



For Immediate Release

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Delaware River Basin Commission Heard Testimony About PennEast Pipeline Project

Washington Crossing, PA: At its first meeting since making the decision to exercise jurisdiction over the PennEast Pipeline project, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) Commissioners heard testimony from the public regarding anticipated impacts to the water resources of the Delaware River Watershed.

Responding to a formal petition submitted by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, and hundreds of letters from individuals, the DRBC issued its jurisdictional determination on November 14, 2014 in letters sent to the PennEast Pipeline Company and to Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper. In the letters, DRBC Executive Director Steve Tambini wrote about the PennEast pipeline:

“...the project is subject to review under Section 3.8 of the Delaware River Basin Compact and implementing regulations.”

"I'm pleased DRBC is providing an opportunity for our community to voice its concerns regarding the potential impacts of several proposed pipelines. This is an opportunity for DRBC and Pennsylvania to partner in addressing these matters going forward," **said PA state Senator John Rafferty.**

"Pipelines are a known and growing source of water pollution, of forest fragmentation, of wetlands degradation, of flooding, erosion, lost groundwater recharge, and damaged ecological systems. They are also responsible for the increased taking of private and public lands through the exercise and/or threat of their eminent domain authority. They are the big bully partners of the gas drillers. We applaud the DRBC decision to subject the project to their decisionmaking process and are going to take full advantage of every opportunity to share with the DRBC the information we have about the impacts this project would have on our water resources if allowed to cut through our watershed, especially with the standard development practices used by the industry. We will be urging the DRBC to stand in defense of our River and communities when it comes to the PennEast Pipeline project," **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.**

"Communities up and down the proposed route of the PennEast pipeline are expressing their opposition to the project, voiced in thoughtfully prepared municipal resolutions that pay special attention to the natural resources they value and work hard to protect. They look to the Delaware River Basin Commission as a powerful ally with the legal authority they lack to advocate on behalf of the basin and every being who calls it home," **said Karen Feridun, Founder of Berks Gas Truth.**

"The proposed pipeline would cross my historic farm which lies in the most sensitive part of the Well Head Protection Area (WHPA) that provides the town of Stockton, NJ, with its water supply. Any contamination of this aquifer would have serious and irreparable consequences for the safe drinking water of our region, including the Delaware River. In addition, the clearing of mature trees would exasperate storm runoff problems causing flooding and property damage to surrounding properties," **said Deborah Scoblionkov a local property owner.**

"If approved, the PennEast pipeline would increase demand for fracking in Pennsylvania, impact tens of thousands of people along the entire route, and pollute our air, water, and soil in the Delaware River Watershed," **said Joe Minott, Esq., Executive Director of the Clean Air Council.**

"Already, every single impacted community in New Jersey has passed a resolution of opposition to the pipeline, along with many townships in Pennsylvania. The people are standing up and demanding an end to polluting gas infrastructure. It is time for the DRBC to respect the voices of impacted communities and exercise their jurisdiction to stop the PennEast pipeline and protect the watershed."

"The PennEast pipeline is a poster child for private profit and public pain," said **Robert Gardner, Campaign Representative with Sierra Club Beyond Natural Gas**. "The DRBC's decision to subject this pipeline to review is a step in the right direction, but there is more work to be done. Much as the DRBC should continue its moratorium on fracking for shale gas, the Commission should ensure that they are not permitting dirty, dangerous and, in some instances, deadly pipelines to cut through the Delaware River Basin."

"Natural gas pipelines are becoming a major environmental problem. These pipelines not only cut an ugly scar through our open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas, they are having a significant impact on our environment, especially water quality. Erosion, stormwater and chemicals all coming off the pipelines during construction and even afterwards are a big threat to clean water. The proposed PennEast Pipeline is one of the most damaging, crossing dozens of high quality watersheds, including Special Protection Waters, Category One Streams, and Trout Production Streams. This pipeline will seriously threaten these high quality waters and watersheds. We applaud the DRBC for requiring the PennEast pipeline come before them for review. We believe the DRBC must look at the project's secondary and cumulative impacts, especially the impact to high quality waters. We encourage the DRBC to do a comprehensive and thorough review that encourages public input. We will be glad to work with and provide information to them," said **Jeff Tittel, Director, NJ Sierra Club**. "There are around a dozen of these pipeline projects in and around the basin and the DRBC needs to look at all the impacts, not just one at a time."

