

French Creek

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"We could not require you to fence your animals out of the stream. And we would not be adding another layer of government bureaucracy for you to contend with if you want to develop your land or sell it for development.

"Your local zoning laws and the flood plain management act would continue to guide local land use. The only time the scenic rivers people would get involved in any changes would be in those cases where DER is presently required to review those changes.

"If French Creek is declared a scenic river, you may never hear from us again," he said.

Before any waterway can be brought into the scenic rivers program, the entire legislature must approve a bill designating it as a scenic river, and the governor must sign the bill into law.

In trying to meet Grange objections to the French Creek proposal, Fogg said, they had stayed away from any provisions which might threaten individual property rights, while at the same time protecting the unique historical and scenic qualities of the stream.

If DER has pulled back so far, a number of questioners wanted to know, why bother with the bill at all? Why not let the environmental and zoning laws already in place protect the stream?

Fogg said that approach would ultimately fail because of development pressures on land surrounding French Creek.

Existing laws and even community sentiment have failed to preserve other streams, he said.

Of Pennsylvania's 245 streams and 45,000 miles of waterways, only about 40 streams and some 5000 or 6000 miles are being considered for the program.

There currently is only one state scenic river, a 94-mile stretch of the Schuylkill. And property owners along that stream have reported no problems as a result of the scenic rivers designation, Fogg said.

One concrete aspect of a scenic rivers designation is a prohibition on building dams in the stream, Fogg said.

One farmer asked if he would be allowed to put a bridge across one of the tributaries in order to reach an otherwise inaccessible field. There would be nothing

in the law, either its letter or intent, to stop him, he was told.

State agencies like Penn-DOT are mandated to take special care when they are dealing with a scenic river, and are prohibited from doing anything which would change the character of the stream. This would not preclude, however, crossing the stream bed with sewer or water lines, or necessary roadwork.

Perhaps the biggest impact of the scenic rivers label, Fogg said, would be the attention it would focus on the stream. It would be mostly local attention, he pointed out, and it would result in mostly local action to guide any efforts at preserving the stream.

"We certainly don't have the manpower or the funds to police every mile of every scenic river," he said. "We can draft the legislation and help to get it passed, but only you people will be able to protect French Creek."

The meeting closed after an hour-and-a-half with a supportive note from State Grange Master Charles Wismer, who had chaired the meeting.

"George Fogg and DER have worked closely with us on scenic rivers legislation,"

Wismer said, "and they've taken care of our objections. They took eminent domain out of the French Creek bill and we're now working on getting eminent domain provisions taken out of the scenic rivers act itself.

"What the proposal would do is to keep dams out of French Creek and to focus more attention on the stream. It's beginning to look like a great idea," Wismer said.



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Equipment Expo to start February 28

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hollowell today announced that the theme for the Second Annual Farm Equipment Exposition is energy conservation.

The expo will feature new and innovative machinery that is designed to save energy.

"With today's prices for energy, whether it be gasoline, diesel fuel or electricity, every farmer is forced to be concerned with energy conservation," said Hollowell. "Only those farmers who succeed in cutting their power needs will survive the 1980's."

This year the Second Annual Farm Equipment Exposition will be held February 28, 29 and March 1. There will be over 170 commercial exhibitors at the show from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

Some of the exhibitors will be showing the latest in redesigned energy efficient machinery and systems using alternative sources of energy.

Some of the energy saving devices include: air cooled diesel engines, long

recognized as far more fuel efficient than their water cooled counterparts; machines that make one pass spraying, plowing and planting possible; heat exchangers for dairy farms, and redesigned manure spreaders.

Alternative energy sources such as gasohol, methane, wood systems and solar heating panels will also be on display.

Hollowell urged all those attending not to miss the exciting stock tractor pull competitions on Thursday, February 28 and Saturday, March 1. Over 140 tractors have entered the competition.

Those wishing to enter can do so by contacting Les Houck at the Pennsylvania Tractor Pullers' Association, Box 157, New Holland, PA 17557 or by calling 717-354-8600.

Other exciting events at the expo include the first Pennsylvania swine show and sale, a Young Farmers Volleyball Tournament, a draft horse and mule show and sale, horse pulling competitions and a goat exhibit.

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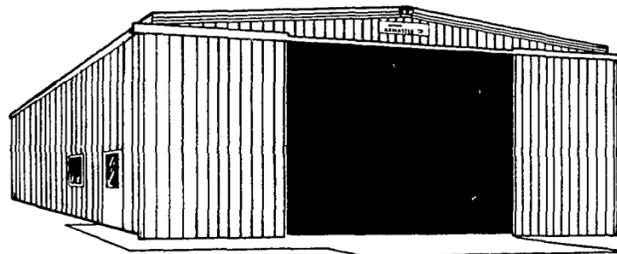
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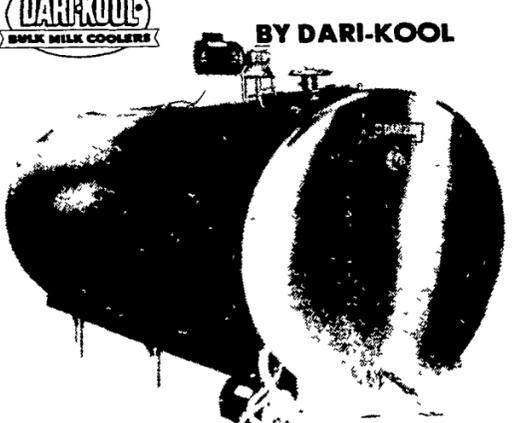


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