



Lackawanna County

Commissioners

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September 23, 2020 - For Immediate Release

Statement On Fossil Boulders Donation

Waste Management's Alliance Landfill has donated two large pieces of the region's distant history to the Lackawanna County Coal Mine Tour in McDade Park.

Landfill Manager Glenn Kempa said the boulders, each with vivid fossilized images of ferns and tree branches that shaded Taylor and Ransom Twp. 300 million years ago, were discovered during earthwork work at the landfill.

"The team working on our site spotted these fossils during excavation. We decided to see if we could make these available for the public to see." Mr. Kempa said.

Mr. Kempa said Lackawanna County Parks and Recreation Manager Bob Noone was contacted and the fossils were offered for display in McDade Park. Latona Trucking & Excavation of Pittston, a site contractor, agreed to donate transportation of the fossils to the park.

"We are very grateful for the donation of the two large boulders from Waste Management's Alliance Landfill. The Coal Mine at McDade Park is the perfect location for these two pieces. The embedded fossil imprints on these boulders will certainly something of interest for everyone to see for years to come," said Lackawanna County Commissioner Chris Chermak.

Alliance Consulting Engineer and Project Manager Rob Sochvoka of ARM Group LLC said the fossils are from the Llewellyn formation, a layer of shale and sandstone found between the region's coal seams. He said Pennsylvania is one of the few places where highly detailed, and sometimes appearing white or yellow, fossilized plants can be found in contrasting black shale.

"These fossils were formed in the Paleozoic Era of the Carboniferous Period," Mr. Sochovka said. "During this period, the earth's climate was much warmer and humid, allowing large trees and ferns to grow. The abundant amount of plant life increased oxygen levels higher than they are today. When the huge trees and ferns died, they fell into waters with little to no bacteria to help them decompose.

"The accumulation of dead plant life formed large peat bogs," Mr. Sochovka said. "Eventually, with the repeated depositions of sand, silts and clay over these peat bogs and the weight and pressure of these deposits, the peat bogs turned into coal."

The boulders each weigh about two tons.



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Pictured from left to right, Bob Noone, Lackawanna County Recreation Manager, McDade Park; Rob Sochovka, Geologist/CQA Manager, ARM Group LLC; Commissioner Chris Chermak, Lackawanna County; Mark DeStefano, CFO Latona Trucking & Excavating; Jason Lab, Project Manager, ARM Group; Tom Murray, Sr. Project Manager, ARM Group; and Glenn Kempa, District Manager, Alliance Landfill.