

For Immediate Release

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Contacts:

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

Joanne Kilgour, Chapter Director, Sierra Club PA, 717-232-0101 (office)
joanne.kilgour@sierraclub.org

Sharon Furlong, Bucks Environmental Action, sfurlong5@verizon.net

Over 90,000 Petitions Demanding Fracking Ban Delivered

*Gov. Wolf asked to vote for a COMPLETE fracking ban in
Delaware River Basin*

Harrisburg, PA – Representatives of Pennsylvania organizations submitted 90,039 signed petitions to Governor Wolf at his Capitol office today. The petitions, collected by groups representing members in all four states that are part of the Delaware River Watershed, asks the Governors to vote at the Delaware River Basin Commission for a complete and permanent ban on fracking and its activities. The petitions call for a ban on fracking throughout the Delaware River Basin, a ban on frack wastewater processing and discharges in the Basin, and a ban on water exports from the Delaware River Watershed to fuel fracking elsewhere.

The Delaware River Basin Commission, made up of the governors of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware, and the Army Corps of Engineers representing the federal government, are expected to vote in the coming months on the proposed fracking ban.

"It is clear from Pennsylvania's experience with the shale gas industry that fracking is harmful to our communities, our natural resources, and the climate," said Joanne Kilgour, Director of the Sierra Club PA Chapter. Kilgour continued, "Governor Wolf and the Delaware River Basin Commission are in a unique position to prevent this harm in the Delaware River Watershed by enacting a complete ban on fracking and related activities - such as waste water disposal - which is exactly what the public and the residents of the watershed are calling on them to do today."

"People are expressing their commitment to protecting the Delaware River Watershed and the water supply for up to 17 million people through these 90,000+ petitions, collected after the comment period on DRBC's draft gas regulations closed. We are speaking loud and clear for a complete ban that prohibits fracking, frack wastewater discharges and the export of water from the Delaware for fracking and nothing less. We are submitting these petitions to Governor Wolf so he is well aware of

the public's support for him to vote for a COMPLETE fracking ban in the Delaware River Watershed," said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.

"Bucks Environmental Action and Bucks County Sierra Club groups, representing approximately 3 thousand people, are part of this action because we are fighting for the integrity of a system that provides over 17 million people with water, and is responsible for around 600,000 jobs, both directly or indirectly connected to a clean river, with those jobs providing over \$10 Billion in wages, as of 2010. In addition, a clean and healthy Delaware River results in over \$22 Billion in direct economic activity, again in 2010 dollars, far outpacing the Marcellus Shale contribution of a mere \$425 Million. We in Bucks County are trying to prevent disasters that would affect millions. That is why we are doing this," said Sharon Furlong, Co-Founder and Spokesperson, Bucks Environmental Action and Bucks County Sierra Club.

The Petition:

DRBC – ENACT A FULL BAN ON FRACKING

To the Delaware River Basin Commission voting members - the Governors of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, representing the Basin states, and the Army Corps of Engineers, representing the federal government:

We, the undersigned, call for the Delaware River Basin Commission to enact a permanent ban on natural gas drilling and fracking and all related activities (including drilling; fracking; fracking wastewater storage, processing and discharges; and water withdrawals for drilling and fracking) throughout the Delaware River Watershed.

During the eight years of the DRBC drilling moratorium, scientific studies have exposed environmental harms and documented damaging health effects, leading New York and Maryland to ban fracking. The overwhelming weight of evidence shows that shale gas simply cannot be extracted safely.

The DRBC is responsible for protecting the water resources of the Delaware River Watershed — upon which 15 million people rely for their drinking water. This water supply and the Wild and Scenic Delaware River are irreplaceable. The time to enact a permanent ban is NOW.

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, as instructed by a resolution passed by the DRBC Commissioners at their September 13 public business meeting. The draft regulations were issued by Nov. 30. The comment period closed March 31, 2018 and the DRBC is now deliberating on how to proceed.

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.

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 15 to 17 million people, including New York City and Philadelphia, and the federally designated Wild and Scenic Delaware River.

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