

EARTH CONSERVANCY NEWS

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VISIONING WORKSHOP PRODUCES FEEDBACK FOR LAND USE PLAN

Despite the unexpected "Nor'easter" which caused a postponement in Earth Conservancy's first public meeting on its land use plan, more than 100 people attended the rescheduled Visioning Workshop held November 21st at Luzerne County Community College.

EC President and CEO Mike Dziak opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their participation in this important gathering. "If our land use plan is to be successful, it must reflect the views of the community," Dziak said. After Land Use Planning Committee (LUPC) committee chairman Ed Schechter conducted some brief committee business, the meeting was turned over to representatives of EDAW, Inc., Earth Conservancy's land use planning consultants. Richard Dorrier, project manager, presented an overview of EDAW's activities to date. Project principal Cales Givens then instructed the crowd in how the workshop would be structured.



Trish Curran, an employee of Hammer, Siler, George, one of the regional firms working with EDAW, records her small group's ideas on land uses.

The audience broke into ten small groups of ten people each. Each of these groups, aided by a consultant staff member, was asked to develop a list of the positive and negative aspects of our region, appropriate and inappropriate uses for Earth Conservancy's 17,000 acres, and an overall vision for the future.

Forty-five minutes later, the small groups' ideas were presented to the larger group. The groups had come to many of the same conclusions on the pros and cons of the area.

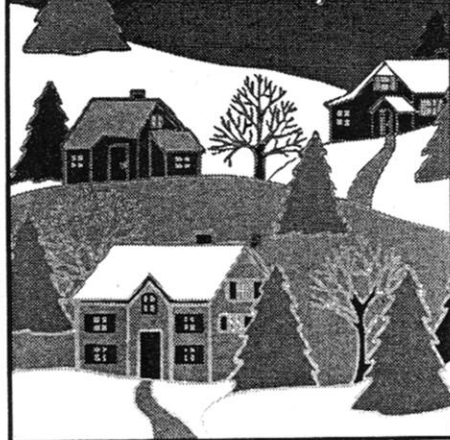
Positive characteristics noted were the highway infrastructure, the quality of life, the small town atmosphere, the work force, educational opportunities, the low crime rate, and the cultural and environmental diversity of the valley. Negative aspects mentioned were the physical and economic effects of the mining era, the lack of good paying jobs, a lack of cooperation among local governments, a rich/poor class system, and a "not in my backyard" attitude.

Appropriate uses for the land mentioned most frequently were nature and recreation areas, gamelands, an area reserved for all terrain vehicles, commercial and industrial development, and mid and low income



Mike Dziak, left, President of Earth Conservancy, and Cales Givens, EDAW project principal, discuss the structure of the visioning workshop with the audience.

All of us at Earth Conservancy
wish you a happy & healthy
holiday season!



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EC initiates discussion on illegal dumping



As these two photos show, illegal dumping is a significant problem on EC land. The December 12th meeting with municipal representatives addressed this issue.

As this publication went to press, Earth Conservancy was anticipating a December 12th meeting with elected officials from all twenty communities where EC's land is located.

Mike Dziak invited the mayors, and the chairs of the boards of commissioners and supervisors to convene at Earth Conservancy's Ashley offices to discuss the pervasive problem of trash and garbage illegally dumped on our area's landscapes.

Since Earth Conservancy bought the 17,000 acres of old Blue Coal land and became familiar with the more than 600 separate parcels that comprise the land, we have become increasingly aware of the amount of trash and garbage deposited not only on our property but *everywhere*. This problem has only worsened over the months, prompting Mr. Dziak to ask individuals from throughout the county to get together to brainstorm about the problem, to discuss creative ways in which all of us could collaborate to put an end to the spoiling of our naturally beautiful area.

Visitors to our region say it is trashier than most places they have seen; ultimately, trash affects the economic development of our region. We hope the discussion that begins on December 12th can continue constructively until we can resolve this problem together. ♦

(con't)

Visioning Workshop produces feedback for land use plan

residential areas. Inappropriate uses mentioned most frequently were landfills, transfer stations, strip mining, and nuclear waste disposal sites.

Many of those present said they appreciated having the opportunity to have a say in the future development of Earth Conservancy's 17,000 acres of land. Mike Dziak voiced his reaction to the workshop in closing by saying, "I'm really happy with the participation; it's great to see people express themselves the way you have. Your feedback is going to be a valuable tool for us as we develop this plan."

