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Contacts:

Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, 215.369.1188 x102 (rings through to cell) keepermaya@delawareriverkeeper.org

Stephanie Heron, Sierra Club, Delaware Chapter, 302.468.4550
Stephanie.Herron@SierraClub.org

Emily Wurth, Food and Water Watch, 202.412.1505
ewurth@fwwatch.org

Jeff Tittel, New Jersey Sierra Club, 609.558.9100, jeff.tittel@sierraclub.org

Doug O'Malley, Environment New Jersey, 917.449.6812
domalley@environmentnewjersey.org

Wes Gillingham, Catskill Mountainkeeper, 845-901-1029,
wes@catskillmountainkeeper.org

Alyssa Bradley, Clean Water Action New Jersey, abradley@cleanwater.org

Kate Kiely, NRDC, 212-727-4592, kkiely@nrdc.org

Barbara Arrindell, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, 845.252.6677
dcs@DamascusCitizens.org

Karen Feridun, Founder, Berks Gas Truth, 610-678-7726

Tracy Carluccio, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, 215.369.1188x104
tracy@delawareriverkeeper.org

**Public Speaks Against Fracking, for Clean Water at Philadelphia Hearing
Delaware River Basin Commission hears from residents of all four watershed
states for a ban on fracking, frack wastewater disposal and water export**

Philadelphia, PA – An outpouring of support for protection of the region's drinking water by the adoption of a complete ban on fracking in the Delaware River Watershed was expressed by people and organizations from all four states that flow to the basin at the Delaware River Basin Commission's public hearings in Philadelphia on Thursday, January 25.

People and organizations from Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and New York testified in favor of a complete ban on fracking at the DRBC's second day of public hearings on draft fracking regulations and a proposed ban. Residents and representatives of a wide variety of groups expressed steadfast support for a complete ban on fracking but called for the rejection of the DRBC's proposed allowance of wastewater produced by fracking to be stored, processed, and discharged in the Watershed, as well as opposing water from the basin to be exported for use in fracking elsewhere.

15 million to 17 million people rely on the Delaware River for drinking water, 8 million of them in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware (and up to 9 million in New York City). People expressed concern that the existing exceptionally high water quality of the

nontidal river that provides clean and healthy flow for downstream water intakes would be degraded by fracking upriver. Testimony also opposed frack wastewater discharges, which are highly toxic and cannot be effectively cleaned, and opposed the export of water for fracking, which would deplete the finite waters of the watershed. Impacts of toxic frack waste on fish and aquatic life was also highlighted as a major concern.

After an outpouring of public criticism of the extremely limited public process regarding the proposals, two more hearings were added by DRBC—one in Schnecksville, PA., on Feb. 22, and another by phone on March 6. Details about how to sign up for those are here:

http://www.nj.gov/drbc/home/newsroom/news/approved/20180108_newsrel_hydraulic-fracturing2.html.

The Frack Ban Campaign groups (quoted below) are also encouraging people to comment in writing to the DRBC about why they want a complete frack ban and the rejection of DRBC's draft fracking regulations by March 30, the close of the public comment period.

“We are pleased that the DRBC is listening to the millions of voices of residents within the Basin and the overwhelming body of scientific evidence and moving forward with a ban on fracking in the Delaware River Basin. It is incomprehensible then that the Commission would at the same time move to allow for wastewater created in the toxic process of fracking elsewhere to be disposed of in the Delaware. This would put the safe drinking water, health and economic engine for four states, including and especially Delaware which is at the receiving end of all water that flows down through the Basin, at an undue, unnecessary and unacceptable risk. We call on Governor Carney and the other DRBC Commissioners to support a full and comprehensive ban on ALL fracking related activities in the Basin,” **said Stephanie Heron, Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator, Sierra Club, Delaware Chapter.**

“No one is safe from the harmful impacts of drilling and fracking for gas in shale. It doesn't matter where you live, if we allow this dangerous industry to advance in our watershed, or to support its advancement elsewhere, we are dooming present and future generations to the devastating impacts of this dirty fossil fuel industry. That is why we are here today, to support the ban on fracking in the Delaware River Watershed, but also to oppose the proposal that our watershed be the repository for frack wastewater, or the source of water, for fracking that happens outside of our watershed. We cannot afford the water pollution, air pollution, loss of forests and wetlands, or the climate instability fracking anywhere will bring,” **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.**

“Banning fracking but allowing fracking waste in the Delaware River Basin puts the drinking water for millions of people at risk,” **said Emily Wurth of Food & Water Watch.** “The Governors of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware must

fully protect the Delaware by banning the treatment of toxic, radioactive fracking waste and prohibiting water withdrawals for fracking in the watershed.”

