

Between 2004 and 2016, the EPA identified nearly 9,500 public complaints about environmental problems in Shell gas drilling areas. These impacts, again, while they should have never been experienced anywhere should be prevented from being experienced within the watershed.

In addition to private water supplies, fracking related operations have also resulted in changes to water quality in streams. For instance, a publication by the proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found streams adjacent to gas wells are negatively impacted by run off and sedimentation, harming fish and wildlife, and causing streams to be eroded and destabilized. Beyond impacts from erosion, sedimentation, concerns remain regarding exposure to unknown chemicals or unknown quantities of chemicals in frack fluid and wastewater from fracking operations.

Drilling companies have withheld fracking chemical identities from the public as confidential--

Operator: It has been three minutes. Please conclude remarks.

Joanne Kilgour: Thank you. Thank you again for this opportunity to comment in support of a complete ban on fracking in the watershed.

Operator: Thank you. We will go next to Mark Leben. You have three minutes. Your line is open.

Mark Leben: All right, thank you. I agree with the previous speaker. The fracking industry is not concerned with the welfare of the environment. As a chemical engineer, I understand why because it saves them a lot of money. Anything that they put back, any treatment they do to the water after fracking is minimal and is not in the best interest of anyway that is going to be drinking the water or is being put on the farmlands.

What I do not understand is in the age of the Twenty-First Century, that we need to be continually looking at fossil fuel as our energy sources. We have much better sources that do not pollute. There is no real need for fracking, any more fracking. I am extremely concerned that the damage to our watershed and to the water that we use, that millions of people use. I would appreciate it if the commission would please ban all fracking and not allow the use of water and that they controlled to be used for fracking operations. I appreciate the opportunity to make my comments known and I thank you and please ban fracking. Thank you very much.

Operator: Thank you. We will go now to Wendy Robinson. Your line is open. You have three minutes.

Wendy Robinson: Thank you. Thanks for offering a creative way to testify for those of us unable to travel to the rather inconvenient locations provided for in person testimony.

I assume you are all quite familiar with the history of the Delaware River and how polluted it was at the time of the American Revolution. You may know that even after the Delaware River Basin Commission's goals and objectives were established, its work was complicated by multi-year drought between 1961 and 1966 that brought the driest spell recorded since 1895.

When John F. Kennedy created the commission to protect and manage the river's resources, he could not have contemplated the fossil fuel extracted method we know as fracking. So, it's only right and laudable that you are proposing to ban fracking in the basin. But neither would Kennedy have ever condoned strong, I'm sorry, storing or dumping chemical laden radioactivity, radioactive water into the river or draining its precious contents to support such a polluting process. Why would you threaten centuries of progress this way?

The 1960's drought demonstrates that even with the best of intentions and planning, you cannot plan the weather. So, the prospect of withdrawing millions of gallons of clean, fresh water which you yourselves recognize is in incredibly short supply is nothing but irresponsible. You don't know when we could be in the beginning throes of a drought that lasts even longer than the one in the Sixties. A slight shift in the El Nino running pattern and we might experience a dearth of moisture California suffered through so recently. Then you will have sacrificed a dwindling resource necessary for survival. We can live without fracking. We cannot live without water.

Even if it is abundant at any given time, this is water that can never again be returned to the water cycle in its original form. Once replete with hundreds of chemicals, in many cases unidentified, it can no longer be considered the fresh, new water it once was. If it's no longer that fresh, clean water, what is it then? A toxic chemicals, chemical compounds, and radioactivity. That there should be any consideration of allowing that toxic soup to be dumped into the river is even more irresponsible than the water withdrawals. When you can't even be certain of what chemicals to neutralize it because they are trade secrets, how can a treatment facility be sure that it would be discharging a nonlethal product? Even more concerning, there is no absolutely no evidence that radioactivity can be eliminated from fracking wastewater. So, what then? Are we playing Russian roulette with the lives of the people who depend on the river for their drinking water? Are you gambling on how much is too much radium? Does the water include a calculation based on a person's size? Will you be able to determine if a child or an infant's tiny body can withstand the cancer caused by the radioactive water? Could you sleep at night knowing that you might be responsible for a decision that could cost a child his or her life? Thank you.

Operator:

Thank you. We will move now to Robert Kraus. Your line is open. Robert Kraus, your line is open. Please check your mute function.