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Public Opposition to Gibbstown LNG Export on Delaware River Explodes
Governors of Four States Petitioned to Vote NO December 9

Governors' Offices in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware – People from all four Delaware River Watershed states joined together to amplify their opposition to a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) export terminal proposed for Gibbstown, New Jersey, sending strong messages to the governors of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, ahead of a likely vote on the permit at next Wednesday's December 9 meeting of the Delaware River Basin Commission.

New petition signatures opposing the LNG project submitted to DRBC since September 8, 2020 total 49,730 names, bringing the total petitions submitted to DRBC this fall to over 100,000. A coalition of organizations has been generating thousands of emails, letters, petitions and other expressions of opposition to the export terminal since the DRBC voted in September to put the current permit in abeyance. The DRBC vote included a "stay" on construction of "Dock 2", the wharf that New Fortress Energy subsidiary Delaware River Partners want to build for their project to ship LNG overseas.

The terminal project would bring supercooled fracked gas from Pennsylvania, by either rail or a fleet of trucks. It has drawn staunch opposition for a range of reasons: The additional fracking in Pennsylvania would create pollution in the communities close to the drilling and in Wyalusing Township where the gas liquefaction plant would be located, while the transport of the LNG to Gibbstown would represent a serious health and safety threat to hundreds of thousands of residents along the route. Critics also cite the negative impacts of the dock project on the Delaware River, including threats to water quality and vulnerable and rare habitats for plants and animals, including the federally endangered Atlantic and Shortnose sturgeon.

The DRBC commissioners have been conducting an in-depth review of the voluminous record produced by the legal challenge that Delaware Riverkeeper Network filed against the project in 2019, which was the subject of an 8-day adjudicatory hearing in May.

Today, flash drives containing the declarations of public opposition were submitted to each of the governors, as well as the Army Corps of Engineers, which has the fifth vote on the Commission. Public participation in the original DRBC decision to approve the project was rushed and inadequate, leading to a huge public controversy over the last months.

Included in the submission are 49,730 petitions (in addition to the 50,962 petitions submitted on September 8 to the DRBC, **totaling 100,692**), newly adopted resolutions passed by local governments along the truck and rail routes where the LNG would be carried to Gibbstown from northcentral Pennsylvania, as well as by Delaware communities with grave concerns about the enormous LNG tank ships. Sign-on letters from officials and community organizations are also being submitted.

The Story of Community, Organizational, and Local Government Opposition

Petitions, Emails, Declarations of Public Opposition

In addition to the 50,962 signatures on petitions calling for the DRBC to vote NO on the permit for the proposed Gibbstown LNG export terminal in September, another 49,730 petition signatures are being submitted today. In addition, emails, tweets, Instagram messages and faxes/calls have been sent to the Governors and the Army Corps of Engineers by thousands of people during the Coalition's Week of Action November 30 to December 4. For example, Tweets sent to the Governors: 2,818 using #DRBCNOLNG in a Dec. 1 Twitter Storm. See those tallies from Twitter here: <https://bit.ly/33HczrS>

Over the last weeks, these declarations have been generated by many organizations working together to oppose the project, including: 215 People's Alliance, 350 Philadelphia, Berks Gas Truth, Better Path Coalition, Breathe Project, Bucks Environmental Action, Catskill Mountainkeeper, Clean Air Council, Clean Water Action, Coalition to Ban Unsafe Oil Trains, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, EMPOWER NJ, Environment New Jersey, Food and Water Action, Food and Water Watch - NY and NJ, Friends of Sparta Mountain Associated with NJ Forest Watch, Friends of the Earth, Mark Ruffalo for Move.On, Natural Resources Defense Council, New Jersey Sierra Club, New Jersey Student Sustainability Coalition, Northwest Philly Climate Action Network, Not Here Not Anywhere - Ireland, PennEnvironment, Pennsylvanians Against Fracking, Philly

Boricuas, POWER, Protect Northern PA, Resistance Cafe, Sierra Club PA Chapter, Surfrider NJ, DE, and NY, Waterspirit.