"The Delaware River has been burdened for generations by the legacy of industrial pollution in South Jersey and greater Philadelphia, especially from the fossil fuel industry. No part of the Delaware River Watershed should be a sacrifice zone," **said Doug O'Malley, director of Environment New Jersey.** "The DRBC should enact a complete fracking and fracking wastewater ban so that no part of our watershed becomes a dumping ground."

“It’s good that the DRBC is calling for a ban, but we need a complete ban of fracking activities, including not allowing dumping fracking waste or taking water for fracking activities elsewhere. We must protect the drinking water for 17 million people. Dumping fracking wastewater is dangerous because it contains over 600 different toxic chemicals, many of them carcinogenic. This could lead to pollution and contaminated drinking water, especially for downstream communities,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “Governor Murphy has called for a full fracking ban and we will work with his Administration to make sure it happens.”

"The DRBC is not fulfilling its job if they ban fracking but allow pollution from fracking to occur. We've seen what frack wastewater and water withdrawals can do to a river basin. We know the dangers. The simple truth is that if they allow frack wastewater discharges and water withdrawals for fracking, the DRBC is denying the science, ignoring the danger, and putting millions of people's drinking water at risk. It's time for the Commissioners to pay attention and enforce a FULL BAN on fracking and all related frack activities in the Delaware River Basin!" **said Alyssa Bradley, Clean Water Action New Jersey.**

“Attending and speaking at the DRBC January 23rd Waymart hearing in Wayne County I was once again so struck by the clear fact-based yet heartfelt comments made by those wanting to preserve the Delaware Basin by not drilling it - speaking of common resources, the future, stewardship, health, peer reviewed science and the Commission's obligation to preserve the Delaware. It was inspiring,” **said Barbara Arrindell, Director of Damascus Citizens for Sustainability.**

“The proposed fracking ban is historic. But to allow fracking wastewater in the River Basin is to undermine one of main purposes of the ban—to protect our water,” **said Kimberly Ong, Staff Attorney, Natural Resources Defense Council.** "While fracking would be off limits, the draft regulations allow for the disposal of toxic fracking wastewater in the region, as well as the removal of fresh water from the basin for fracking elsewhere. A true ban must not only keep fracking out of the Delaware River Basin, but all of the dangerous industrial activity that goes with it.”

"Because of the health impacts of drilling, science won the day in New York and we banned the practice of high volume fracking for our communities. There may still be a few desperate people wishing they could get a lump sum payment for a gas lease but

thousands of people across the region and beyond are speaking out to protect this incredibly clean river and the surrounding landscape that keeps that water clean. Today we are here to say we do not want fracking anywhere in the Basin or the impacts of waste water and water withdrawals here. Waste water from Fracking is a bizarre mix of chemicals and pollutants that any logical person realizes should not be released in a river," **said Wes Gillingham, Associate Director, Catskill Mountainkeeper.**

"Regulations manage pollution. Bans on dangerous practices prevent it. It is irrational to choose pollution over prevention. The DRBC must permanently ban all fracking-related activities in the basin," **said Karen Feridun, Founder, Berks Gas Truth.**

"We are fortunate to have a commission dedicated to protecting the water resources of the Delaware River and we all benefit every day with clean drinking water and the river's diverse natural habitats, home to many species of fish and wildlife. But that is all in jeopardy if the Delaware River Basin Commission's proposal to allow the dumping of toxic wastewater from fracking and the export of our precious water from the watershed to frack wells elsewhere is accepted. We are dedicated to achieving true and complete protection for the Delaware River Watershed and its communities by the adoption of a complete ban on fracking and its activities and will accept nothing less," **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) issued draft natural gas regulations on Nov. 30. They proposed a ban on fracking but also issued draft regulations that would allow the toxic wastewater produced by fracking to be stored, processed, and discharged in the Delaware River Watershed – and the estuary is the most likely place in the basin where that would occur. The draft regulations also allow water to be exported from the Basin for fracking elsewhere. For over a year, organizations from throughout the Delaware River watershed states have been working through the Frack Ban Campaign to achieve a complete ban on fracking in the watershed and have vowed to defeat the proposed dumping of waste from fracking and the export of water to fuel fracking outside the Basin.

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