

***Delaware Riverkeeper Network***  
***Sullivan County Residents Against Millennium (SCRAM)***  
***Sullivan Area Citizens for Responsible Energy Development (SACRED)***  
***Protect Orange County***

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**NYDEC Approves Millennium ESU**  
**Community and Environmental Groups Cry Foul**

***Albany, NY:*** Community and environmental representatives issued strong statements of opposition to the announcement of the New York Department of Environmental Conservation that it was issuing a Clean Water Act 401 Certification approval for the Millennium Eastern System Upgrade Project (ESU), despite last week having denied the same approval to the Millennium Valley Lateral pipeline, a key part of Millennium's overall plan for the region.

"ESU is not about just 2 compressor stations and 7 miles of pipeline, it is just another step in Millennium's plan to build out its pipeline with an ever widening cut through our Delaware River valley and communities. The Valley Lateral pipeline is another segment of this larger goal. How NYDEC reached the conclusion that it should deny Valley Lateral and approve ESU despite all the evidence of segmentation and tremendous harm to community health, environmental health and our local economies is beyond comprehension," said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, and leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network. "Sadly, it will once again become the job of the public to take the steps necessary to enforce the law, protect our environment and to defend our communities from yet another FERC fracked gas pipeline project," van Rossum added

"NYSDEC's decision to approve Millennium Pipeline's ESU is certainly disappointing, but the battle to keep their toxic facilities out of The Town of Highland & Hancock are far from over. NYSDEC wisely denied Millennium's Valley Lateral Pipeline permit. The justification for that decision is equally valid for ESU and we intend to pursue all measures necessary including legal remedies. As we have argued, ESU, CPV, and Valley lateral are connected projects. None exist without the others. Millennium says this is not a segmented project and has justified ESU as necessary to meet customer demand. It should be noted that half those customers are Millennium parent companies and 10% of the project is 'unsubscribed', meaning it has not been contracted and thus unneeded overbuild alone. Four compressors in 52 miles is double the industry standard and this massive amount of compression was clearly meant to service CPV. Engineering reports provided to both FERC and DEC clearly demonstrate segmentation," states George Billard, Founder of the Sullivan County opposition group named SCRAM (Sullivan County Residents Against Millennium).

NYDEC denied the Valley Lateral Project on August 30, 2017 because FERC had failed to consider the greenhouse gas impacts of the CPV power plant, the recipient of the gas the project would carry. According to an expert report filed by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network with FERC on May 1, 2017, Millennium improperly split the ESU from the overall planned expansion of its natural gas pipeline system including the Valley Lateral Project. The full comment can be found here: <http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/sites/default/files/DRN%20Comment%20on%20Millennium%20ESU%20CP16-486%20FERC%20EA%205.1.17.pdf> . The US Environmental Protection Agency similarly found the ESU and Valley Lateral project to be connected projects in a letter filed on June 10, 2016.

"Sullivan County recently achieved certification, and the Town of Bethel has been diligently moving toward certification, as Climate Smart Communities. Permitting the ESU to move forward would call into question the Governor's and the DEC'S commitment to their own program and adherence to our state's constitutional home-rule provisions. The Town of Highland banned fracking and all of its infrastructure, as did Bethel, Lumberland and Tusten, the towns that would be most affected in this county, which already has the unenviable citizen-health ranking of 61<sup>st</sup> out of NY's 62 counties. The efforts to achieve Climate Smart Community status isn't just about a frameable certificate, it's about doing more to protect and improve the health of our residents and the sustainability of our planet," said Wendy Robinson of SACRED.

Millennium has yet to answer for the health problems around their Minisink compressor, which they have laughably attributed to wood stoves. Allowing even bigger facilities to be built before local and fully detailed air emission monitoring of their existing compressors is done is an abdication of NY officials' duty to protect the health and safety of their citizens" stated Larysa Dyrszka of SACRED.

"It is time for Governor Cuomo and the DEC to shut down the expansion of all fracked gas infrastructure in NY. Scientists Anthony Ingraffea and Robert Howarth of Cornell, had established that VLC and ESU, together with the CPV power plant they would feed, would generate 7 million metric tons of CO2-equivalent pollution, increasing state power-sector emissions by 15%: Clearly this is the wrong direction to go if we want to stem greenhouse gas emissions statewide," stated Pramilla Malick, founder of Protect Orange County.

It is time for NY to transition to sustainable energy. Lashing the state to fracked gas infrastructure puts its citizens in physical peril and causes untold damage in the states where the gas is first fracked. Hurricane Harvey reminds us that reliance on fossil fuels will only ensure future devastation.

The Millennium ESU project includes:

- a new 22,400 horsepower compressor station in the Town of Highland, NY
- addition of a new 22,400 horsepower compressor unit at the existing Hancock Compressor Station in Delaware County, NY
- installation of 7.7 miles of new 36-inch pipeline and 0.1 mile of 30-inch pipeline looping Millennium's existing 24-inch line between the Huguenot and Westtown meter stations in Orange County, NY

FERC has completed its Environmental Assessment for the project and now awaits decisionmaking by the FERC Commissioners regarding federal Certification (i.e. approval).

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