

***For Immediate Release***

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## **67 Organizations Petition For Delaware River Basin Commission Action on Pipeline Projects**

***West Trenton, NJ:*** 67 organizations resubmitted a formal legal Petition to the Delaware River Basin Commission asserting the agency has an obligation to exercise its jurisdiction over the proliferation of pipelines being constructed and proposed within the boundaries or portions of the Delaware River watershed. According to the Petition, pipelines are a significant source of waterway degradation and, according to DRBC's Rules of Practice and Procedure as well as the Delaware River Basin Compact, should be subject to DRBC jurisdiction, docketing and oversight. The Petition was first submitted at the DRBC's September 12, 2012 Commissioners meeting and then denied without any public notice, comment period or hearing at the December 5, 2012 Commissioners meeting. The organizations have strengthened the Petition, and with new evidence about the harms of pipelines constructed within the watershed and the DRBC's acknowledgement that it should have reviewed at least two recent pipelines constructed (the Tennessee Gas 300 Line and 1278 Columbia Line), are urging the DRBC to reconsider the issue of pipelines and its jurisdiction.

The Petition was submitted via email and mail along with a second copy of a rehearing request for the Northeast Upgrade Project, a pipeline now cutting its way through the upper watershed, which the rehearing request says should be immediately halted and subjected to DRBC review and jurisdiction.

According to the cover letter submitted with the two documents, the Petitioners and residents from around the region are expecting the DRBC to act upon the documents at their March 6 meeting and will be there to give testimony on the matter. "Whether or not the Commissioners want to receive testimony on the Petition and the rehearing request we will be there to give it to them. The last time we submitted our Petition and documents on the NEUP Pipeline we trusted DRBC to play fair, to have an opportunity for public comment, a public hearing and to provide public notice before they cast their votes; they did none of that. So this time we are

not giving them the chance to take action without our being there to speak; we will be there on March 6 to urge them to take immediate action on pipelines,” said **Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper and leader of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

"Given the potentially damaging impacts of the TGP pipeline and others, the DRBC needs to do their jobs and take jurisdiction. There is concern that these pipelines pollute critical water supply streams and rivers and damage the watershed so there needs to be review and oversight. The DRBC needs to follow the law and do what is right for the Basin. By not fully reviewing these projects the DRBC is violating the public trust and that is shameful," said **Jeff Tittel, Director, NJ Sierra Club.**

**Angela Monti, Founder of The Mother’s Project (TMP)** said: "I’m speaking as a long time resident of the Upper Delaware and for TMP. When we built our home here, the Delaware River and the surrounding forestry was a place of unimaginable beauty and peace, protected by laws that would keep it ‘forever wild’. Never would I have imagined that 38 years later I would be defending its right to remain that way. The law has forsaken us all and is allowing the destruction of a legacy that was meant for not only my children and grandchildren but all of our children." Explains Monti, "TMP is a global coalition to end all forms of extreme energy production and use, and for full scale investment in sustainable sources of energy."

"The The Delaware River Basin Commission must recognize that every pipeline and compressor station project that is built in and through the Delaware River watershed has the potential to affect water quality and will certainly cause land and ecosystem disturbance. The DRBC should be active participants in advocating for the health of the watershed and protection for the water supplies for people and wildlife who depend on them. To not exercise jurisdiction over gas infrastructure projects would be an abdication of responsibility," said **Jill Wiener of Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy.**

**Joe Levine of Damascus Citizens for Sustainability (DCS)** offered, "Instead of picking and choosing among all the interconnected aspects of gas development and transport to see which it will deign to consider in fulfilling its obligation to protect an irreplaceable natural resource, the DRBC must account for all impacts both individually and cumulatively. Rubber stamping the Tennessee Pipeline without further study fails to fulfill that obligation." Adds **B. Arrindell, Director of DCS**, "Actual tests of methane emissions from gas pipelines confirm emission levels that will substantially accelerate climate change due to total emissions from all phases of fracking including gas transport. Since testing shows that these emissions far exceed the accepted 3.2% emissions upper limits for natural gas to be considered an improvement over coal, for what and  
Page 2 of 5

whose benefit is all this expensive infrastructure?"

"The Delaware River Basin is a natural resource that supplies life via its water supply to many nearby large cities, but the DRB is more than this. It's the "lungs" of our children, a "forever wild" recreational wonderland and a national treasure. By cutting down trees to open a pathway for the Tennessee Pipeline through the pristine Delaware River Watershed, we are affecting not only our future, but our children's future. We don't have to search far to see many of the safety and health issues related to natural gas infrastructure. The Delaware River Basin Commission has an obligation to consider how every one of their decisions will affect the generations to come and the future of this sensitive natural resource," offered **Tanyette Colon from M.U.S.T. (Mothers United for Sustainable Technologies)**.

"DRBC needs to regulate these pipelines, whether due to fracking or something else, it's DRBC's job! It's as clear as water, these gas lines impact the Delaware River watershed and DRBC's job is to protect the water for the people, not the profits for the polluters," said **David Pringle, Campaign Director with the NJ Environmental Federation**.

