

For Immediate Release

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Citizens Speak Out and Shut Down Meeting as DRBC Attempts to Ignore Pipelines

West Trenton, NJ: Over 140 people from around the region showed up at the Delaware River Basin Commission's (DRBC) March 6th meeting to demand action on gas pipelines, including (1) urging a yes vote on the Petition submitted by 67 organizations and supported by over 2,000 citizens, and (2) exercising DRBC jurisdiction over the Tennessee Gas Pipeline/Kinder Morgan Northeast Upgrade Pipeline Project (NEUP).

Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, was joined by a large crowd of over 140 people demanding that the DRBC listen to those who turned out today for the meeting. She urged the Commissioners to take public comment and commit to voting to exercise their jurisdiction on pipelines. van Rossum told the commissioners that the crowd was going to hold a spontaneous people's hearing on pipelines, and the testimony began. In response, the DRBC commissioners called a recess, and the crowd then broke into song, singing *This Land is Your Land*, and waving signs that said "Stop the Fracking Pipelines" and "Stop the Chainsaws."

DRBC commissioners reconvened after a few minutes and announced they would move the public comment session up, in order to hear the public. For over two hours, attendees delivered testimony from their seats to enthusiastic applause, defying commands that they comply with a pre-determined order that they limit their comments to two minutes and speak from the front of the room at a microphone that the commissioners would turn off after each two-minute time allocation ended.

When the commissioners attempted to reconvene the business portion of their meeting, van Rossum, joined by the crowd, demanded that the DRBC take action and vote yes on a people's resolution offered from the crowd, and not abdicate their responsibilities to the communities being harmed by the pipelines. Singing and chanting from the crowd continued, disrupting the business portion of the meeting. The meeting was unable to continue until 3:00 p.m., when it was ended by the commissioners with their exit from the building.

Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, said, “It is very important that the people took control of this meeting to ensure that our concerns and demands were heard. This regulatory body, the DRBC, is supposed to be about acting for and protecting the people. The gratuitous offer by the DRBC to give us an additional thirty minutes of public comment was meaningless without a commitment for a positive vote. So, while we didn’t get the votes for DRBC jurisdiction today, we spoke, and we showed the power of community and our commitment to securing DRBC jurisdiction.”

“Today we sent the DRBC a message that they have to do their jobs and protect the Basin not only from fracking, but also from the devastating impacts that these pipelines cause by cutting through our watersheds and leaving toxic chemicals behind, which threatens the drinking water for 17 million people. This is a message not only for the commissioners, but to the Governors of the Don’t Ruin the Basin Commission,” stated **Jeff Tittel, Executive Director, NJ Sierra Club**.

“We’ve tried to make the system work, to insist that the DRBC do the right thing so that gas pipelines do not slash and burn the watershed. But they haven’t listened and taken the action their compact requires, so we had to seize the moment today to speak for the Delaware River Watershed,” said **Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network**.

“Today the people have spoken up to protect our Delaware River. Concerned citizens will continue to hold the DRBC accountable for their decisions and actions regarding destructive shale gas development and infrastructure buildout. Democracy can be loud and a bit messy, but it is essential,” said **Jill Wiener of Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy**.

“More than six years after the shale gas industry first began poisoning Pennsylvania's waters, the DRBC should be ashamed to hide from its responsibility to regulate fracked gas pipelines,” said **Iris Marie Bloom, Executive Director of Protecting Our Waters**. “These pipelines, and with them compressor stations with rampant toxic emissions, are ramping up a whole new level of assault on our watershed. Protecting our water requires us to protect our forests, wetlands, air and overall ecological health. The DRBC must not abdicate their responsibility to regulate pipelines. Further, they have an ethical responsibility to stop every pipeline they can stop, because pipelines induce fracking, which accelerates climate change in addition to harming our health. DRBC, help us take a step back from the climate cliff instead of jumping off it!”

“The DRBC is mandated to protect the resources of the Basin and focuses on water, but without a total ecology you don't have clean water. The pipelines impact many aspects that the DRBC is required to oversee,” said **B. Arrindell of Damascus Citizens for Sustainability**.

“DRBC has a unique role to play in protecting the Delaware River Basin from the impacts of irresponsible gas production and development. Riverkeeper urges the Commission to grant our coalition's petition and exercise its clear authority over gas pipeline construction within the Basin as soon as possible,” stated **Mike Dulong, staff attorney of Hudson Riverkeeper**.

The February 15th hearing request was submitted by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network on behalf of its 11,000 members. The Pipeline Petition was submitted by 67 environmental, civic and religious organizations:

Delaware Riverkeeper Network,	Lakeland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship,
NJ Sierra Club,	NYH20, Inc.,
Guardians of the Brandywine,	NJ Environmental Federation,
Protecting Our Waters,	The Mothers Project,
Brandywine Conservancy,	Mothers for Sustainable Energy,
Berks Gas Truth,	Raritan Headwaters Association,
Earthworks,	Citizens United for Renewable Energy (CURE),
Pennsylvania Alliance for Clean Water and Air,	CWA Local 1081,
Physicians for Social Responsibility Philadelphia,	Brandywine Watershed Regeneration Initiative,
Pipeline Safety Coalition,	GreenFaith,
Aquashicola / Pohopoco Watershed Conservancy,	the Delaware Chapter of the Sierra Club,
Catskill Mountainkeeper,	North Jersey Pipeline Walkers,
Responsible Drilling Alliance,	Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice,
Stop the Pipeline,	Food & Water Watch,
Cross County Clean Air Coalition,	The Raymond Proffitt Foundation,
Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy,	Save Cummins Hill,
Clean Water Action,	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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