



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 17, 2014

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Fitzgerald Discusses Status of Deal with Range Resources, Huntley & Huntley

PITTSBURGH – Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald announced today that Allegheny County has reached agreement with Range Resources and Huntley & Huntley for the off-site extraction of gas under Deer Lakes Park. The lease will bring \$4.7 million in a bonus payment, an additional \$3 million Park Improvement Fund, and provides 18% in royalties to the county over the length of the lease.

“I’m very proud of the fact that this is the most comprehensive non-surface lease that has ever been crafted in Pennsylvania,” said County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. “The county’s participation in this makes this a win-win for the community. We are enhancing assurances for our residents, enhancing revenues for the county as well as the private land owners, and enhancing our community through the park improvements that can be made with these revenues.”

The lease strictly prohibits any operations in Deer Lakes Park. It also includes a wide range of enhanced terms negotiated by the County including expansion of DEP water testing requirements, planning with local school districts to avoid school bus routes, coordination with local fire departments regarding safety plans, noise and light reduction provisions including coordination to minimize impacts on the Wagman Observatory, and an obligation to implement industry best practices for all aspects of operations during the course of lease. The company will also be responsible for all necessary repairs to portions of county roads utilized by them in furthering its operations. In addition, the proposed lease requires the operators to conduct at least two job fairs for County residents to learn about employment opportunities in the industry.

Throughout this process, the Executive also met with numerous area organizations that utilize Deer Lakes Park to talk with them about challenges, needs, and concerns. Additionally, he along with staff and members of County Council toured the park on several different occasions and met and talked with neighbors who have already entered into leases with Range Resources for surface drilling. Honoring a prior commitment, Fitzgerald also announced that he will hold hearings in the community on the proposed lease that will provide an opportunity for residents to learn about the agreement and ask questions of the county, Range Resources and Huntley & Huntley. The hearing will be held on Wednesday, April 2, 2014 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Deer Lakes High School. Further information related to the agenda will be announced at a later date.

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