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## Seminar to inform land owners about gas drilling leases

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Jessica Soule /The Citizen AuburnPub.com | Posted: Monday, June 20, 2011 3:05 am | (0) Comments

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A local agency wants to offer information to landowners about leases for natural gas drilling operations.

The Cornell Cooperative Extension Associations of Cayuga and Onondaga counties are sponsoring a seminar called “Understanding and Managing Natural Gas Development on Your Property” next week.

The city of Syracuse Water Department cosponsored the talk about shale gas development for central New York landowners. Now is the best time to present information about the process of drilling for gas and land leases, according to Jessi Lyons, team coordinator for the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County.

“We’re coming upon a time when people might choose to renew their lease or it ends because there was no drilling on the property,” Lyons said.

Besides those who have leases, the talk is also appropriate for people who are on the fence about leasing their land. This applies to those owners with property over either the Marcellus Shale or the Utica Shale, which actually covers a larger part of central New York than the Marcellus Shale.

The information at the talk will be applicable now, but also will help people look forward as natural gas drilling continues to happen throughout the region.

The Cornell Cooperative Extension doesn’t endorse gas drilling, nor condemn it. Lyons said the organization wants everyone to have as much information as possible while they are faced with making decisions regarding leasing or land management.

The workshop the extension is bringing to Skaneateles is part of series hosted in different counties across

the state.

“We want people to have the tools in hand so they can make the informed decision. ... Cornell is trying to offer resources to people. Cayuga County has more shale, but the Skaneateles Lake watershed, because it’s our drinking water, is especially environmentally sensitive,” Lyons said.

Organizers turned to someone who has been in the thick of this topic to lead the workshop.

Bret Chedzoy is the senior resource educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension in Schyuler County. Drilling for natural gas is currently taking place in Schyuler County, so Chedzoy has an extensive background in gas leasing, land management and the drilling process.

Meanwhile the cooperative has conducted stakeholder meetings for municipal leaders, planning agencies and groups involved with the watershed or land management in the Skaneateles watershed.

“We gave them information about what they need to know, how they can be proactive, to prevent it or to plan for it,” Lyons said of drilling operations.

Next week will be the first time the Cornell Cooperative has hosted a public event about gas drilling in Skaneateles.

The workshop is free, but organizers ask that attendees register as soon as possible.

“We’re hoping people can walk away having a breadth of information so they can move forward knowing the pros and cons, and what the consequences are as well as the benefits,” Lyons said.

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