

March 11, 2018

Dear DRBC Commissioners:

I am a resident of Pennsylvania and live along the Delaware River. I am writing to commend and support the proposed draft regulations Part 440, 18 CFR 401.35 and 18 CFR 401.43, and to thank you for your service to our river basin. I would also like to request a strengthening of 18 CFR 401.35 and 18 CFR 401.43. Currently these regulations “discourage” the exporting of water for use in hydraulic fracturing and “discourage” the importing of wastewater from oil and gas extraction practices. I urge you to strengthen the regulations to include a ban on both exporting water for this use and on importing waste to the Basin.

Because the health of our economy is centered around our scenic river and its pristine natural resources and because over 15 million people rely on our river basin for drinking water, agriculture and industry, I support a complete ban on the importation into the Basin of waste from hydraulic fracturing activities, including the list of wastes attached at the end of this letter, and on the treatment and/or discharge of wastewater from hydraulically fractured oil and gas wells in the Basin.

As you are aware, the oil and gas industry is not required to release complete lists of the chemicals used in its extraction processes. Of the hundreds of chemicals found in fracking waste, 56% have been examined and 44% we have little to no information about. Of the 56%, more than half are soluble in water and over a third are volatile, meaning they can be inhaled, swallowed or absorbed through skin. The chemicals that have been studied, we know to cause cancer and affect the brain and nervous systems, the immune system, respiratory, circulatory, reproductive and endocrine systems, liver and skin. Among many others, a new Yale study supports these numbers. <https://news.yale.edu/2016/01/06/toxins-found-fracking-fluids-and-wastewater-study-shows>. Another concern is that little information exists on how the chemicals that are known to be part of the extraction process might react when mixed with toxins and compounds already existing in shale deposits.

Westchester County passed a permanent comprehensive ban on the waste from oil and gas extraction processes in 2012, signed into law by the Republican County Executive. Republican-dominated Putnam County followed the next year. Nassau & Suffolk Counties passed waste bans years ago and have gone back to amend and strengthen them since. All five boroughs of New York City banned fracking waste in 2016. The State of Vermont and many parts of New Jersey also have bans in place. In Connecticut, 38 towns have passed local ordinances banning this waste. The Delaware River Basin, if only because it provides drinking water to millions of people, should be at least as protected as these other communities.

Please protect our local economies, drinking water, fish and wildlife, and future generations from the sort of contamination we have seen in other areas. There have been over 6,600 spills of this waste, many during its transfer from one site to another. Spills and inadequate treatment followed by discharge have contaminated rivers and drinking water supplies harming fish, wildlife and human health. What more proof do we need to pass a comprehensive ban? This is a public health and economic issue as well as an environmental one.

Thank you for your dedication to protecting the water quality and quality of life in the Basin.

Sincerely,
Louise Washer, 646 River Road, Beach Lake, PA 18405

Please Ban Permanently:
Gas Drilling Muds
Gas Drill Cuttings
Gas Hydraulic Fracturing Flowback
Gas Flowback & Drill Cuttings Mix
Gas Flowback & Brine Mix
Gas Flowback & Used Frac Sand
Gas Brine Produced During Gas Flow
Gas Chemicals Used on Pad Surface
Gas Underground Storage Waste
Liquified Petroleum Gas Waste
Oil Drilling Muds
Oil Drill Cuttings
Oil Hydraulic Fracturing Flowback
Oil Flowback & Drill Cuttings Mix X
Oil Flowback & Brine Mix
Oil Flowback & Used Frac Sand
Oil Brine Produced During Oil Flow
Oil-Chemicals Used on Pad Surface