

**Berks Gas Truth \* Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy  
Catskill Mountainkeeper \* Damascus Citizens for  
Sustainability \* Delaware Riverkeeper Network  
Earthworks \* Environment New Jersey  
Food and Water Watch \* Frack Action  
Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition  
Josh Fox/“Gasland” \* Hudson Riverkeeper \*  
New Jersey Sierra Club \* NYH2O  
New Jersey Environmental Federation \* NYSESS  
PA Clean Water Action \* Protecting our Waters  
United for Action**

November 21, 2011

For Immediate Release

Contacts: Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper 215-369-1188x102  
Tracy Carluccio Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Ntwrk 215-692-2329  
Wes Gillingham, Program Director, Catskill Mountainkeeper 845-901-1029  
Jeff Tittel, Director, New Jersey Sierra Club 609-558-9100  
Tina Posterli for Hudson Riverkeeper 516-526-9371  
Doug O’Malley for Environment New Jersey 917-449-6812  
Barbara Arrindell, Director, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability 570-729-8687  
Karen Feridun, founder, Berks Gas Truth, 610-678-7726  
Dave Pringle, Campaign Director, NJ Environmental Federation 732-996-4288  
Joe Levine, NYH2O, (212) 219-1038 x1  
Jim Walsh, Eastern Region Director, Food & Water Watch 732.979.6883  
David Braun, United for Action, 917-514-0700  
Nathan Sooy, PA Clean Water Action, [nsooy@cleanwater.org](mailto:nsooy@cleanwater.org)  
Michael Lebron, NY’ers for Sustainable Energy Solutions Stwide 917-743-7568  
Ana Tinsly, Frack Action Communications Director 646-331-4765  
Josh Fox, writer and director, “Gasland”, [orifox@aol.com](mailto:orifox@aol.com)  
Steve Kent for Josh Fox, [skent@kentcom.com](mailto:skent@kentcom.com) 914-589-5988  
Iris Marie Bloom, Director, Protecting our Waters, 215-840-6489  
Al Rodriguez, President, Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition [gdacprez@gmail.com](mailto:gdacprez@gmail.com)

**Rally for the Delaware River Watershed**

**Groups to Governors and President Obama: Vote No to Protect our Water and  
Communities from Drilling and Fracking**

**West Trenton, New Jersey** –Eight hundred gathered today in front of the War Memorial in Trenton to say “Don’t Drill the Delaware” at a Rally of various constituencies and organizations opposed to gas drilling in the Delaware River Watershed. The Rally

was held at the steps of the building where the Delaware River Basin Commission was to hold a meeting on this same day to consider opening the Watershed to drilling and fracking. That meeting was cancelled on Thursday, apparently because the voting members of the DRBC could not reach agreement on the issue.

The Rally was called so that people could make it clear that they are more determined than ever to keep drilling and fracking out of the Watershed, building awareness of the intrinsically polluting nature of shale gas development – drilling and fracking -- and actively engaging more people to speak up for the DRBC's voting members to make this momentous decision based on protection of communities, drinking water and public health, not politics and the pressures applied by drilling interests and big energy corporations.

The Rally, organized by a Coalition of organizations, featured prominent activists: writer and director Josh Fox [www.gaslandthemovie](http://www.gaslandthemovie) and [www.savethedelawariver.org](http://www.savethedelawariver.org); actor, director and founder of [WaterDefense.org](http://WaterDefense.org) Mark Ruffalo; actress Debra Winger; and biologist, author and cancer survivor Dr. Sandra Steingraber. Representatives of several constituency groups and organizations rallied the high-spirited crowd from 11:00 am to 12:30. The group then marched to the New Jersey State House to Governor Chris Christie's office to call for his vote at the DRBC against drilling in the Watershed; they were greeted on the steps by members of the New Jersey Legislature who are sponsors of the NJ Frack Ban Bill. Governors Jack Markell of Delaware and Andrew Cuomo of New York have both publicly stated they are voting against the plan to drill, Governor Corbett has called for drilling to commence (the rest of Pennsylvania is experiencing the largest drilling campaign in its history), but Christie and the Obama Administration have not made any public statement about the delayed vote.

"We have just had a major victory that is true. But there is immense suffering happening and irreparable damage being done across Pennsylvania, across the US and across the world from fracking. New York State is in the process of holding crucial hearings on its drilling regulations and we must weigh in. We are not stopping now; we must redouble our efforts, encouraged by this significant and symbolic but momentary win. Stopping fracking in the Delaware River Basin, even just for this moment is huge but it is also a drop in the bucket. We must push ahead. We must take this momentary victory at the Delaware River and press on. Let's not lose our incredible momentum. We have to keep up our level of action and perseverance and not back down", **said Josh Fox, writer and director, "Gasland" and [www.savethedelawariver.org](http://www.savethedelawariver.org).**

**Actor and Director and founder of [WaterDefense.org](http://WaterDefense.org) Mark Ruffalo said** "I applaud Governor Markell for admitting that there is no science to justify opening up one of North America's important River Basins to industrialization and greed. Now the rest of

the commission will hear from us, the people who speak for this beautiful river not for short term profits.”

