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DRBC Votes to Approve Gibbstown Fracking Terminal Shameful move comes after tens of thousands speak up in opposition

The Delaware River Basin Commission voted to approve a permit for a highly controversial fracked gas terminal to be built in South Jersey, despite a flood of public comments opposing the dangerous project.

The proposal to build a port to export liquefied natural gas (LNG) has attracted tremendous controversy in the region. The project -- spearheaded by New Fortress Energy -- would extract and liquefy fracked gas in Pennsylvania and ship it hundreds of miles, by rail or truck, to the Gibbstown export terminal. Opponents have criticized every aspect of the plan: It would increase destructive fracking and pollution from gas processing in Pennsylvania, create a massive threat to public safety as the highly volatile liquids are transported 200 miles to Gibbstown, would threaten water quality, and irreparably harm endangered species and their rare habitats in the Delaware River.

The groups leading the opposition to the project have been highly critical of the DRBC's handling of the project, citing a lack of transparency and a failure to meaningfully consider public input. For weeks leading up to today's meeting, it was not even clear what would be up for consideration; the meeting agenda posted online stated that there may be "**Possible** Commission action."

"This shameful vote gives the Trump administration one final fossil fuel industry victory, and represents a direct and potentially deadly threat to hundreds of thousands of people in New Jersey and Pennsylvania," **said Food & Water Watch South Jersey organizer Jocelyn Sawyer.** "Governor Murphy and the rest of the DRBC commissioners can't claim to be climate leaders while approving massive fossil fuel projects like the Gibbstown LNG export terminal."

"The DRBC has sold out the Basin and sided with the fracking industry. This is the worst decision the commission has ever made. Their decision is outrageous and dangerous. They sided with the Trump Administration and fracking over public health and safety. By approving this project, Governor Murphy and the other DRBC Governors show they are full of hot air, but

this hot air explodes. Their approval basically says they do not care about Environmental Justice, climate change, or public safety,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “Even though DRBC acted recklessly in approving the LNG port, we will continue to fight. People of the region and Puerto Rico don’t want this disastrous project. Governor Murphy needs to lead and stop this project. If he doesn’t, we will hopefully get President Biden to.”

“With this vote today, the Delaware River has been dealt a deadly blow by the Delaware River Basin Commission and the Governors who are supposed to protect our river, its irreplaceable quality, and our communities. If the one agency - the DRBC - that is supposed to be prioritizing the health of the river and its watershed over special interests and exploitation and supposed to be approaching their responsibility from a Watershed-based perspective has abandoned that mission, the future of the river and all that rely on the Delaware is in the gravest jeopardy. We will not take this lying down, we will continue to fight this project in court and in every public arena possible, united with those who want clean water, air and energy, until we can be assured the river will be safe from the degradation that the Gibbstown LNG export terminal would cause,” **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

“Today’s vote is dereliction of duty by the DRBC and their Governor representatives, which will cause irreparable harm to the Delaware River, deepen our climate crisis and threaten our communities. This project is a relic of the Trump Administration’s support for endless fossil fuel expansion and that’s why it generated unprecedented public opposition across the watershed. This project has been rushed by New Fortress Energy and today’s rubberstamp decision ignores the massive evidence of the harm to the Delaware River. This decision is a huge black-mark on Governor Murphy’s climate record and the enormous outpouring of opposition against this fossil fuel project isn’t going away,” **said Doug O’Malley, director of Environment New Jersey.**

“The disastrous approval of this massive fracked gas export terminal is a lovely parting gift to the Trump administration and their fossil fuel allies,” **said Eric Benson, NJ Campaigns Director for Clean Water Action.** “Governor Murphy and the other DRBC commissioners are trading the health of the Delaware River, the safety of the surrounding communities, and our planet’s climate future for the profits of a private company. This does not serve the people of New Jersey, but it’s a huge handout to special interests.”

“Every governor who voted for this disaster waiting to happen can turn in their climate leader credentials. This isn’t over,” said **Karen Feridun, Founder of Berks Gas Truth.**

“Greenlighting the massive Gibbstown fracked gas facility is not only bad news for our climate, but also poses an imminent threat to the Delaware River and surrounding communities. By taking this action, the DRBC is advancing a project that flies in the face of its own rules governing toxic PCB pollution, as well as strict federal and state rules. But make no mistake, we will keep fighting to stop this reckless project from moving forward,” **said Mark Izeman, Senior Attorney at NRDC.**

“This is an environmental travesty! This is an environmental justice outrage for the impacted communities to allow this project to go forward,” **said Wes Gillingham, Executive Director at Catskill Mountainkeeper.** “This is a climate travesty that fracking and LNG export will have to our planet. This is an administrative outrage by the governors and the federal government. The commissioners have failed the people they represent. They are ignoring the science, reality and the facts of this project. Governor Murphy, Governor Carney, Governor Wolf, you Now fit into the category of CLIMATE CHANGE DENIER.”

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