



Testimony of Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Public Hearing May 16, 2018

DOCKET NO. D-2017-002 CP-1
DELAWARE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
Drainage Area to Special Protection Waters
Gan Eden Estates
Groundwater Withdrawal
Town of Fallsburg and Town of Thompson,
Sullivan County, New York

Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) opposes this Docket that would approve a groundwater withdrawal from wells for a total combined withdrawal of up to 4.60 million gallons of water per month to serve the Gan Eden Estates, a residential development proposed in Sullivan County, New York. DRN supports the testimony and technical findings presented by Catskill Mountainkeeper at this Hearing.

The three groundwater wells that would provide the water supply for the proposed development are located in the drainage area of the Upper Delaware River designated as Special Protection Waters. The importance of protecting the waters of this region are supported by the Commission's Water Quality regulations and Comprehensive Plan.

DRN does not agree that the groundwater testing and pumping test results provide the necessary data and conclusions that support the groundwater withdrawals from Wells TW-5, TW-6 and TW-8. DRN agrees with Catskill Mountainkeeper that because standard protocols were not adhered to during the pumping tests, particularly regarding the water level stabilization rates, the data does not support a conclusion that the proposed wells can safely yield the volume being considered in the Docket without unmitigatable adverse impacts.

During the testing, neighboring wells were drawn down, did not fully recover, and one well demonstrated water quality impacts. Furthermore, the Hobby well, which was influenced by pumping of the proposed TW-6 is located 1.03 miles away and the impacts should have been measured over a longer period of time and further out since the influence was still expanding. The potential for more negative impacts on existing wells or for a greater impact of the Hobby well exists but has to be sufficiently tested.

Piezometers showed drawdown in the neighboring wetlands and of shallow monitoring wells but is only being addressed by this Docket through monitoring the impacts after the docket is approved. The interference results of the pumping of the proposed water supply wells show a hydrologic connection between surface water, groundwater, wetlands and the aquifer where the water supply would be withdrawn. There is no protection of wetlands or groundwater provided by the Docket.

DRN does not agree that there has been adequate determination of the safe yield of the aquifer that would supply water to this proposed development. The pumping was limited in terms of length of time, the radius of wells that were monitored, and the lack of mapping of the aquifer. The proposed withdrawal amounts do not build in a sufficient safety factor should drought or low precipitation periods occur. The potential for adverse impacts to the local and regional aquifer and the wetlands that are hydrologically connected, has not been sufficiently investigated to warrant the approval of the Docket.

DRN supports the concerns that have been identified by Catskill Mountainkeeper of the substantial impacts of this development on the local and regional water resources and aquifer recharge areas where the project will be built.

DRN requests that the Commission withdraw the Docket until further aquifer testing can be performed to address the untested aspects of the proposed withdrawal or, alternatively, that the Docket not be approved.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Groundwater Withdrawal Docket.