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183 Organizations from Four Watershed States Tell Delaware River Basin Commissioners to Enact a Fracking Ban in the Watershed
Hundreds of thousands of members and residents want permanent regional water protection

Washington Crossing, PA – Today 183 organizations representing hundreds of thousands of members and the four states whose waters flow to the Delaware River submitted a letter to the Delaware River Basin Commission voting members – the Governors of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware and the federal representative, the Army Corps of Engineers - calling for a permanent ban on fracking in the Watershed.

Almost 400 people demonstrated at the DRBC's public meeting last month in reaction to news that the DRBC staff has been working behind the scenes with PA Department of Environmental Protection to develop natural gas drilling regulations, which, if enacted, would lift the seven year moratorium on drilling in the Delaware River Basin. The groups are insisting that the mountains of scientific evidence, the data about water contamination from fracking, and the fracking ban in New York State provide more than enough reason for the Commissioners to enact a ban instead.

The rollback of federal environmental regulations and authority under the Trump Administration's policies is an important concern since President Trump is represented on the DRBC by the Army Corps of Engineers, who holds the fifth vote to the four Governors.

"Delaware has nothing to gain and everything to lose from allowing fracking in our watershed" **said Stephanie Herron, Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at the Delaware Sierra Club.** "That's why we're calling on Governor Carney and the other DRBC Commissioners to protect Delawareans drinking water and health by

permanently banning the dirty and dangerous drilling process in the Delaware River Basin."

"It is time to remove the fracking guillotine hanging over the heads of our watershed and residents and that could drop at any time with just a few weeks' notice and the vote of just 5 people. Now is the time to give permanent protection and peace of mind to all those who rely upon and appreciate the Delaware River watershed" **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.**

"The Delaware River Basin is the drinking water source for millions of people. Peer reviewed scientific study shows us that fracking is inherently contaminating of water supplies. Fracking cannot be done anywhere water. Period. It needs to be banned in the Delaware River Basin and we will not stop until a complete ban is enacted," **said Josh Fox, Director, GASLAND**

"It's now time, in fact past time, to turn the temporary moratorium on fracking around the Delaware River and its tributaries into a permanent ban. DRBC's 2010 decision to protect these outstanding natural resource waters, the drinking water supply of 17 million people, was wise then and with all we've learned since it would be still wiser to take the next step now. The science is clear, fracking and protecting water are incompatible, that's why New York has acted to ban fracking. DRBC must follow suit and get back out ahead of the curve," **said David Pringle, NJ Campaign Director of Clean Water Action** which has members in all 4 states in the watershed.

"The Delaware River Valley is a national treasure and it's being threatened by fracking. We need the DRBC to make the fracking ban permanent to protect this environmentally sensitive region and the drinking water for 17 million people," **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** "You have designated these areas as Special Protection Water Areas and you must give the River the special protection it deserves!"

"The Commissioners need look no farther than the shale fields of Pennsylvania, the only state in the basin that has exposed its communities to the ravages of fracking, to see why a permanent ban is warranted. During the years since the moratorium was established in 2010, we've seen fracking's profound environmental, public health, and safety impacts in PA at the same time that we've seen huge, scalable advances in renewable, sustainable solutions. A ban is a no-brainer," **said Karen Feridun, Founder, Berks Gas Truth.**

"The Delaware River Basin is one of the most important ecological and cultural regions in the entire nation. We cannot afford to expose it to the dangers of fracking, which could forever destroy the drinking water source for millions of people across five states. Instead of relying on dangerous fossil fuels of the past, we must turn to renewables and

efficiency to power our future,” **said Rob Friedman, Natural Resources Defense Council.**

“New York State banned high volume fracking because of the overwhelming scientific evidence of its threats—especially those to public health. The Delaware River Basin Commission must do the same. This is the only course to protect our water, air, health and communities—it’s one that Pennsylvania’s Governor Tom Wolf supports, one that New York’s Governor Cuomo has implemented, and we urge all of the commissioners to follow their lead,” **said Wes Gillingham, Program Director, Catskill Mountainkeeper.**

“The Delaware River Valley shouldn’t have the specter of fracking hanging over our watershed. More than 5 years ago, the DRBC rejected fracking regulations and maintained the temporary moratorium on fracking. In the age of Trump, it’s imperative for the DRBC to institute a permanent fracking ban on one of the most harmful industrial activities facing our vast drinking water network in the Delaware River watershed. It’s time for the DRBC to take a clear stand for our drinking water and oppose fracking,” **said Doug O’Malley, Director, Environment New Jersey’s Director.**

“The 183 organizations that signed this letter are telling the DRBC Commissioners that the moratorium they put in place has protected the River so far and now that we have abundant incontrovertible evidence to prove fracking cannot be done safely, it is their responsibility to enact a permanent ban to provide this Wild and Scenic River and the water supply for 17 million people the protection that is necessary,” **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

The letter to the DRBC Commissioners was submitted to them at the March 15 business meeting of the Commission in Washington Crossing, PA. A copy of the letter is attached.

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