"It is critical that the Gibbstown LNG Export Terminal is stopped, these dirty fossil fuel projects not only have detrimental impacts on public health and the environment in the US but all along the supply chain to Europe and beyond, resulting in fossil fuel infrastructure lock-in which threatens our global emissions reduction targets," **said Richard Curtin, on behalf of Not Here Not Anywhere, Ireland.**

"The New Fortress Energy (NFE) Liquefied Natural (Methane) Gas Port in Gibbstown, New Jersey has far reaching negative implications for people in the Caribbean and Central America, especially Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Nicaragua where the NFE conglomerate is making inroads. The dumping of methane gas fracked in communities in Pennsylvania that would be shipped down the Delaware River through the proposed Gibbstown installation would displace viable opportunities for sustainable renewable energy projects, especially onsite solar + storage that are so desperately needed to provide energy security and resilience on the islands in preparation for ever-more frequent and intense storms related to the climate crisis," **said Ruth Santiago, We Want Sun (queremossolpr.com) civil society initiative, Salinas, Puerto Rico.**

"The last thing--really, the last thing--that the world needs is more infrastructure for pumping more fossil fuel out to the world. Only someone in some kind of serious denial about climate change would push for this kind of nonsense," **said Bill McKibben, author and founder and senior adviser emeritus of 350.org.**

"DRBC has a duty to ensure the projects it approves benefit the Delaware River and its watershed. It is clear the proposed Gibbstown LNG export terminal will bring great harm to water quality, to precious endangered and rare species, and exposes our river communities to inescapable threats to public safety and health. The Commissioners must vote no on Dock 2 and rid the watershed of LNG and its treacherous dangers," **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.**

"Elected officials and their staff saying one thing and doing another is a fundamental cause of the erosion of our democracy. You can't care about clean water or the climate crisis if you vote yes on an unneeded frack gas export facility in South Jersey fed by bomb trains and trucks coming in from Pennsylvania. The four Democratic governors of the Delaware watershed states must practice what they preach, side with people and oppose the Trump Administration on December 9th. We'll find out whether they will soon enough," **stated Eric Benson, Clean Water Action NJ Campaign Director.**

"This week, tens of thousands of people throughout the region have called on their Governors in the region to stop the Gibbstown LNG terminal. They need to vote NO at

the DRBC vote in order to protect the drinking water for 15 million people and the safety and health of our communities. This is the most important DRBC vote they have had in decades. The council and the Governors must vote NO," **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** "Opposition has been growing, not only in the Delaware Region, but Puerto Rico and Ireland have already said no to this dangerous and unneeded project and so should the Governor!"

"The decision before the DRBC to deny a proposed LNG port on the Delaware River can be made based on ecological impacts to the Delaware alone. But so much more is at stake from climate impacts of a new massive fossil fuel plant on the Delaware to the stealth public health threat that tankers and trains would pose to our communities. This decision will be a true test for Governor Murphy on standing up for the Delaware and the climate. An LNG export facility would be a massive black eye for his climate record, and we urge him and his representative to vote no," **said Doug O'Malley, director of Environment New Jersey.**

"This is 2020 and it makes no sense to lock this country into a fracked future with the community and land abuse that LNG export spreads. Let's stop denying the truth about climate and the damage dredging for this project will have to the river. The Commissioners should vote to deny the permit on the Gibbstown LNG export dock. The only right thing to do is vote against fracking, against bomb trains and Liquefied fracked gas export," **said Wes Gillingham, Catskill Mountainkeeper.**

"The people have spoken. Theirs has been the voice of concern for each other, our natural resources, environmental justice, and future generations. It is the voice the Commissioners are in place to put above all others. That's what they must do by saying no to LNG exports on the Delaware," **said Karen Feridun, Founder, Berks Gas Truth.**

