



For Immediate Release
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Delaware River Basin Commission
Declares Moratorium on Shale Gas Production Wells

West Trenton - May 6, 2010 - The Delaware River Basin Commission placed a moratorium on shale gas production wells in the Delaware River Basin. By unanimous vote at the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting today the Commission decided to postpone action on all shale gas well "dockets" under their jurisdiction until the Commission adopts the natural gas-specific regulations they are developing. They also voted to direct staff to begin the public rulemaking process for natural gas well pads.

The moratorium does NOT apply to water withdrawal applications for gas well development. The Commission claims they already have sufficient regulations in place to consider water withdrawal applications for natural gas development. The moratorium also does not apply to exploratory or test wells at this time because the Commission does not "docket" (permit) them; they have decided not to include test wells in their regulatory process, an oversight being vigorously protested by Delaware Riverkeeper Network and others.

"We applaud the DRBC for taking this precautionary approach to gas drilling in the Delaware River Watershed. Now rules to protect the Delaware River and its Watershed from degradation and pollution from shale gas development can be put in place prior to the drilling of gas production wells," said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.

"The Commission should next recognize that it must include all natural gas related projects in its rulemaking, including water withdrawals, and that this moratorium should stop all drilling, closing the current loophole that will allow 'exploratory' or 'non-shale' drilling to surge ahead of DRBC regulation. The DRBC has taken a sensible and laudable step today towards keeping gas drilling from running wild here so that a cumulative study of impacts and rulemaking can happen first. The public fought for this "pause button" and the DRBC listened. We will continue to fight for a full moratorium", said van Rossum.

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