

Louisville Metro Council Passes Rebuke to LG&E's Assault on Nature and Ratepayers in Bernheim Forest

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LOUISVILLE: The Louisville Metro Council tonight passed a resolution which is a sharp rebuke to LG&E's plans for constructing a pipeline corridor through the Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest. This vote reflects the opinion of the Louisville community that the pipeline project should be cancelled, that sensitive biological habitat must be preserved, and it reinforces the Council's prior Resolution calling for action to address climate change. **The Council vote was 17 to 5 in favor of this Resolution.** [The Resolution wording is below]

The Council discussion countered recent claims made by LG&E. Council Members Betsy Ruhe, Andrew Owen, Phillip Baker, and Ben Reno-Weber spoke strongly in favor of passing the Resolution. **Council Member Betsy Ruhe** said "The Louisville community has made clear that Bernheim is a unique resource, beloved by Kentuckians for its unparalleled commitment to connecting people with nature and for protecting our regional environment. I am opposed to any development in this forest that threatens its natural lands, clean water, and biodiversity. It needs to be defended."

Council Member Andrew Owen declared before voting: "The misuse of eminent domain by which LGE/KU has sought to break the existing conservation easement on Bernheim's protected land sets a very undesirable precedent, undermining the protected status of all nature preserves throughout the Commonwealth.

Danica Novgorodoff of the **Save Bernheim Now Coalition** stated "We continue to urge LG&E to cancel this pipeline project and, instead, to work with its ratepayers to develop a clean and renewable energy strategy that benefits the community as well as the living systems upon which we all depend." The Save Bernheim Coalition has numerous actions planned in the coming months.

Dr. Mark Wourms, Executive Director of Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest, said after observing the debate "Bernheim is a rare place where plants and animals thrive and where wild places still exist in central Kentucky. We want to keep it that way. In fighting against this proposed pipeline through Bernheim we are all standing together to protect the forests, clean air, and pure water that is critical to the health and quality of life of all people in this region. Bernheim is a unique and irreplaceable treasure that continues to attract tourists and young families to the area ensuring economic vitality and an appreciation for nature and the arts.

"The opposition to the proposed LG&E/PPL pipeline is larger than Bernheim. We are in a dual crisis of climate change and biodiversity loss. We are pleased by the Metro Council's support,

and urge everyone to stand with us in opposing this pipeline, in asking LG&E to find alternatives that protect natural lands, and to support transitioning to clean and renewable energy sources. “

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LG&E recently received a decision in Bullitt County District Court, giving it the right to condemn Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest property, which is protected by a KY conservation easement. However, the struggle to stop the high-pressure fossil gas pipeline that would cross Bernheim's Cedar Creek Wildlife Corridor and adjacent private property continues with growing support.

- All of LG&E's environmental permits for this project have been rescinded by the various regulatory bodies.
- All areas of Bullitt County have full access to electric power. LG&E has not addressed why they insist on building costly new fossil gas (approx. 90% methane) distribution infrastructure through environmentally sensitive habitat. Methane is a more potent greenhouse gas than CO₂.