"The massive public mobilization to stop this dangerous fracked gas terminal on the Delaware should be a wakeup call for Governor Murphy: If you really think the climate crisis demands a swift move away from fossil fuels, you must stop the Gibbstown terminal with your vote at the DRBC," **said Food & Water Action South Jersey organizer Jocelyn Sawyer.** "This scheme creates dangers at every stage; from an increase in fracking in Pennsylvania to the untested, unsafe plan to ship gas hundreds of miles via truck or rail through densely populated neighborhoods. Countries like Ireland and France are saying no to these dangerous US fracked gas schemes, and Governor Murphy should do the same."

B. Arrindell, Director of Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, stated, "With the exponential decline of fracked wells resulting in only 15% of initial production in two years, an expanding drilling treadmill is required to supply the gas needed for the LNG to be exported from Gibbstown. All this drilling will add volumes of greenhouse gas

pushing global climate change. DRBC has promised to protect against advancing climate change so should not approve the Dock 2 project.”

“This polluting and self-serving proposal to export LNG destroys and threatens life every step of the way - from PA fracked wells in the beleaguered PA Marcellus, to Wyalusing, through PA and NJ communities where the terror trains and trucks would go, to Gibbstown with LNG as its next-door neighbor, to Delaware and South Jersey bayshore communities, threatened by floating bombs. Even the overseas ports where New Fortress Energy is trying to push its product don’t want LNG, such as Puerto Rico and Ireland; they want truly clean and self-generated renewable energy. DRBC must vote NO on the permit for Dock 2 LNG for the sake of the water and natural assets they are required to protect,” **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

“The long-term danger of a project like this is locking us into an additional 25 years of increased fossil fuel use and the climate dangers that come with it,” said John Weber, Mid Atlantic Regional Manager for the Surfrider Foundation. “While there is a risk of an accident or an explosion, the real peril is to the planet’s climate if this gas is fracked out of the ground and burned for fuel. Communities of color will suffer the worse impacts of climate change in terms of sea level rise and other climate risks,” Weber continued.

“Meeting the climate change crisis means pivoting away from fossil fuels immediately. There is no better place to start than killing the dangerous and unneeded Gibbstown LNG project. This is a lose-lose-lose for New Jersey; it will produce carbon, water and air pollution; will endanger our roads and neighborhoods; and will not even supply energy to the State,” said John Reichman, Chair, BlueWaveNJ Environment Committee

Local Government Resolutions

Sixteen resolutions have been passed by local government units opposing the transportation and handling of LNG in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware: Clarks Green Borough, Lackawanna County, PA; Clarks Summit Borough, Lackawanna County, PA; South Abington Township, Lackawanna County, PA; Scranton City, Lackawanna County, PA; Jessup Borough, Lackawanna County, PA; Pittston Township, Luzerne County, PA; Lehigh County Board of Commissioners, Lehigh County, PA; Kutztown Borough, Berks County, PA; Scranton, Lackawanna County, PA; Penndel Borough, Bucks County, PA; Runnemede, Camden County, NJ; Haddon Township, Camden County, NJ; City of Burlington, Burlington County, NJ; Pennsauken Township, Camden County, NJ; City of Wilmington, New Castle County, DE; Bellefonte, New Castle County, DE. More than two dozen more municipalities are in the process of considering resolutions.

“I am appreciative for this important issue being brought to my attention. I thank the public for the support and my fellow Councilmembers,” said Councilwoman Linda M. Gray, 1st District Council Member and sponsor of the resolution. The City of Wilmington, Delaware, the most densely populated in the state, passed the resolution opposing the Gibbstown LNG Export terminal on December 3 at their City Council meeting.

