



Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Natural gas drilling is coming to the Delaware River. Rich natural gas deposits are expected in the Upper Delaware River Watershed in Pennsylvania and New York's Marcellus shale.

But this boom has a big price. The gas extraction methods used can, and have, contaminated drinking water supplies, streams and rivers; destroyed mature forests and ecologically and economically important habitats; and damaged the quality of life in communities where drilling is happening.

It is clear that federal legal exemptions favor gas development over environmental and community protection. Pennsylvania's efforts last year to improve permitting are undermined by this year's relaxed requirements -- including stormwater and wastewater protections.

Thankfully, our region has better protections than the rest of Pennsylvania.

Decades of effort and expense have gone into cleaning up the Delaware River and establishing special protection regulations that do not allow the river's high water quality to be degraded. To insure protection, the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) has announced that all gas drilling projects must now receive DRBC approval, including drilling, extraction, construction, storage pits, stormwater and pollution discharges. . . DRBC oversight is essential to protect the Delaware River for all. The DRBC has made the right decision - to prevent damage -- at the right moment -- before natural gas development happens.

Maya K. van Rossum
the Delaware Riverkeeper
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