The information collected at the visioning workshop will be compiled and analyzed by EDAW, incorporated into alternative plans for the land, and presented at future workshops where the community's

reaction will be sought. At the conclusion of the process, the plan will be presented for approval to the Land Use Planning Committee which will then recommend it for approval by the Board of Directors.

The next meeting of the Land Use Planning Committee will be January 9, 1996 at 6:30 pm in the Earth Conservancy offices in Ashley. This meeting will not be a participatory workshop like our November 21st gathering, but instead will be an informational presentation by two panels to which the public is invited. The first panel will discuss trends in Industrial/Institutional Development in our area, and the other will address local Residential, Retail, Recreational/Tourism activities. ♦



NEXT PLANNING MEETING SCHEDULED

Earth Conservancy's Land Use Planning Committee will meet in January to discuss various suitable land uses and potential development. Two panels of experts will present information. The public is invited to attend.

DATE..... January 9, 1996
LOCATION..... Earth Conservancy
101 So. Main Street,
Ashley
TIME..... 6:30 pm
QUESTIONS?..... Call Elizabeth
Ortega at 823-3445.

After the January 9th meeting, the Land Use Planning Committee will next look at environmental issues in our region, and how such issues might be constraints to planning for the eventual use of Earth Conservancy's 17,000 acres. The date for this meeting has not yet been set; be sure to check next month's issue of Earth Conservancy News for the date and time.

A Note of Thanks

All of us at Earth Conservancy thank those of you who attended our Visioning Workshop at Luzerne County Community College on November 21st. You were one of more than 100 community residents who cared enough about the future of our area to share your insights, knowledge, and ideas with us.

We hope you will continue to participate in Earth Conservancy's land use planning process over the next year or so. We need the involvement of interested individuals like you to make this planning process successful. Our next meeting will be held on January 9, 1996 at the Earth Conservancy offices at 101 South Main Street in Ashley, beginning at 6:30 pm. We hope you can join us then.

Thank you again for attending our workshop. It is commitment and participation like yours that brightens the future for all of us in Luzerne County.

Sincerely,

Mike Dziak

Earth Co

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PROJECT UPDATE

In addition to its work on a long-range land use plan, Earth Conservancy continues to be involved in a number of environmentally related projects that are funded by various federal and state grants. These projects are part of EC's mission to improve our region's economic competitiveness and quality of life. Here is an update on these projects:

LAND RECLAMATION

Earth Conservancy will begin reclaiming a 47-acre parcel in Nanticoke as soon as the winter weather breaks. It is hoped that all of the necessary permits for the project will be in hand by January. The reclamation will include leveling hills of mine spoil, filling in pits, grading, and seeding the area.

EC staff met with Nanticoke Mayor Wasil Kobela in October to outline the project for him; they then met with the Nanticoke Council on November 30. A meeting for neighbors adjacent to the parcel, located at Prospect Street and Middle Road, was held December 4.

This project, and two others that have been identified for reclamation next year, are technically supported by scientists from Wilkes University's School of Science and Engineering, under the direction of Dr. Brian Redmond. Funding is provided by the Advanced Research Projects Agency of the Department of Defense.

COMPUTERIZED SYSTEM FOR SURVEY AND LAND USE

Earth Conservancy is developing a computer model which provides a large scale environmental and geographic inventory.

SESLU, a Geographic Information System (GIS), delineates information on geography, topography, demographics, population, municipal boundaries, utilities, roads, and other environmental and geographic data. The GIS will be used in EC's land use planning, and also for future applications requiring large scale mapping. During the last two months, researchers have been working to coordinate the SESLU data with the computer system housed by EDAW, the planning consultants. SESLU will be extremely helpful to the consultants, who would have had to compile similar data had SESLU not existed.

The project is funded by the Advanced Research Projects Agency, and is managed by Dr. Dale Bruns from Wilkes University and Rev. Ronald Wasowski from King's College.

WATERJET TECHNOLOGY

A full scale demonstration of EC's waterjet project is scheduled for mid-January at the University of Missouri at Rolla, where the technology is being developed. After a successful demonstration, the entire project will be moved to Crane Naval Base in Indiana,

where it will be used to deactivate a large stockpile of munitions.

