well is even more toxic than before. It has picked up radioactivity, salts, and heavy metals (arsenic and mercury) from the shale.
- Water Contamination: Accidents have occurred, including toxic spills, explosions, and contamination of drinking wells, aquifers, and surface water. Some people have so much methane in their tap water that they can light it. Bubbles in the ground can burn like a gas lamp.
- Proximity to Homes and Wells: Wells can be drilled and fracked up to 100 feet from a house, 50 feet from a lake or stream and 150 feet from a school, and right under your home.
- Disposal: There is no good solution. Used fracking fluid requires specialized treatment that does not yet exist in NY. Fluid may be trucked to PA or injected deep into empty gas wells from which it may migrate.
- Air pollution: Toxic gases such as benzene, acetone, radon, methane and sulfur are released at well sites. They endanger workers, lease-holders and neighbors. Some drilling areas now rival Los Angles in their smog levels.



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## PARKS CLOSED    PARKS SORT OF OPEN    PARKS OPEN!!!

In the battle of the budget one of the success stories proved that if enough people contact their elected representatives on an issue, change will happen.

The Sierra Iroquois Group joined forces with the Council of Park Friends (CPF) to produce the largest gathering in recent memory at Clark Reservation. According to park police, our April encounter rallied over 700 park supporters, who demanded that state parks remain open. The outpouring

was really exciting.

Shortly after that, the Central New York Parks Regional Director met with CPF and worked out a way to keep Clark open. Volunteers demonstrated their willingness to mow lawns, clean toilets, pick up litter and weed!! Interim status: the park would be "available."

After the plan was in motion, the state promised that all Parks would remain open.

None of us wanted the funds to come

from the Environmental Protection Fund, but that is what happened — at least on paper. As this Messenger goes to press, the whole budget seems to be up in the air, so watch and wait for the results. The parks were all funded for one year, and are no longer a bargaining tool.

Good message: parks and green space are really important to lots of people.

Good lesson: the importance of using online social networks to spread the news fast. Senator David Valesky, our guest speaker, gave us only 4 days notice for the rally.

## SUMMER EVENTS

Sierra Club Indoor and Outdoor events encourage us to Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet. They are free and open to everybody. Parks may charge entry fees.

### THORNDEN PARK — AUGUST 15

Meet at Thornden Park swimming pool parking lot at 10 AM for a walk around Thornden's overlook, rose garden, and wooded paths. Then hike to Barry Park to see the birds, and maybe to the overlook on Westminster if people have the energy. This would be around 6 miles, and people could cut off whenever they want. The streets aren't too confusing to find your way back. Stop at Recess Coffee House on Harvard for vegan sandwiches, cookies and drinks. Wear comfortable shoes and bring water.

Information: 428-1905

Get directions from Mapquest: search for S. Beech St. and Cherry St. Syracuse, NY.

From downtown Syracuse: Start out going south on S. State St/US-11 toward E. Onondaga St. Turn left onto E. Genesee St/ NY 92 E. Continue to follow NY 92 E. for 1 mile. Turn right onto S. Beech St. Drive 0.3 miles. End at S Beech St. and Cherry St.

## FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Tree huggers,

Must admit this warm weather does make for spectacular flower displays. The daylilies (Yes, I know they are not native.) that grow by my roadside, and which I never see in bloom (I am in the Adirondacks by July) are in full bloom, along with chicory. A nice color combo.

I am not advocating for global warming, but even that issue has supporters. Greenland hopes for more. Some say it could help get us away from fossil fuel. I am waiting for someone to say it will boost our economy, riding on the back of the sunscreen and umbrella industries.

Back to my yard...

The chipmunks returned to their homes under the deck and produced at least two small chippies. Hard to say how many as they move too fast for the census taker. Other critters include a skunk (a regular member of the group) now living under the shed along with a woodchuck — sort of the odd couple. Fortunately my two cats pay no attention except to watch them from the deck. Human visitors are not quite so calm about the skunk.

Birds thrive in great numbers and charge the picture window — mostly blue jays and morning doves — but so far this year received only some bad headaches, no deaths. The wrens set up housekeeping in one bird box and chickadees in the other after much extensive remodeling. The Cardinals are in the same bush out front and complain as usual if I pass too close.

My bird population just added a new species. In my back meadow (AKA unmown, former lawn) early this morning was a hen turkey with 6 chicks eating seeds on the tall grasses. At least that is what mom was doing. I guess the chicks were finding seeds on short grasses.

The front-yard rabbits are making sure that any plans I've had about growing some tomatoes would be bonsai versions.

Please, take some time to enjoy what we try to protect, as we mourn humans and critters that are suffering from and drowning in our fossil fuel addiction.

For the earth and all its critters.  
Martha Loew