"Our community is currently under attack by the Tennessee Gas Pipeline (TGP)," said **Jolie DeFeis, a Pike County resident involved with Save Cummins Hill Citizens Group**. Thousands of trees are being cut along Loop 323 while a young man defends the forest by living in a tree 30' above the ground. This outrageous situation has escalated to desperate. We shine a light on you, DRBC, to help. The clock is ticking loudly but it's not too late to save us."

"The Tennessee Gas pipeline and others are a scar across the Delaware River watershed," said **Dan DeRosa, field organizer for Environment New Jersey**. "If the DRBC is going to regulate Dorney Park, they can't turn a blind eye to the damaging impact of these pipeline projects."

"The oil and gas industry uses its ever-growing network of pipeline infrastructure to solidify demand for its polluting fossil fuels and gradually condemn consumers to a reliance on them," said **Sam Bernhardt, a regional organizer with Food & Water Watch**. "But pipelines are especially dangerous in fragile ecosystems like the Delaware River Basin, and they must be kept out of these critical environmental areas."

The next meeting of the DRBC Commissioners is March 6. There is a hope and expectation the issue of pipelines will be addressed at the meeting. For more information on the meeting: <http://www.delawariverkeeper.org/about/event.aspx?Id=333>

According to the Petition, DRBC is obligated to exercise its jurisdiction and require DRBC approval for any and all pipelines passing through any portion of the watershed. The Delaware  
Page 3 of 5

River Basin Compact, which provides for the mission and mandates of the DRBC, obligates the DRBC to review all projects with substantial effects on the water resources of the Basin for consistency with their Comprehensive Plan and any projects that pass through areas which have been specifically included in the DRBC Comprehensive Plan.

“Pipelines are a growing source of pollution and damage to our communities and watershed. Pipelines require a vigilant regulatory review and approval process done on a watershed scale. The DRBC has an obligation to conduct this vigilant review. Rather than fulfill their public protection responsibilities they have so far chosen to abandon the public and side with the drillers and pipeline companies,” added the **Delaware Riverkeeper, van Rossum**. “Our organizations have joined forces and voices to urge the DRBC to take a different path, to exercise their existing jurisdiction and obligation to review any and all pipelines that may pass through an portion of the Delaware River Watershed to ensure need and no harm. There are no limitations or exceptions within the DRBC Compact or its Rules of Practice or Procedure that would exempt pipelines from DRBC jurisdiction.”

The petition was submitted by the following organizations:

Delaware Riverkeeper Network,  
NJ Sierra Club,  
Guardians of the Brandywine,  
Protecting Our Waters,  
Brandywine Conservancy,  
Berks Gas Truth, Earthworks,  
Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and  
Air,  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Philadelphia,  
Pipeline Safety Coalition,  
Aquashicola / Pohopoco Watershed  
Conservancy,  
Catskill Mountainkeeper,  
Responsible Drilling Alliance,  
Stop the Pipeline,  
Cross County Clean Air Coalition,

Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy,  
Clean Water Action,  
Lakeland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship,  
NYH20, Inc.,  
NJ Environmental Federation,  
The Mothers Project,  
Mothers for Sustainable Energy,  
Raritan Headwaters Association,  
Citizens United for Renewable Energy  
(CURE),  
CWA Local 1081,  
Brandywine Watershed Regeneration  
Initiative,  
GreenFaith,  
the Delaware Chapter of the Sierra Club,  
North Jersey Pipeline Walkers,

Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and  
Economic Justice,  
Food & Water Watch,  
The Raymond Proffitt Foundation,  
Save Cummins Hill,  
Clean Ocean Action,  
Lehigh Valley Gas Truth,  
Genesis Farm,  
Dryden Resource Awareness Coalition,  
Pennsylvania Forest Coalition,  
Transition Newton & Northwest NJ,  
Stewart Park and Reserve Coalition –  
SPARC,  
Sanford Area Concerned Citizens (S-  
OACC),  
Ramapough Lunapee Nation (Munsee),  
Damascus Citizens for Sustainability,  
Coalition Against the Rockaway Pipeline  
(CARP),  
ClimateMama,  
Clean Air Council,  
Residents of Crumhorn,  
Milford Doers,  
Upper Unadilla Valley Association,  
Citizens for a Clean Pompton Lakes,

Allegheny Defense Project,  
Otsego 2000, Inc.,  
United for Action,  
Riverkeeper, Inc.,  
American Littoral Society,  
Westchester for Change,  
New Jersey Conservation Foundation,  
Sullivan Area Citizens for Responsible  
Energy Development (SACRED),  
WATERSPIRIT,  
Frack Action,  
Natural Resources Defense Council,  
Green Umbrella – NY Youth for a Just and  
Sustainable Future,  
Crumhorn Lake Association,  
The Shalom Center,  
New Jersey Highlands Coalition,  
North Jersey Public Policy Network,  
Environment New Jersey,  
M.U.S.T. (Mothers United for Sustainable  
Technologies)  
Audubon Pennsylvania

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