



News for Immediate Release

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DCNR Acquires 207 Acres for Addition to Lackawanna State Forest

Harrisburg – The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) today announced the acquisition of 207 acres in Luzerne County that serve as an important buffer to Lackawanna State Forest and have long been popular with hunters, hikers and other outdoors enthusiasts.

Purchased from Earth Conservancy, the land will be deeded to DCNR's Bureau of Forestry, and boost the size of Lackawanna State Forest to almost 30,000 acres.

"This timely, valuable purchase provides great access and expands protection of a valued forested watershed in the northeastern section of the state. More people are turning to nearby state forestlands for recreation and relaxation," DCNR Secretary Richard Allan said.

"This acquisition will expand the conserved forested tracts in this region; increase the supply of high quality forest products to local markets; and add to the recreational opportunities for our visitors to enjoy," Allan said.

Originally owned by the Blue Coal Corporation, the newly acquired acreage is located on the south slope of Larksville Mountain, north of Plymouth borough, and consists of four individual parcels. The largest, a 130-acre tract, borders Lackawanna State Forest. The remaining tracts of 41, 21 and 15 acres are just southeast of the larger parcel.

The land was purchased for \$163,000 from DCNR's Oil and Gas Lease Fund.

"Earth Conservancy worked with DCNR forestry personnel in 2012 for the sale of these lands to expand the Lackawanna State Forest. The 130-acre wooded parcel connects to the existing state forest lands, while the smaller parcels provide for access via Curry Hill Road in Plymouth Township," Earth Conservancy President and Chief Executive Officer Michael Dziak said. "One of Earth Conservancy's objectives is to preserve green space and this sale meets our objective."

The non-profit Earth Conservancy was founded in 1992 to address abandoned coal mine lands, specifically the Blue Coal Corporation's more than 16,300 acres in Luzerne County.

Lackawanna State Forest is comprised of five main tracts in Lackawanna and Luzerne counties. The land purchased in Harvey's Creek tract is located in Plymouth

and Jackson townships, Luzerne County, and buffers Harvey Creek, an acclaimed trout stream. It offers almost 4,000 acres for hunting, fishing, hiking and nature study.

Lackawanna State Forest is a keystone in the Poconos Forests and Waters Conservation Landscape Initiative (CLI), one of seven major land preservation efforts under way across the state. Regional in scope, CLIs partner local governments, conservancies and residents with DCNR and other state departments in regional planning that promotes sustainability, conservation, community revitalization and recreational projects.

For information on Lackawanna, or any of Pennsylvania's 20 state forest districts, go to www.dcnr.state.pa.us (select "Find a State Forest"). For details on the Pocono Forest and Waters and other conservation initiatives, visit www.dcnr.state.pa.us/cli.

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