

Grangers fight scenic river tag for French Creek

PHOENIXVILLE — Chester County Grangers have voiced strong opposition to proposed state legislation that would bring French Creek into Pennsylvania's scenic rivers program.

And, according to Everett Wilson, legislative chairman of the Chester-Delaware Pomona Grange, there's not much the state could do to overcome his group's objections.

"Our biggest concern is that farmers will lose control of whatever land they have along French Creek," Wilson said.

"Scenic sounds good, but if it means we can't cross a stream with a manure spreader, or that we can't

plant crops where we normally would, then we have to oppose the legislation."

Wilson also said he was concerned about the effect a scenic rivers act could have on road buildings near French Creek, citing a dangerous bridge where Route 100 crosses the stream, and a stretch of dirt road paralleling the stream which some area residents would like to see paved.

David Weinstock, an official with the state Grange office in Harrisburg, said the statewide Grange does have policy opposing scenic rivers legislation because such acts could impair normal farming operations.

"We're opposed because, while the scenic rivers idea

is esthetically and environmentally pleasing, the laws that designate scenic rivers can tie up our agricultural resources. And the original Scenic Rivers Act gives the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources the right to use eminent domain for scenic easements along the waterway."

There is so far only one official scenic river in Pennsylvania. It is the Schuylkill, from its origins north of Reading to the point where it leaves Philadelphia's Fairmount Park for the last leg of its journey to the Delaware.

Stiff opposition from farmers and other landowners killed a scenic

rivers proposal in the Wolf Creek and Slippery Rock Creek areas north of Pittsburgh. The threat of eminent domain was one of the most hotly contested items in the proposal there, as it is in French Creek.

"DER has said they would

not use eminent domain in French Creek," Weinstock said. "And the law they're proposing - each scenic river requires its own legislation - excludes eminent domain."

"While we have no reason to suspect that this administration would not live

up to its work, how do we know what administrations after this one would?"

"We don't know. We can't know. And that's why we're opposed. The scenic rivers program simply has too many potential problems for agriculture." DW

How farmers can get pesticide recertification

BAIR — Sometime within the last three years, thousands of Pennsylvania farmers took a test, sent it in for grading, and if they passed, received a certification card licensing

them to purchase and apply toxic pesticides.

Many took the test figuring that it would be a one-time happening and then they'd be permanently certified.

"What the law didn't say was that you had to update that certification every three years," says Donald Lott, ag pesticide inspector for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Lott briefed the 300 farmers attending the York County annual corn clinic on how to go about updating their pesticide certification.

According to Lott, officials knew from the beginning that recertification would be necessary, but no one was exactly sure of the method to be used. The first certification period runs out in September, 1980, and regulations governing the recertification procedure have already been changed three times.

Private applicators can be recertified by attending one of numerous update seminars being incorporated into a variety of area meetings, such as the county corn clinics. Applications are available at the

meetings and farmers need their certification cards and the identification number on them to complete the forms.

Lott said by late August or early September farmers will be receiving renewal applications if they have not already been recertified; and these will be available for farmers who have not obtained their forms at one of the meetings.

"Have your updated certification in your possession at all times," the inspector urged. "If you lose it, contact the extension office immediately for a duplicate."

To insure compliance with the law, spot inspections are being made, at an average of three checks per county per month. Farmers not able to show proof of certification will have their license to buy toxic pesticides revoked and will have to be retested to obtain a new card.

A resident of Adams County, Lott invites farmers with questions on pesticides or the recertification program to contact him at any time either at his office at 717-787-3400 or at his home at 717-642-8060.-JB

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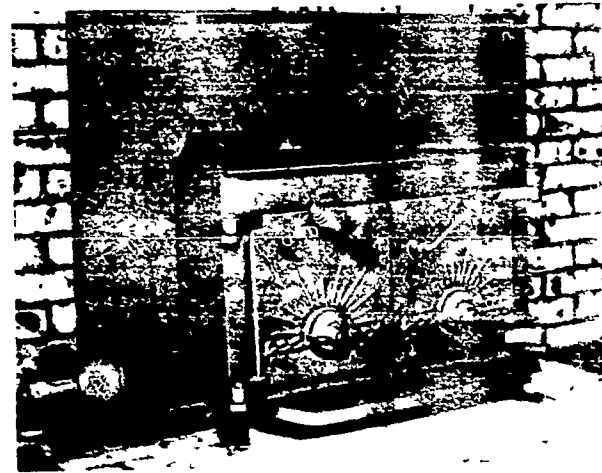
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