The ROW project, or Recycling Operation with Waterjet, uses high-pressure water to clean explosive materials from excess or obsolete conventional munitions. EC has signed a contract with Crane Naval Base to set up the washout facility there. The January demonstration will model the final operation with one exception - the demo will not use live ammunition.

Using ROW to clean out shells could save the United States military millions of dollars and could be a source of revenue to Earth Conservancy to help fund the high cost of land reclamation. The lead scientists working on this project, funded by the Department of Defense's Advanced Research Projects Agency, are Dr. David Summers at the University of Missouri at Rolla, Dr. Perwez Khalim at Wilkes University, and Dr. Grihapati Mitra at King's College.

WETLANDS PROJECT

Work on EC's man-made wetland demonstration project, along Espy Creek in Hanover Township, had to stop earlier than anticipated because of November's early snowfall and wet conditions. Workers were able to clear the site and begin excavation for the wetland that will treat acid mine drainage

con't on back



The photo at left was taken at the site in Nanticoke where a reclamation project will start as soon as weather permits. Note the pile of mine spoil and the scrub growth. The photo at right shows land that looked like the Nanticoke parcel before it was reclaimed.

YOUR NEIGHBORS ARE WORKING WITH EC

EC's Land Use Planning Committee is made up of all different types of people, but they have one thing in common: they are committed to the responsible development of EC's 17,000 acres. There are 37 LUPC members, each of whom attends not only the general LUPC meetings, but also the meetings of one or more issue oriented working groups. In this and future issues of Earth Conservancy News, we will feature the various working groups so that the community will become familiar with the individuals who represent them on the LUPC. This month we meet the Community Liaison Working Group (CLWG).

The CLWG was formerly known as the Citizens' Advisory Committee. The members represent various municipalities; they have the responsibility of taking EC issues back to their communities, as well as bringing their communities' questions and concerns to the Land Use Planning Committee.

If you have input for the Land Use Planning Committee, contact a member of the Community Liaison Working Group, or better yet, attend our public planning meetings yourself! ♦



Pictured seated from left are Frank Shaulis, Nanticoke; Gerald O'Brien, Mayor of Warrior Run; Joseph Kotroski, Conyngham Township; and Robert Ambrose, Nuangola Borough. Standing from left are John Jablowski, Jr., Mayor of Ashley; Frank Revitt, Wilkes-Barre Township; Robert Jones, Jr., Plymouth Township; Calvin Kanyuck, Newport Township; and John Klimuszka, Sr., Hanover Township. Also serving on the CLWG but not present for the photo are Christine Jensen, Wilkes-Barre, Edwin Correll, Laurel Run, and Patrick Mullen, Mayor of Sugar Notch.

PROJECT UPDATE (con't)

(AMD) beginning next summer. If successful, this will be the first of many anticipated water treatment projects on EC land.

Earth Conservancy is committed to cleaning up the effects of coal mining on the region's land and water. This wetland project, the first of its kind in our area, is a demonstration project funded by the Environmental Protection Agency. The scientists working on the project are Drs. Ken Klemow, Tom Walski, and Bill Tarutis from Wilkes University, and Dr. Susan Jones-Held from King's College.

COMPOSTING PROJECT

Truckloads of leaves have arrived daily at EC's new composting facility, located in Newport Township.

Last month's snow slowed activity, and many leaves have yet to be collected in Wilkes-Barre and Newport Township, the communities currently involved with the project.

This facility will turn the leaves into a rich compost material that can be used to promote the growth of new vegetation on reclaimed mine-spoiled land. This year's leaves can become fertile compost in just three months with the process used at the facility.

The design and startup of this project was made possible by a Northeast Tier Ben Franklin Technology grant. The design of the site was produced by Smith Environmental Technologies, Pocono Summit, Pa., under the direction of Dr. Bryce Payne of Wilkes University. ♦

EC will accept Christmas Trees

In an effort to recycle thousands of Christmas trees that will soon be left by curbs throughout Luzerne County, Earth Conservancy announces that its Yard and Leaf Waste Composting Facility in Newport Township will accept trees once the holidays are over. The trees will be shredded and composted so that they can eventually help in the reclamation of mine-scarred lands.

Municipalities can deliver their communities' trees to the Composting Facility between 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please contact Tom Chesnick, Engineering Projects Manager at EC for more information. There is no charge for this service.



Earth Conservancy

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