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9th Anniversary Celebration



Pictured: Protect PT's Staff. Credit: Kiara Jimenez
Front: Yvonne, Laura, Gillian, Brendan, May; Back: Emily, Jim, Tom, and Fabi

Thank you to everyone who came out April 27th for our 9th Anniversary Party! Our staff and volunteers had a blast playing games, eating tacos and ice cream from the food trucks, and of course, jumping in the bounce house!

Justin Nobel at Patagonia

On June 1, 2024, Protect PT held a book discussion and signing with acclaimed author Justin Nobel for his new book *Petroleum-238: Big Oil's Dangerous Secret* at Patagonia Pittsburgh. *Petroleum-238* follows the extraordinary seven-year investigation into how the U.S. oil and gas industry has avoided environmental regulations and created a dangerous and radioactive public health crisis. You can now get your very own copy on Protect PT's website at <https://protectpt.info/Pet-238>.



Pictured: Justin Nobel (left), Gillian Graber (right) Credit: Kiara Jimenez

Meet Our New Staff!



Pictured: Grace DeLallo

Grace DeLallo
Community Organizer

Grace graduated with a degree in Public and Professional Writing, minor in Political Science, and certificate in Sustainability from the University of Pittsburgh in the Spring of 2023.

With her experience in deep canvassing and organizing, she is excited to interact with communities at the grassroots level to promote a healthy, thriving environment for all living beings.



Pictured: Natalie Ford

Natalie Ford
Project Coordinator

Natalie graduated in 2024 from Washington and Jefferson College with a Bachelors of Arts in Environmental Studies and Public Policy with a minor in Nonprofit Management. Natalie's passion for environmental work blossomed through their internship and fellowship with two environmental nonprofits during college. At Protect PT, Natalie is most excited to refine their knowledge on local environmental issues.

Upcoming Events

- **July 11:** Guardian Compressor Station Hearing 7 PM @ Penn Township Municipal Building
- **July 13:** Twin Lakes Trail Hike 10-12 AM @ Twin Lakes Parking Lot D
- **July 17:** Reimagine Turtle Creek Communities Vision Session 6-8 PM @ St. John's Lutheran Church in North Versailles
- **July 25:** Pitcairn Community Meeting 6 PM @ Pitcairn Hose Company #1
- **July 26:** Penn Township Small Business Mixer 6:30-8:30 PM @ PPT's Office
- **July 30:** Monessen/Rostraver Community Update 5:30 PM @ Monessen Public Library
- **July 30:** Lunch and Learn with our Summer Interns @ 12 PM streaming on YouTube
- **August 15:** Run for Office Training 6 PM @ PPT's Office
- **September 14:** Monarchs on the Move @ PPT's Office

For a list of all upcoming events, please visit www.protectpt.org/events.



DONATE NOW TO SUPPORT OUR LEGAL EFFORTS



Testimony on Toxic Roads Bill

Bill Passed out of PA State House Energy Committee

If you, like us, were shocked when you first heard that the gas industry spreads their radioactive waste on Pennsylvania's roads, you will be pleased to hear that we have helped notch a win against the practice.

A loophole currently allows the industry to get away with dumping "conventional" well waste. The gas industry will promise municipalities that their waste - which contains radium, radon, and other dangerous elements—can be used as a cheap way to melt ice or suppress dust. The truth is that it is dangerous, and simply not effective.



Pictured: Tom Pike testifying on June 10, 2024

Our Environmental Policy Advocate, Tom Pike, testified at a hearing in Harrisburg about the problem. Pike made it clear that our members are demanding that their government pass a ban on road spreading of gas industry waste. A day after he testified, the PA State House Energy Committee passed the bill out of committee. It has a long way to go before it's law, but we are going to keep fighting for it until we get a complete ban, enforceable with fines.

New Science Capabilities

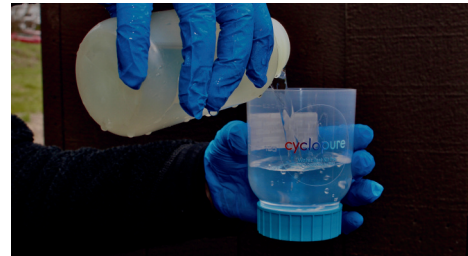
Water Monitoring

Our Environmental Science team is excited about some new equipment and tools for measuring air and water quality. This equipment will help us provide the community with more accurate and additional types of information so we can detect and prevent harm from environmental contaminants.

Through the generous support of the Colcom Foundation, we now have the ability to quickly and accurately measure water quality and to detect "forever chemicals," or "PFAS." The Sonde Exo3 is a professional-grade water sensor that we can use to instantly measure basic water quality with high precision. This means that we can quickly identify if something unusual might be happening in a stream, lake, or puddle. With this information, we can determine if a more detailed, costly, and laborious analysis is needed. We also have Cyclopure water testing kits to detect toxic PFAS chemicals in our waterways. These chemicals can stay in our environment for a very long time (much longer than a human lifetime) and are linked to health problems such as birth defects and cancers. In addition to being used in many consumer goods, they are often used in fracking operations.



