

# 'Slum' Warning Given By Head Of Tocks Unit

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The area around the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area can become a "recreation slum" without proper planning, the chairman of the Tocks Island Regional Advisory Council (TIRAC) warned last night in Bushkill.

Stuart F. Pipher, who is also a Monroe County commissioner, issued the warning at the opening session of TIRAC's five-day design action conference at Tamiment.

The purpose of the conference is to determine what TIRAC and others can do to generate interest in and demand for excellence in land and building design in the region.

## Notes Growth

Noting that growth is starting to "ooze into this region" from the New York and Philadelphia metropolitan areas, Pipher also asked if the development of one or more new cities in the region would be a practical or more rational way of containing this growth.

Pipher quoted an article as saying, "When it (the city) wipes out the valuable reserves of countryside close at hand, instead of zealously preserving them, its inhabitants are still dependent for recreation and change of scene on some distant area."

"Unfortunately, the more distant the area, the less open to daily common use and the more empty it will ultimately be of recreation value, since crowds of people from other areas will be drawn to it—thus turning the natural landscape into a kind of recreation slum, like Yosemite in midsummer."

## 'Recreation Mecca'

Pipher noted this area has been for years the "recreation mecca" for residents of New York and Philadelphia.

"Given the beauty, natural resources, generally wonderful natural environment and ready accessibility to the two cities, how can this region avoid being a recreation slum?" Pipher asked.

"Let none of us forget that what we must shape is nothing less than a better human environment for tomorrow," he said.

Pipher noted TIRAC has taken some first steps to protect the environment of the region well into the future, such as the water, sewage and waste studies which are now under way.

## To Be 'Receptive'

He assured the planners, designers and other officials at the conference that "we the elected officials will be receptive to your ideas."

The conference delegates were shown a film entitled "Tocks Island: It Can't Happen Here," produced by TIRAC's planning consultant firm, Candeb, Fleisig and Associates of Newark.

The film opened with scenes of the Pocono Mountain's lush beauty: Rolling hills, lakes and streams, old homes and barns, waterfalls, cows grazing peacefully in green fields.

The movie then switched to shots of men and machines ripping up and burning timber, building highways and houses; cars speeding down superhighways and traffic jams. Clusters of ugly billboards and neon signs, dirty and overcrowded beach areas, junkyards, housing developments and hot dog stands and gas stations were shown.

Not one word was spoken in the film, but the warning was clear.

## Relocated Route 209

Yesterday afternoon, Dr. Richard E. Toth of the University of Pennsylvania's department of landscape, architecture and regional planning, recommended Route 209 be relocated at the base of the Pocono Plateau.

He based his recommendation on a study his department conducted.

Frank W. Dressler, TIRAC's executive director and general chairman of the conference, noted, however, that relocated Route 209 is planned to be the western boundary of the park, several miles east of the Pocono Plateau.

Today's activities included a bus tour of parts of Pike County and Sullivan and Orange counties in New York, and a talk by Dr. Philip H. Lewis Jr. of the University of Wisconsin at the Pinchot Institute of Conservation Studies at Milford.

A night meeting will be held at the Delaware Valley High School on Route 209 between Milford and Matamoras to discuss design problems and potentials of Pike, Orange and Sullivan counties.

All conference sessions are open to the public.

# Decide What To Preserve In Tocks Area, Then Act, Seminar Speaker Urges

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"We've got to decide what it is we want to preserve in the Tocks Island area, then go out and do something about it,"

Prof. Philip H. Lewis Jr., of the Wisconsin University department of landscape architecture, told about 150 residents of Sussex and Warren counties at a seminar in Newton last night.

Answering a question by Asst. Warren County agricultural agent Harry Serfass as to what constitutes "quality" necessary for preservation, Lewis said such decisions are up to the area residents and it is their job to catalogue those things in the area that are worth saving from the expected population increase in the coming years.

The exchange came in a session of the five-day Design Action Conference sponsored by the Tocks Island Regional Advisory Council.

Among the most important natural resources to be preserved, Lewis listed productive farm land.

"The world's population is now growing at an annual rate of two per cent a year while the food production potential increases at half that rate. Even with all the present farm land in production in the year 2000, the average daily amount of food available per person will fall below the starvation level," he said.

Aside from farm lands, those lands most worth saving are usually least habitable — flood plains, mountains and marsh lands — Lewis said. This fact probably means they would find easy inclusion in any comprehensive land development and conservation plan.

A number of those at the meeting asked questions, especially about the cost to local governments of the Tocks Island project and protection of the local "way of life" from intrusion.

Dr. Malcolm D. Rivkin, of Baltimore, an urban and regional development specialist, said he favored a system of state roads leading into the park from the interstate highway system. Such a system would take the financial burden of road construction off of local taxpayers, he continued.

Rivkin said the best way to handle many of the expected problems from the development of the Tocks Island area is for counties to assume many of the powers now reserved for local municipalities.

"I am a strong supporter of local government, but I favor increasing the strength of the counties to create a strong local power base," Rivkin said.

Both Rivkin and Paul D. Spreiregen, architecture and planning director for the National Endowment for the Arts, said they felt the increasing value of lands bordering the park area would more than make up for tax losses to local municipalities that gave up land to the project.

"The area you live in is about to be invaded by residents of New York and Philadelphia who made a mess of their own areas and need a recovery ward," Spreiregen said. "What happens to the area during the influx depends on the actions of agencies like TIRAC which have to plan for these changes."

# Area Naturalists Plan New Hike To Sunfish Pond

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Area naturalists and conservationists will make the 2½-mile hike up Kittatinny Mountain on May 25 and 26 to demonstrate their opposition to the proposed use of Sunfish Pond as an upper storage reservoir.

The Lenni Lenape and the Sierra Club of Northern New Jersey will cosponsor the two-day "pilgrimage."

The league has been waging a campaign against the use of

the natural pond by the New Jersey Central Power & Light Co. as an upper storage reservoir for their proposed Tocks Island hydroelectric power project.

Thus far, they have been successful in delaying the project by convincing state and federal authorities to reassess the contention of the power companies that Sunfish Pond is the only feasible site for a reservoir and that no alternate sites would do as well.

The two-day hike will go on rain or shine. Hikers are urged to wear proper shoes, bring a lunch and canteen. Campers may stay overnight in Worthington State Park at the bottom of the ridge.

The trail to the pond is about 2½ miles and is climbed in about one hour and a-half. Temporary public conveniences are expected to be located along the trail through the cooperation of the New Jersey Division of Parks, Forestry and Recreation.