"Today's Rally is about sending a message — a message of hope for success to our community, a message to the governor's and the president that opposition to gas drilling is key to their political futures because it is critical to the ongoing health of our communities, and a message to the drillers that their campaign of deception and lies isn't working," **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.** "And today is about sending a hearty thank you to Governor Markell for taking a fresh look at this issue and casting his vote for the community, and to Governor Cuomo for making clear his ongoing opposition to the regulations."

"We have clearly seen what a mobilized citizen response can do to shine a light on a major lack of oversight by our government watch dog agencies over this very dangerous practice. Finally, our politicians are waking up to find out that what's been going on under our noses, the poisonous onslaught and major expansion of fracking, is a really bad idea. And good for them, namely the Governors of Delaware and New York, as these guys are finally hearing the alarm sounded by this broad based coalition of citizen action groups and environmental organizations to the threat of hydraulic fracturing", **said David Braun, United for Action.** "Kudos to those elected officials who remember that they were put into office to protect and serve the people. We are anxiously waiting to see which side President Obama weighs in on," Braun added.

"The DRBC has postponed a vote but they still haven't asked for an EIS which is the law under the National Environmental Policy act. They need to hear the voices that want this national treasure protected. This river and its surrounding habitat are just too important to trash," **said Wes Gillingham, Program Director, and Catskill Mountainkeeper.**

"Today's Rally is a new kick-off of a campaign to ban fracking in the Delaware River Basin. This is a Rally for the future of our river and to protect the water supply for 15 million people. We cannot trust the politicians or the DRBC to protect that water from fracking; we must get them to ban fracking. We had a victory in stopping the weak DRBC rules from going forward now we must get President Obama and Gov Christie to support a fracking ban. This is just the beginning of the grassroots campaign to get the New Jersey Legislature to over ride the Governor's veto of the Fracking Ban Bill and get the DRBC to ban fracking in the basin. We will win this campaign because our future and the River's future are at stake. There is no fracking way they will drill the Delaware!" **said Jeff Tittel, Director, NJ Sierra Club.**

"Delaware's Governor Markell got it right by saying the fracking proposal 'Currently Lacks Sufficient Health and Safety Protections', the title of his post on his

letter to the Commission saying Delaware votes "NO". In order to fulfill Gov. Markell's demand to assure that the 2/3 of his state's water that comes from the Delaware River remains viable drinking water there has to be a Cumulative Impact Study of the effects of gas drilling on the watershed," **said Barbara Arrindell, Director, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability.** "On behalf of the 15 million residents of the Basin, Damascus Citizens salutes Governor Markell. DCS will continue to insist on a cumulative Impact study in the Basin in order to fully understand BEFOREHAND all the ramifications of drilling," concluded Arrindell.

"The Delaware River won today," **said Doug O'Malley, field director for Environment New Jersey.** "But New Jersey residents deserve to know whether Governor Christie would have voted to start gas drilling or protect the Delaware. The Delaware is still in the crosshairs of the gas drilling industry."

"Never has there been a more reasonable outcry. We know we can't live without clean air, clean water and clean food; we know our grandchildren may need this gas, but we don't need it. We need to lead our nation away from fossil fuels altogether, and fast," **said Iris Marie Bloom, Director, Protecting our Waters.** "The cancellation of the DRBC meeting is a turning of the wheel of the nation away from that insanity. We are taking the helm. We are going sane," added Bloom.

"By delaying action, the DRBC is recognizing that the proposed regulations are far too weak to prevent harm to communities and the environment from irresponsible drilling," **said Nadia Steinzor of Earthworks Oil and Gas Accountability Project.** "But they still have a long way to go to prove that they will uphold their mandate to protect vital natural areas and water supplies despite pressure from the gas industry."

"If it wasn't for all of us and our colleagues - regionally and in the drilling fields, there would by now be drilling and fracking and air pollution and water contamination and landscape desecration and industrialization in the DRB. Today is a wonderful and overwhelming display of solidarity and coming together to protect our homes, property and environment from the thieves in power - the corporations and those they buy and own," **said Joe Levine, NYH2O.** "We must continue to apply all the pressure we can from every perspective on every public official and force them to switch their priorities. 28 - 1/2 days of fuel is not worth ruining the basin for 20 million people for generations. We hereby put President Obama on notice that he will be held accountable, because he has breached his promise to those who elected him to protect our most valuable environmental resources," concluded Levine.