State of Delaware Boards

Two influential Boards representing Delaware residents submitted resolutions to DRBC opposing the export terminal, primarily based on the dangers of the shipping of volatile hydrocarbon transportation, including LNG, which, if released, could catastrophically harm Delaware populations and irreplaceable natural assets. See the New Castle County Civic League (NCCCL) and the League of Women Voters of Delaware (LWVDE) letters here: NCCCL: <https://bit.ly/33I5Aiq>; LWVDE: <https://bit.ly/2VAo2F3>

“Shipping LNG through Delaware could disrupt existing river-based businesses, snarl traffic on busy highways and bridges, add to sea-level rise and, in a worst case scenario, injure or kill many people and destroy vital infrastructure. No benefit to Delaware has been disclosed, and no possible benefit from this secretive, ill-considered plan could justify the potential risks,” **said Coralie Pryde, League of Women Voters of Delaware.**

City of Philadelphia Officials

A letter was submitted by 25 elected officials from the Greater Philadelphia Region including eight Philadelphia City Council members, several PA State Legislators, and two labor union presidents opposing the transportation of LNG through the city. The letter is sponsored by the community organization **PhillyBoricuas** whose members live in many of the neighborhoods along the railway tracks where the LNG rail tank cars would travel on its route to Gibbstown. The community also is actively opposed because Puerto Rico is one of the destinations where New Fortress Energy is forcing the LNG from Gibbstown at an import terminal they own there; there is a groundswell of support for self-sustaining, independent and clean energy from renewable energy sources in Puerto Rico and people there are fighting the import. See the letter here: <https://bit.ly/39Hlfpk>

“In 2009, after 4 years of protest the people of Puerto Rico defeated a government that wanted to build a gas pipeline across the entire island in the middle of an energy crisis, putting millions of lives at stake. In 2020, we, Philly Boricuas, join our communities in Philly, Puerto Rico, and all over the diaspora to reject the New Fortress Energy project to transport LNG "bomb trains" through our communities putting our families' lives and

ours at grave risk. Puerto Rico deserves energy independence from the US mainland and our families deserve to be safe from the threat of LNG. It is time that we have a government that stands up for its people over the pockets of the ultra-rich!” **said Fermin Morales, Lead Organizer with Philly Boricuas.**

Philadelphia Community Groups

Spotlight: The strong voice of protest in Philadelphia opposing the LNG terminal has been expressed by many groups who have been working to raise awareness about the proposal to send trains loaded with hazardous, flammable and potentially explosive LNG right through the city’s neighborhoods as well as LNG trucks streaming through the southwestern Greater Philadelphia region. In addition to the letters submitted by City elected officials today, engaged organizations including Philly Boricuas, 350 Philly, PennEnvironment, Clean Water Action, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Sunrise Philly, POWER and the Northwest Philly Climate Action Network have mobilized people to participate in expressing their opposition through the Week of Action and related campaigns. A letter signed by an additional 20 local community groups in Philadelphia was submitted by Northwest Philly Climate Action Network, demonstrating grass roots resistance. See the letter here: <https://bit.ly/37C7n9O>

“The proposed Gibbstown LNG export project would endanger the lives of Philadelphia residents, by bringing hundreds of unsafe trains through our city every week and creating the risk of a catastrophic exposition. And it would increase the production of fracked gas at a time when we urgently need to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy while ensuring a just transition for workers and communities. We need Governor Wolf to protect our safety and a livable climate by voting NO,” **said Mitch Chanin, Steering Committee Member at 350 Philly.**

In summary, opposition to the export of LNG from the proposed Dock 2 at the Gibbstown terminal has quickly expanded as more communities learn of this reckless and dangerous project, its enormous footprint of potentially disastrous impacts on all four Delaware River watershed states, the runaway climate impacts of the additional greenhouse gas emissions that will exacerbate the climate crisis, and the catastrophic public health threats it thrusts on people, unjustly targeting black and brown people and low income communities where the trains and trucks would slice through.