"Penn East would have a devastating impact on the Delaware River Watershed. It is only right for the DRBC to assert jurisdiction and better quantify the devastation. That documentation will be proof positive that our drinking water, property rights and rural heritage trump the arrogance and greed of the antiquated fossil fuel industry," stated **David Pringle, NJ Campaign Director for Clean Water Action**.

"We are facing an onslaught of proposals for new pipeline corridors that fall outside of any overall plan or vision. Those lines now pose perhaps the single greatest threat to preserved land in New Jersey and the water resources those lands protect. We greatly appreciate the DRBC's willingness to consider the impacts from the PennEast line on the water resources of the Delaware River Basin, and we urge the Commission to exercise its authority to protect those resources," said **Alison Mitchell, Policy Director, New Jersey Conservation Foundation**.

"No one wrote a book called 'A Pipeline Runs Through It.' The PennEast pipeline will tear an ecological scar through Central Jersey," said **Doug O'Malley, Director of Environment New Jersey**.

"The DRBC needs to apply the strongest environmental review for PennEast. This can't be a rubber stamp."

"The proposed route crosses 14 parcels of preserved open space and farmland in Hopewell Township alone. A primary reason for investing public tax dollars in the preservation of land is to protect the quantity and quality of water resources. Examination of the proposed PennEast pipeline route superimposed on a land cover map shows that it crosses 60 water bodies and irreparably fragments many significant forest areas. The fragmented woodlands can never be restored to their previous state. The impacts to our waterways will not only happen during construction but, in many cases, will continue in perpetuity," said **Patricia Sziber, Friends of Hopewell Valley Open Space**.

"In my township alone, Holland, this proposed pipeline will cross at least 20 creeks and their tributaries in three of the five subwatersheds, the construction and housing of a pipeline such as this one will breach the integrity of our community. Not only will the pipeline disturb these streams but it will also intrude on the mandatory 300-foot buffer on each side of the streams. These buffers contain vegetation that keeps the water cool, and slows run-off into the stream, mitigating flooding. The majority of these waterways are classified Category-One (C-1) by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP), indicating that trout can reproduce because the water in those waterways is the cleanest in the state," said **Alice Orrichio, a member of Concerned Citizens Against the Pipeline (CCAP)**.

"Hopewell Citizens Against the PennEast Pipeline wants to thank the Delaware River Basin Commission for exercising jurisdiction over the PennEast pipeline. This proposed pipeline is the only one out of 15 pipelines proposed for New Jersey that is not co-located in any already disturbed, existing right of way. This greenfields line, if approved, will clear cut and fragment mature forests; violate Category 1 buffers designed to protect water quality and the ecology of our stream corridors; and damage preserved open space and preserved farmlands. HTCAPP looks forward to a thorough analysis of the cumulative adverse impacts to water resources and the biodiversity of the river basin," said **Katherine V. Dresdner, Esq., Consulting Attorney, HTCAPP**.

"I would like to thank the DRBC for recognizing the environmental consequences this pipeline will have by exercising their jurisdiction over this project. We believe that a critical review of the project will show that it does not meet the DRBC standards. The impacts to the Delaware River basin are unacceptable when compared to any alleged economic benefit to the region," said **Michael L. Pisauro, Jr., Policy Director, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association**.

The various petitions and letters can be found at:

DRN Petition:

<http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/Documents/DRN%20Petition%20to%20DRBC%20re%20PennEast.pdf>

DRBC Response:

<http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/Documents/DRBC%20response%20sept%202014.pdf>

DRN Response to DRBC Sept letter:

<http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/Documents/DRN%20response%20to%20DRBC%2010.28.14%20letter.pdf>

DRBC Jurisdictional determination letters:

http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/Documents/vanRossum_DRN_PennEastPipelines_Ltr_14_1114.pdf

[http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/Documents/DRBC%20ferc%20comment20141119-0008\(29930859\).pdf](http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/Documents/DRBC%20ferc%20comment20141119-0008(29930859).pdf)

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