"CLEAN WATER ACTION and GAS TRUTH Rallies in Trenton because we must show the powers-that-be in Trenton, Harrisburg, Albany, Dover, and Washington, DC

that our commitment to preserve and protect the Delaware Watershed is absolute,” **said Nathan Sooy, Clean Water Action, Harrisburg, PA.** “We must draw this line and then STOP THE DRILLING where it is occurring now in our region”, added Sooy.

**Dave Pringle, Campaign Director, NJ Environmental Federation said,** “Kudos to Governor Markell! He is not only protecting Delaware citizens but also Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers, and New Jerseyites and setting the standard for the rest of the country.”

“The rally we are holding today is a testament to the growing grassroots movement that is working to ensure human needs are put above the interests of a greedy few who would jeopardize our livelihoods for their own personal profit. This victory for the Delaware River should serve as a ray of hope to everyone in New York, Pennsylvania and across the country who are struggling to ban fracking. The tide is turning and we can win,” **said Jim Walsh, Food & Water Watch.**

"The DRBC's postponement of its vote shows what individuals can accomplish when they band together against the tyranny of fossil fuels. The Delaware River, the drinking water source for 15 million people, belongs to all of us, not the few gas corporations who would destroy this pristine river for profit. The people have woken up, and we will no longer allow our earth and our children's future to be compromised by greed and shortsightedness. Frack Action will continue to fight against fracking, whether it is along the Delaware River Basin, or New York State," **said Claire Sandberg, Executive Director, Frack Action.**

“We have won a battle in a much larger war. We hope that this serves as inspiration for the many environmental and health advocates on the front lines of countless other battles being waged in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and everywhere else dirty drilling is happening. We know it serves as an inspiration to everyone who has fought this battle and knows that there are more ahead before the Delaware River receives the protection it deserves”, **said Karen Feridun, founder, Berks Gas Truth.**

"The fight to protect the Delaware Basin watershed from fracking is far from over. But today's action demonstrates that we are committed to continuing the fight. We intend to leverage the momentum of this victory to apply pressure on Governor Cuomo and DEC Commissioner Martens to heed their own advice and take the time to get it right in New York, as their fracking plan is in no better shape than the DRBC's," **said Kate Hudson, Riverkeeper Watershed Program Director.**

“Congrats to Governor Markell for applying the precautionary principle and putting the health and welfare of the 15 million people who depend on the Delaware River Basin for clean fresh water ahead of industry profits. And a big thanks to the thousands of people who work together as one to get out the message that transparent, peer-reviewed science - not advocacy science - should be the determining factor on this important issue, for the basin, the nation and the world,” **said Michael Lebron, New Yorkers for Sustainable Energy Solutions Statewide.**

"Today, the Delaware River Basin Commission took an important pause," **said Deb Nardone, Director of Sierra Club's Natural Gas Reform Campaign.** "The Sierra Club will continue to work with coalition groups and the Commission to stand by this decision and keep an unsafe and unsupervised natural gas industry out of sensitive areas like the Delaware River Basin."

“Right now we have a Mexican standoff but we are determined to turn this temporary reprieve into a permanent prohibition on drilling in the Delaware River Watershed, demonstrating to all regions who are enduring the drilling invasion that the pollution and degradation the resource extraction industry is forcing on us must be stopped to protect clean water and a healthy future,” **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) is composed of the Governors of the four states that drain to the Delaware River - New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware - and a federal representative, the Army Corps of Engineers for the Obama Administration. The issue has been a raging controversy over the past 3 ½ years; a drilling moratorium is currently in place in the Basin while the DRBC develops natural gas regulations.

69,800 comments were received by the DRBC during a public comment period (December 2010 to April 2011) on draft natural gas development regulations proposed for the Basin, breaking all records for public interest. Since that time, 73,000 more letters and Petitions, in addition to several sign-on letters from diverse constituency groups, have been submitted to the voting members of the DRBC in opposition to the commencement of drilling and in support of comprehensive environmental review.

The DRBC provides a layer of regulation that prevails over State regulations, if stricter than the State, to protect the exceptional water quality of the Delaware River and its outstanding resources recognized by Congress under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Under adopted law based on the Compact that resulted from the Supreme Court Decree that established the DRBC in 1961, all gas drilling within the Delaware River Basin requires a permit from the DRBC in addition to a state permit.

If Monday's DRBC vote had approved the regulations, the drilling moratorium would have been lifted and gas drilling and fracking would have commenced in the Upper and Middle Delaware River Watershed which is underlain by Marcellus and Utica Shales. The DRBC is required to provide 10 days public notice of a meeting where the voting members will cast a vote on the adoption of regulations and the vote is required to be made in public. In Pennsylvania, where drilling is occurring at breakneck speed, permitting would likely occur quickly. In New York State, where the Department of Environmental Conservation is updating its environmental review process for fracking and horizontal drilling, there is a *de-facto* moratorium in place, which would continue to hold up Delaware River Basin drilling.

###