For over a year, New Fortress Energy has hidden behind a cloak of secrecy that has been pulled back by the public, exposing the truth about the dangers this project poses and the devastating environmental and public harm it would impose on the region. The Delaware River Basin Commission’s mandate to protect the water resources of up to 17 million people, the Wild and Scenic Delaware River and the National Estuary are the values the Commission are bound to uphold, not the special interests of a private

company. The submission today speaks directly to the Commissioners to vote NO on the approval of Dock 2 for the export of LNG from the Gibbstown terminal. The coalition is working to ensure the Commissioners hear them as they meet to decide on December 9.

Background:

Controversy has been swirling around the proposed export of LNG from the Gibbstown Logistics Center, a deepwater port in Gloucester County since the discovery of the plans were unearthed through Freedom of Information Act requests last year. Delaware River Partners, a subsidiary of New Fortress Energy, aimed to expand the terminal with a second dock (“Dock 2”) that would export LNG overseas, but they had kept their intention to export LNG secret for years. DRBC confirmed the LNG export plans at a quickly called public hearing in June 2019 and approved a permit for Dock 2 less than a week later. In addition to adding LNG to the planned export of natural gas liquids, Dock 2 would potentially triple the previously planned activities at the facility.

In July, the hearing officer who oversaw the legal proceedings challenging the 2019 DRBC approval recommended that the Commissioners affirm the original decision. After reviewing the record and several more legal filings, the Commissioners are now required to vote publicly on whether or not to accept the Hearing Officer’s recommendation or reject it.

Despite being a public agency, the DRBC has not been clear with the public about the action expected at the December 9 meeting. The meeting agenda states that the DRBC “may” vote on the permit (Docket D-2017-009-2) and that “**possible**” action could be taken (their emphasis). Yet in an October 13 letter to the applicants Delaware River Partners, obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, DRBC Executive Director Steve Tambini stated, “The Commissioners informed me that they anticipate completing their review in time to take action at the next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Commission on December 9, 2020.” This is a much more definitive statement, and when coalition organizations disclosed this in November, they asked why this language was not used in the public agenda. The public deserves to know what is being said; conversations regarding public decisions should never be going on behind closed doors. To see more on this go to: <https://bit.ly/3qnNhst>

The Gibbstown LNG export project has many complicated parts, adding up to a footprint with massive impacts. The gas would be extracted from fracking wells in Pennsylvania’s Marcellus Shale, and sent to a processing plant New Fortress Energy, the same company that owns the Gibbstown facility, is building in Wyalusing, Bradford County, PA on the beautiful Susquehanna River. From there the liquefied methane, or LNG, would be carried by truck and/or rail every day about 200 miles across PA and NJ to

Gibbstown, exposing hundreds of communities along the way to the threat of a catastrophic accident. See maps of the potential routes here: <https://bit.ly/3gaCBYg> and <https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/taxonomy/term/1174>

At Gibbstown, LNG will be loaded round the clock directly into enormous ships, putting the entire region, including Gibbstown where back yards adjoin the property, Tinicum Township, PA less than mile across the river and environmentally overburdened Chester, PA, at risk from explosion during these dangerous operations. See details in the Fact Sheet here: <http://bit.ly/factsGtown>

Known adverse impacts include: water quality, endangered species such as Atlantic and Shortnose sturgeon, and rare, vulnerable habitats for many animals and plants will be harmed or destroyed by the terminal, the dredging, and the construction and operation of the proposed Gibbstown “Dock 2” LNG export terminal. The ships, dubbed “floating bombs” by some experts, would pass next to densely populated cities such as Wilmington and the Delaware and New Jersey bay shores and coastal beaches as they travel out to sea to import terminals proposed by New Fortress in Ireland, Puerto Rico, and beyond.

Public opposition is fueled by the far-reaching and unavoidable environmental, public safety and health harms caused by fracking for the gas, liquefying the methane, transporting and handling the flammable and potentially explosive LNG and its ultimate use as a burnt fuel. These concerns are compounded by the recognition that methane is the most potent of greenhouse gases in warming the atmosphere during the next critical 10 years, worsening our global climate crisis and threatening us now and our future generations.

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