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Contacts:

Karen Feridun, Berks Gas Truth, 610-678-7726, karen.feridun@gmail.com

Tracy Carluccio, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, 215.369.1188x104
tracy@delawareriverkeeper.org

Barbara Arrindell, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, 845.252.6677
dcs@DamascusCitizens.org

**Public calls for COMPLETE BAN on fracking and related activities
Lehigh Valley turns out to DRBC Frack Ban Hearing
*Complete ban must also prohibit frack wastewater disposal
and water export***

Schnecksville, PA – Area residents, businesspeople, farmers, and representatives of organizations testified at the Delaware River Basin Commission's (DRBC) last in-person public hearing on their draft natural gas regulations and proposed ban on fracking to express why it is imperative that DRBC adopt a complete ban on fracking and its associated activities throughout the Delaware River Watershed. The hearing was held at Lehigh Carbon Community College in Schnecksville, PA this afternoon.

At a press conference preceding the hearing, people explained why their community or organization was calling for the DRBC to completely ban fracking throughout the watershed by rejecting proposed regulations that would allow the dumping of wastewater from fracking or would allow the export of water from the Delaware for fracking elsewhere. Concerns centered on the protection of the Delaware River Basin and its water supplies and natural resources, including the Lehigh River, the second largest tributary to the Delaware River and a watershed that contains shale gas formations.

Today's is the last of DRBC in-person hearings on the draft regulations that will be open to the public. A phone hearing will be held March 6, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.: listen by calling 1-866-831-8713 and asking the operator to connect them to the DRBC call. To speak at the phone hearing register at <http://bit.ly/2pdqxQ9> .

For more than a year, the groups have been advocating for the DRBC to enact a permanent and comprehensive fracking ban to protect the health and safety of all who live in the watershed, as well as the 15 million to 17 million people who depend on it for drinking water.

The groups are also encouraging people to comment in writing to the DRBC about why they want a complete frack ban and the rejection of DRBC's draft fracking regulations by March 30, the close of the public comment period.

"The water that leaves the Delaware River Basin for fracking will never return to us as potable water. The water we get back will be in such a highly polluted condition that we'll have no choice but to store it or dispose of it. That is effectively the unsustainable cycle the Delaware River Basin Commission is proposing in its draft regulations that recognize that fracking is so dangerous that it must be banned in the basin, but fail to acknowledge the profound impacts to our water resources water extraction and waste processing would inflict. The Commission must rethink its position and ban all of it," **said Karen Feridun, Founder, Berks Gas Truth.**

"Climate change is a direct threat to our fresh water; our land, food and all species rely on fresh water to survive and thrive. On behalf of families across Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware, and all around our great country, we call on the federal government and the Governors of the four states of the Delaware River Basin Commission to enact a complete fracking ban in the Basin; one that includes water withdrawals and the processing, discharge and storage of fracking waste. Your stated responsibility is protecting the shared waters that provide more than 15 million people in all of our four watershed states with drinking water. Our country, our region and our citizens are watching. We call on you to lead," **said Harriet Shugarman, Executive Director, ClimateMama, Climate Reality Project New York City Metro Chair.**

"Our family lives on our fourth generation farm in Pennsylvania. The farm is a short drive from the Delaware River Basin but it is located in the Susquehanna Watershed where to the north fracking is running rampant over farmer rights and sustainable efforts by farmer friends attempting to grow healthy organic food in Pennsylvania. Our land is near the boom and bust of the anthracite coal region that has left contamination behind

for the taxpayers to clean up - though much of this harm is sadly permanent. Being a sacrifice zone for the fossil fuel industry for generations, seeing the lasting sickness that is irreversible, we understand these fossil fuel industries do not have our interests in mind – that is history that the DRBC and Governor Wolf and other Commissioners need to heed now by passing a complete ban on fracking and its related activities. By saying no to the drillers, Governor Wolf and the DRBC will be saying yes to healthy food, healthy sustainable farms, and a future where young people will want to live and thrive and grow their families in the Commonwealth,” **said Faith Zerbe, Potter’s Farm.**

“What happens in the headwaters has impacts locally and downstream. Spills, dumping, aquifer and surface water contamination are rampant where drilling is occurring, though often covered up with non-disclosure agreements. Without clean water, health goes down the drain - and property values along with health,” **said Barbara Arrindell, Director of Damascus Citizens for Sustainability.**

“The people of the Delaware River Watershed need the protection the DRBC is supposed to provide to our water resources and the watershed lands that make up the Basin. Fracking has ruined communities where it is occurring, polluting water and harming the health of communities, human and nonhuman. The only way to protect our environment and irreplaceable water supplies from the degradation fracking brings is to prevent fracking altogether, including prohibiting the dumping of toxic wastewater and the withdrawal of water for fracking. DRBC, do the right thing – ban it all to protect us all,” **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) issued draft natural gas regulations on Nov. 30. A written comment period is open until March 30. To read the draft regulations: http://www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/proposed/notice_hydraulic-fracturing.html

DRBC proposed a ban on fracking but also issued draft regulations that would allow the toxic wastewater produced by fracking to be stored, processed, and discharged in the Delaware River Watershed – and the estuary is the most likely place in the basin where that would occur. The draft regulations also allow water to be exported from the Basin for fracking elsewhere. For over a year, organizations from throughout the Delaware River watershed states have been working through the Frack Ban Campaign to achieve

a complete ban on fracking in the watershed and have vowed to defeat the proposed dumping of waste from fracking and the export of water to fuel fracking outside the Basin.

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