

CLA



VIEWS

Newsletter of the Catskill Landowners Association • Vol. 11 • No. 2

Spring 2010

President's Letter

By Bob Bishop

Water, weather falling from the sky, or springing from the earth, if it's on your property, it's yours to control or contend with.

As landowners, we have responsibility for what's on, over, under, or passing through our property. Laws and regulations guide our thoughts and actions. It matters little if you bought your land last week, or it's been in your family for 250 years; the beauty, usefulness, and income potential are ultimately at your command and control.

So, too, are the long-term economic and environmental development rights and planning your responsibility. The Catskill Landowner's Association works to insure your place in these proceedings. The CLA looks far beyond the boundaries of our own region to review and respond to current and future events that impact your rights and responsibilities. Just as we thank you for your support, we ask for your views to help shape our public responses and actions.

Thank you. ♡

CLA Survey Results on Gas Drilling, Development and Hamlet Extension

By Patricia Odell

The Catskill Landowners Association sent a survey to members in November requesting their opinions on three issues of importance to landowners: gas drilling; development and hamlet extension.

The survey outlined the CLA Board of Directors' positions on the three issues. Your response and remarks to these issues

are critical to CLA's mission and to its commitment to understanding and meeting the needs and concerns of its members.

CLA received 37 responses to the 63 surveys mailed to members, a good response.

The results of the survey found that 32 agreed with CLA's position on drilling, 4 disagreed. As for development, 29 agreed and 6 disagreed. And on hamlet extension all 37 respondents agreed.

We received numerous comments and questions from members, which will be considered at the upcoming Board Meeting. While the comments cannot all be outlined here, I would like to provide you with a sampling.

Gas Drilling

AGREE: We need stronger protection for landowners in the watershed who incur greater costs than people outside the watershed.

Right on target!

Gas production properly (but not overly) regulated can provide jobs, royalties and land value absent scenic obstructions, etc. (unlike turbines). We should fight against any ban.

DISAGREE: While I certainly favor the idea of "just compensation for the loss of this property right," I cannot agree with the CLA position. I believe it will fail in court. Of greater importance is my belief that the DEC will not provide "adequate regulatory oversight" no matter how funded or organized. Governments have consistently failed to protect water quality in areas that have been drilled for natural gas. Corporate interests are too powerful. The only real protection comes from an outright total ban.

I do not believe that hydro-fracture gas drilling can be done in an environmentally safe manner at this time on our steep terrain with many streams that flood frequently

MARK THE DATE

CLA will hold its
Annual Membership Meeting
on
Saturday, July 31, 2010

Details will be forthcoming.

... I do not think the drilling companies will have adequate protections for the environment, nor do I think our government can adequately monitor the drilling operations.

Development

AGREE: Crossroads Ventures and their Belleayre Resort project is a good example of what we don't want. Re-development of existing infrastructure is what is needed and expansion of Belleayre Mountain Ski Center.

Agree so long as CLA opposed wind turbines.

DISAGREE: Too vague to be meaningful. What is a "slope"? Who's aesthetic values? Agree with intent, however, needs to be less open ended.

This CLA position takes away landowner's rights. It's worded in an arbitrary way—can't agree as worded.

Statement is much too broad.

Hamlet Extension

ALL AGREED: I am fine with NYC acquiring land as long as they pay taxes and support the local infrastructure.

To view the position statements please visit the CLA Web site at www.catskill-landowners.com. ♡

Dam Safety

By John J. Wadlin

Does your property include one or more dams? If so, you need to be aware of revised dam safety regulations which became effective in 2009.

High hazard dams are classified as “C” and intermediate hazard dams as “B”. We are already past the 1st certification date which was January 31, 2010 to submit the 1st annual certification for both classes.

The dam safety forms are at: www.dec.ny.gov/lands/58691.html. where templates are available to assist in compliance. Depending upon whether your dam is “B” or “C” you have different deadlines for implementing and submitting the “Emer-

gency Action Plan” and “Inspection and Maintenance Plan”.

CLA suggests members inform the CLA director of the name of the Professional Engineer selected to prepare your “Emergency Assessment”. CLA will maintain a list of Professional Engineers so members may obtain recommendations from CLA. ♦♦

CLA welcomes Mark Boyer as a Board Member

Mark Boyer has a background in Geographic Information Systems. He worked for five years with the Wildlife Conservation Society on conservation planning projects in Central Africa, making maps and renderings

of a new national park system in Gabon. Last year, he illustrated a book called “Mannahatta: A Natural History of New York City” that showed what Manhattan Island looked like when Henry Hudson arrived in 1609. He has a house in Schoharie county and is an enthusiastic denizen of the trout streams of the Catskills. ♦♦

Other News and Notes:

CLA has paid \$550 to sponsor Forest Awareness Day on April 26, and \$100 to sponsor the Catskill Forest Festival on July 17. ♦♦

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Catskill Landowners Association

