



Friends of Allegheny Wilderness seeks to foster an appreciation of wilderness values and benefits, and to work with local communities to ensure that increased wilderness protection is a priority of the stewardship of the Allegheny National Forest.

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**Elk Township Historical Society Endorses *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal*
Locals Seek Permanent Protection for Portions of Allegheny Reservoir Shoreline**

SCANDIA – A Warren County community organization is seeking to permanently protect large portions of the west shore of the Allegheny Reservoir in the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) from all forms of commercial development in order to maintain the area in its natural condition.

At an April 5th meeting of the Elk Township Historical Society (ETHS), the Board of Directors voted unanimously to endorse the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest*, published by the Warren-based non-profit organization, Friends of Allegheny Wilderness (FAW).

The ETHS endorsed the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal* in full, though it is most acutely interested in the two proposed forest reserves within Elk Township. These are the 3,022-acre proposed Cornplanter Wilderness Area between the Webb's Ferry boat launch and Camp Olmstead, and the 4,752-acre proposed Scandia National Recreation Area, covering most of the ANF land south of Camp Olmstead to the Kinzua Dam.

The group emphasizes that its efforts to have select areas of the ANF set aside should not be viewed as a referendum on the legitimacy of timber harvest or even oil and gas drilling throughout the entire federal forest. They seek only to leave certain special areas of woodland in their pristine condition by law for future generations.

"We have concerned ourselves, since our inception in 2001, with preserving our cultural heritage here in Elk Township, which is indeed important," noted ETHS Board Member, Dr. Julie Lindblom Boozer. "However, preserving our heritage goes beyond restoring historic buildings, such as the 1870s Scandia one-room school. Our forest and wildlife are vital components of Elk Township's natural history and ecological heritage, as well," she continued.

“Working with FAW on this effort for the proposed Scandia National Recreation Area and Cornplanter Wilderness dovetails nicely with our overall mission and goals,” concluded Boozer.

The group wants the U.S. Congress to act on the FAW proposal in order to leave the majority of the Allegheny Reservoir’s western shoreline in an undeveloped state in perpetuity – free from hotels, golf courses, resorts, and all other commercial development ideas that have been floated over the years. Low-impact, non-motorized forms of recreation such as hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding and other activities would be protected by these designations.

With the ETHS endorsement, to date nearly 50 local, regional, statewide, and national organizations representing hundreds of thousands of Americans have formally endorsed the *Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal*, which during the latest ANF Forest Plan revision received the enthusiastic support of more than 6,800 of 8,200 public comments, indicating support from more than 80 percent of respondents.

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