

OFFICE OF THE CARBON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners

Wayne E. Nothstein, Chairman
Rocky C. Ahner, Vice-Chairman
Chris L. Lukasevich, Member
Eloise K. Ahner, County Administrator
Daniel A. Miscavige, Solicitor



Carbon County Administration Building
P.O. Box 129
Jim Thorpe, PA 18229
Telephone: (570) 325-3611
Fax: (570) 325-3622
E-mail: cccommis@ptd.net

FRANCIS E. WALTER DAM HEARING

MARCH 18, 2021

Good morning everyone, my name is Wayne E Nothstein, Chairman of the Carbon County Board of Commissioners. I thank you for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Carbon County Board of Commissioners and the residents of Carbon County.

Francis E. Walter Dam and the Lehigh River attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors ever year to enjoy the scenic beauty of the Lehigh River Gorge. From the many rafting companies in the county that operate on the river, the fishing enthusiasts, scenic rail tours, the tens of thousands of hikers and bikers that enjoy the 165-mile Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor scenic trail that starts in Wilkes-Barre, PA runs through Carbon County on the way to Bristol, PA. This attraction has enabled countless businesses to thrive and prosper. The many rafting companies, restaurants, gift shops, gas stations, hotels, bed & breakfasts, and sporting goods stores, are just to name a few.

Our county was built on the coal industry using the Lehigh Canal and rail system to transport the product. Today, very little of that industry remains and has been replaced by tourism which is an important economic factor in this area.

Carbon County is again seeing a surge of population growth and housing shortage due to the COVID Pandemic. Hundreds from New York City and other highly populated areas are moving to rural Pennsylvania. Just as it had after 9-11. With that comes the concern of our own water supply and ability to meet the demand now and well into our future.

Water from the Lehigh River is already a back-up source of supply to some municipal water systems here in the County during drought conditions. If New York City starts removing their 15 % of this water from Francis E. Walter Dam during a drought there will be nothing left downstream.

Reserving 15 % of the water at Francis E. Walter Dam for a New York City drought is not the answer for the residents of Pennsylvania. It is a financial, economic and environmental disaster waiting to happen for the residents of Carbon and many other counties.

I am sure that the residents of New York City would not like us taking their water supply. We need to protect and preserve this vital commodity for current and future generations and the economic stability of our County and others.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the residents of Carbon County.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wayne E. Nothstein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'W' and 'N'.

Wayne E. Nothstein, Chairman
Carbon County Board of Commissioners