



Shale Gas Extraction Statement

LVC Board Approved, April 12, 2012

The Lebanon Valley Conservancy recognizes the potential economic benefits of natural gas extraction, but also recognizes the potential environmental impacts that extraction of natural gas by means of hydraulic fracturing can bring. Realizing that the Marcellus and Utica Shale formations are present in the northern part of Lebanon County, and also with the realization that all counties in Pennsylvania will eventually bear the impacts of natural gas extraction in some way, the Conservancy has developed the following statement:

In keeping with its mission and vision statements and in regard to its strategic plan to identify, protect, and connect open lands as well as foster public understanding and cooperation for achieving a sustainable balance of land use, the Lebanon Valley Conservancy calls for a cautious approach to the development of the natural gas industry through use of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing.

To balance the value of economic development against environmental impacts, the Conservancy advocates for truly robust regulation that protects the quality of our water, air, and land. Vigilant enforcement of these regulations by well-manned regulatory agencies must take place, with meaningful penalties and fines imposed for violations of these rules. Transparency and full disclosure of all related activities and procedures must be a part of this resource extraction process, and citizens who suffer negative impacts as a result of this industry must be fairly compensated for any incurred losses.

Of particular concern is the 2005 exemption of hydraulic fracturing from the Safe Water Drinking Act. The Conservancy advocates for the removal of this exemption along with other existing exemptions and insists that shale oil and gas extraction processes be subject to the same regulations, both federal and state, as other industries.

Historically significant sites as well as environmentally sensitive areas must be acknowledged, with the ability to set aside these special areas as "off limits" to drilling and drilling infrastructure. Communities must have the ability to regulate where drilling-related activities will take place within their boundaries in order to preserve local heritage and quality of life for their citizens.

The Lebanon Valley Conservancy recognizes the need for wise use of all of our natural resources and encourages the use of environmentally sound, sustainable practices so as to maintain our vision to protect and enhance the critical natural and other resources that define the Lebanon Valley's rich agricultural heritage, landscape, diverse habitats and historical legacy.

Realizing the importance to keep this vision for Lebanon County intact, the Conservancy will, through education and awareness, continue its mission to promote the conservation and preservation of the unique cultural, historical, and environmental heritage of our region for the benefit of present and future generations.