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From the Organizations Working for the Complete Fracking Ban

Public Calls upon Governors of Delaware River Watershed to support Full Ban on Fracking and its Activities to Protect Public Health

Groups Present Compelling Evidence of Health Effects of All Aspects of Fracking

Washington Crossing, PA – Representatives of health professionals and organizations from throughout the Delaware River Watershed joined with residents today to testify before the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC). Letters were submitted by the groups that emphasized the negative health effects of fracking and its related operations in communities where it is occurring, urging the DRBC to prevent the damage by voting for a full ban on fracking, on wastewater produced by fracking and on the withdrawal of the Watershed's water for fracking elsewhere. See the letter:

<https://bit.ly/2u4fcBS>

The Concerned Health Professionals of New York submitted a letter to the DRBC about the growing evidence of the adverse health effects of fracking to human health and the hundreds of scientific reports documenting it. The studies, cataloged in the Fifth Edition of the Compendium published by the group in 2018, were also referenced by others during the public comment session. Representatives of organizations working for a complete fracking ban testified to the DRBC delegates who represent New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf, Delaware Governor John Carney, and New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy at the DRBC's business meeting.

“Governor Murphy understands the threat of fracking. Health professionals understand the threat of fracking. The people of the Delaware River Basin understand the threat of fracking. It's time for the DRBC Commissioners to put a complete ban on fracking and all its activities in the Basin,” **said Wes Gillingham Associate Director of Catskill Mountainkeeper.**

"The science on climate is in, and the health of our planet is at stake. A full and total ban on fracking, and all frack activities within the Delaware River Basin, is long overdue and an important start to transitioning our region to a renewable energy economy," **said Eric Benson, NJ Campaign Director, Clean Water Action.**

"People are concerned about the environmental impacts of fracking, especially how it relates to water pollution. There are serious health consequences from fracking and the witches' brew of 600 different toxic chemicals pumped into the ground. The fracking water and fracking waste affect groundwater and streams with significant health impacts. A new Pennsylvania study in the journal [Public Health](#) shows fracking not only impacts our lungs and vital organs, but has significantly more health impacts. The report shows that where there are higher numbers of fracking wells in an area, there are increased hospitalizations for genital and urinary conditions. The health problems include urinary tract infections, kidney infections and kidney stones, as well as skin-related issues. The more we know about fracking, the worse it is," **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** "The report clearly states why the governors have to put a full ban on fracking and fracking waste in the Delaware River Basin. They need to protect the 15 million people who get their drinking water out of the Delaware River. The DRBC needs to do its job and Ban Fracking Now!"

"Fracking was banned in New York state because of the public health concerns," **said Emily Wurth of Food & Water Watch.** "Since 2015, more and more studies have shown that fracking and fracking wastewater pose unacceptable risks to human health and the environment. That's why we are calling on the Delaware River Basin Commission to ban all fracking related activities in the river basin."

"Without your health, you have nothing - corporate profits put ahead of human and environmental health is criminal even if allowed by the state. Government's main responsibility is to protect and foster the health and welfare of the people not to assist corporate profits," **said Barbara Arrindell, Director, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability.**

"Governor Murphy took a stand to protect the Delaware River watershed by telling DRBC that its proposed fracking regulations aren't strong enough. The Delaware River and its watershed lands should never be despoiled by fracking waste, fracking and its activities, and we need our fellow governors to join Governor Murphy," **said Doug O'Malley, Director of Environment New Jersey.** "Gas drillers still wait along the watershed's borders and these proposed regulations need to be crystal clear that the fracking industry is not welcome inside the watershed. We urge Gov. Carney, Gov. Cuomo and Gov. Wolf to join New Jersey's call to the DRBC to strengthen these regulations."

"Fracking is ruining communities where it is occurring, as evidenced by health reports and studies from Pennsylvania's shale gas regions. Today we're speaking to the governors of the four watershed states for a complete ban on fracking, its toxic waste

and its waste of water throughout the Delaware River Watershed to prevent damage to public health and the water that as many as 17 million people drink every day,” **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

Governor Phil Murphy, DRBC Chairman, announced on January 30 that he supports a complete permanent ban on fracking and its associated activities in the Delaware River Basin, including a ban on wastewater storage, processing and discharges in the Basin, and a ban on water exports from the watershed for use in fracking elsewhere. Groups asked all the Governors to join Governor Murphy to vote for “...a complete ban on all fracking activities”.

Background:

Since 2010, the DRBC has prohibited natural gas extraction projects in the Delaware River Basin while they study its potential impacts on water resources, a *de-facto* moratorium that does not allow permits to be issued until natural gas regulations are adopted.

A mounting call by the public for transforming the current moratorium on natural gas drilling, fracking and related activities in the Delaware River Watershed into a permanent ban has resulted in the proposed fracking ban but the DRBC also included the allowance of frack wastewater discharges and the withdrawal of fresh water for fracking.

The draft regulations were commented on by the public through March 30, 2018. During the public comment period tens of thousands of people submitted comments to the Commission calling for a complete ban on all aspects of fracking. In addition, in December, over 100,000 petitions were submitted to the governors of the four states that are part of the Commission, amplifying the call for a complete fracking ban.

Since 2010, scientific analyses, public health statistics, peer-reviewed studies, and government records show that the impacts of gas and oil development significantly harm the environment including our water, air, habitats and communities’ health, despite regulatory controls. The experience of communities where fracking is occurring are the proliferation of adverse health impacts due to gas drilling and fracking operations and its inherent air and water pollution. The overwhelming weight of the evidence shows that shale gas cannot be extracted or developed safely, making this the right time to enact a Watershed ban on all gas development. See the Compendium here:

psr.org/resources/fracking-compendium.html)

Organizations representing over a million members have submitted extensive technical and policy reports detailing why a complete ban on fracking is the only certain means of protecting the basin’s water resources and the outstanding values of the Wild and Scenic Delaware River – a river recognized by Congress and protected by special water quality regulations.

The five voting members, the Commissioners, of the DRBC are the Governors of the four states whose tributaries flow to the Delaware - Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware – and the Army Corps of Engineers, representing the federal government. As an autonomous agency formed under federal law to manage the shared waters of the Basin, the Commission members are responsible for protecting the drinking water supplies of up to 17 million people, including New York City and Philadelphia, and the federally designated Wild and Scenic Delaware River.

Delaware River Frack Ban Coalition Organizing Committee

(Alphabetical order)

Catskill Mountainkeeper
Clean Water Action NJ
Damascus Citizens for Sustainability
Delaware Riverkeeper Network
Delaware Sierra Club
Environment New Jersey
Food and Water Watch
Natural Resources Defense Council
New Jersey Sierra Club

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