



*2023 Letter-writing Campaign to raise awareness of shortcomings of
the Governor Dick Park Forest Management Plan*

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 logging at the Clarence Schock Park at Governor Dick. This plan to manage the forest concerns me because harvesting large areas of their trees can lead to the destruction or alteration of the natural habitat of many native plant species. This disruption can result in the loss of plant diversity and negatively impact the overall ecosystem. This park is a treasure gifted to the community by someone who understood the ecological importance of native, natural areas as well as their benefit to the people who walk there. The current plan of logging large areas within the park does not follow the donor's wishes.

A forest's natural ecological succession is a process by which different plant species replace one another over time. Tree harvesting removes certain tree species that play a crucial role in the progression of succession.

Removing large trees changes the light available to the existing plants, which in turn affects nutrient cycling within the forest. Imbalances favor certain plant species that thrive under the new conditions. We have seen proof of this in previous large cuts, when invasive plants quickly overshadow native plant populations, reducing their abundance and altering the overall plant composition in the forest.

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,