Pictured: Sonde Exo3 being used by Yvonne Sorovacu. Credit: Kiara Jimenez



Pictured: Cyclopure testing kit. Credit: Kiara Jimenez

Air Monitoring

It can be very tricky to figure out exactly what kinds of chemicals are in our air because many different sources are continuously releasing particles into it. That's why we are so excited to use our new SPod monitors and summa canisters, purchased with the help of an EPA grant. We will be using this equipment to assist 3 different communities that are concerned about local pollution sources. With these units, we can continuously measure the levels of gaseous pollution in an area, and trigger a sample collection when conditions show that pollution may be happening. Those samples can be sent to a lab and tested for hundreds of different chemicals. Residents in these areas will finally get some answers about what is actually in the air they are breathing.

Radon Monitoring

Because of continued support, we are able to help folks find out if they are being exposed to radon. This naturally occurring gas is the #1 cause of lung cancer for nonsmokers. The soil in Pennsylvania has some of the highest radon levels in the world and about 1 in 3 Pennsylvania homes have dangerous levels of radon.

Some studies show that radon levels increase in homes located near fracking activity. We have a small library of high-quality, consumer-grade radon monitors called EcoQubes that people living in our service area can use for up to a month. Folks can borrow and install these easy to use

devices and then see live radon measurements on their mobile phone. Coming this fall, we will have additional options available for folks who are concerned about radon. Stay tuned, or contact us now if you want to borrow an EcoQube.



Pictured: EcoQube Radon Monitor.

Legal Updates

Guardian Compressor Station ZHB Hearing

This summer will see the conclusion of hearings that began in January of this year. On June 13, Mackenzie White testified about the myriad adverse health impacts from this industrial facility. She also testified to the increased incidence of childhood leukemia, the increased exposure to radioactive particulate matter, the increased presence of tiny, airborne particulate matter, and the associated hazards.



Pictured: Mackenzie White testifying. Credit: Kiara Jimenez

The next hearing is scheduled for Thursday, July 11. Silverio Caggiano, an expert in emergency preparedness, will be testifying to the following: the hazardous nature of compressor stations, the possibility of fires and explosions, the compounded danger of having a compressor station in such close proximity to two unconventional well pads, Aphrodite and Poseidon, the added danger of sitting the station

next to a landfill that flares methane gas, the proximity to residents and facilities, and the difficulty for first responders to access the site. At the conclusion of the testimony, there will be an opportunity for public comment. Residents are encouraged to attend and give public comment—this is the time to do so!

Aphrodite Well Pad

From January through May 2022, the Penn Township Zoning Hearing Board held hearings on the zoning permit for the Aphrodite Well Pad, and Protect PT offered testimony in opposition. The permit was granted. Subsequently, Protect PT wrote an objection letter to PA DEP, pointing out that the pad location impinged on an intermittent stream. The DEP required Olympus to move the pad and Penn Township Commissioners approved the land development permit in violation of their own ordinance. Protect PT sued Penn Township in Common Pleas court, pointing out, correctly, that Olympus could not move the pad without another approval from the ZHB. On May 1st our attorney argued the matter before Judge Smail at the Westmoreland County Court of Common Pleas. The decision is pending.

Olympus Obtains Permission to Bury Radioactive Waste in Penn Township

Pennsylvania State Regulation Title 25 sec. 78a.61 allows burial of radioactive fracking waste in pits located on the well pad site. By filing form OG71 with the DEP, Olympus was permitted by the Department to bury their radioactive waste at their well site. This process of permitting bypasses the local process and is in violation of the township ordinances that pertain to

landfills and dumping. In addition, the waste will remain radioactive for over 1,600 years and will affect waterways and water supplies for generations.

Draftina Well Pad

The proposed Apex Energy well pad Draftina, located along Dutch Hollow Road, was issued a Special Exception Zoning Permit in 2017 pursuant to a Federal Court Consent Order. The Penn Township ordinance states that operations on permits issued must begin within two years. Apex delayed over 5 years before taking any action at the well pad site. The Penn Township Commissioners again issued a land development agreement in violation of their own ordinance. This matter is being heard by Judge Smail in Greensburg on July 30, at 9:00 AM with a decision expected sometime in the fall.

Sustainability

TCWAC Strategic Planning

An exciting new chapter of TCWAC is underway as we focus our efforts on strategic planning! Interested community members can participate in our strategic planning by attending our FINAL visioning session on **July 17th, 6-8 PM** at the St. John's Lutheran Church in North Versailles. During this meeting community members will have the opportunity to voice their opinions on which sustainability initiatives they want to see in their communities!

RiFs Summertime Success

Reimagine Food Systems, our backyard garden program, successfully installed gardens in both Allegheny and Westmoreland counties. All participants have completed their summer plantings with the support of our volunteers and Master Gardeners.

