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Subject: : Conservation

Topic: : Drilling In State Forests Under Consideration Again

Re: Drilling In State Forests Under Consideration Again

Author: : vern

Date: : 2009/5/1 13:40:09

URL:

As far as the ANF, do Cornplanter's heirs hold any mineral rights?

According to "Indians in Pennsylvania" (pg. 172, revised 1991, Pa. Historical and Museum Commission), on January 29, 1791 the Pennsylvania Legislature gave three tracts to Cornplanter and his heirs in perpetuity, two of which he reportedly sold (swindled out of one), and the third - 600 acres, "... most of it on the west bank of the Allegheny just south of the New York state line."

The booklet, No. 5 in the Pa. HMC's Anthropological Series, doesn't mention if the third tract was sold willingly or was condemned by the federal government, but it does quote from the Historical Pennsylvania Leaflet No. 32, "Chief Cornplanter" (pub. 1972):

"Cornplanter's descendants and other Indians continued to live on the tract. The community had its own school and its Presbyterian Church. Eventually, however, the population dwindled as residents moved to the adjacent, larger, and related Allegany Reservation of New York. Residence became largely seasonal, and in late 1964 the last inhabitant left, permitting Kinzua Dam to be closed and the reservoir flooded. ..."

It doesn't mention if it was sold or condemned, or if mineral rights were forfeited and belong to the federal gov't., with it's apparent overturn of the 1791 Pa. Legislature's "in perpetuity" gift of the lands to Cornplanter and his descendants.

An interesting twist would be to know if any of the Nation members still living near the area could claim to be heirs of Cornplanter, and are legitimate owners of mineral rights there.

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