Lebanon County Commissioners
Michael Kuhn, Jo Ellen Litz, Robert Phillips
Room 207, Municipal Building
400 South 8th Street
Lebanon, PA 17042-6794

Dear Commissioners,

I want to reach out to you prior to the fall 2023 election to let you know I am unhappy with the use of Glyphosate (Round Up) and Oust XP as part of the management plan at the Clarence Schock Park at Governor Dick. This concerns me because while Glyphosate helps suppress unwanted vegetation, negative impacts include hindering the natural regeneration of native tree species by affecting seed germination or the growth of young seedlings. Forests rely on a diverse array of plant species to provide suitable habitats and food sources for various wildlife. Overuse of Glyphosate may lead to changes in the composition and function of soil microbial communities, potentially impacting nutrient availability, soil structure, and overall ecosystem processes. Without healthy soil, the health of the forest suffers.

In addition, Governor Dick overlooks the headwaters of the Conewago Creek and portions of the park lie in the watersheds of Chiques and Quittapahilla Creek watersheds. Over-application in forested areas close to streams, rivers, or during periods of heavy rainfall can increase the risk of glyphosate reaching aquatic ecosystems, disrupting water quality.

Oust XP is a pre-emergent herbicide that kills seeds as they try to germinate. This was applied to 63 acres of land this past year, ostensibly to combat invasive mile-a-minute vine. This product does not discriminate between native and invasive seeds, in fact making it impossible for any of the native seeds from sprouting.

You as commissioners have the power to make a positive change. I urge you to engage an independent authority who considers the forest in its entirety rather than as timber alone, and thus can propose more sustainable ways of managing this park.

Sincerely,