



**July 25, 2009**

## **Monday public hearing on PSE&G is important**

To the Editor:

Based on the extraordinary turnout at three public hearings (including a full house at the Frelinghuysen Arboretum), there are many people as concerned as I am about Public Service Electric & Gas Co.'s proposal to build massive 200-foot power towers across nine Highlands towns. To make it worse, credible studies are questioning the need for this enormous undertaking. It even violates the New Jersey Energy Master Plan.

Surprise. Simply, it is profit-driven.

One major reason to oppose the project is its impact on our Morris County park lands, lands we thought were protected forever when they were bought and are now maintained with public funds. On July 27, at 6 p.m. at the Camp Jefferson Community Lodge in Lake Hopatcong, a hearing will be conducted by the Morris County Park Commission about how this project will affect Mahlon Dickerson Reservation.

The park areas in question have extraordinarily steep slopes, streams, and are considered to be critical habitat necessary for the protection of threatened and endangered species. They will never recover from the building of access roads that are thousands of feet long through the existing forest cover. How can they ever truly be restored from such dramatic intrusions? Our public landscape will be forever scarred by 200-foot towers and access roads.

**JULIA SOMERS**  
**Executive Director**  
**New Jersey Highlands Coalition**