

Jennifer Canfield

Dear Mr. Tambini, Ms. Schmidt and respective Commission Members:

I sincerely hope that my comments on the proposed regulations will adequately express what I consider valid reasons to prevent hydraulic fracturing and all associated activities within the the Delaware River Basin, main stem and special protected waters.

From a personal standpoint:

I have resided along the tributaries and main stem since 1954. In the time since, I have witnessed the sustenance these waters provide to our delicate and now threatened pristine ecosystems, including wildlife, forests, plant species and air quality. Fortunately I still live surrounded by the natural forces which allow these resources to function without impairment. I have been here continually for changing seasons, historic floods, changes in weather patterns and periods of modest development, even economic ups and downs. Through it all, the one thing that has not changed is the quality of life for both humans and the natural world which co-exist at present but which are now reliant for a safe future on people who do not live here. This last comment is not meant to diminish my confidence in all of you that you are taking all of these arguments into serious consideration. It is simply a matter of fact.

One of the biggest problems I see with allowing fracking and its associated activities within the area and waters of the basin is the potential for human error and greed. To be honest, while we may all have opinions on "studies" funded by both sides of this issue, and while I personally do not believe that fracking can ever be safe, the bottom line is that things can go way wrong no matter how regulated an activity is. We have seen examples of this across the entire globe. The damage is mostly irreparable. The list is long. In our case, we have an incredible opportunity, and only this one chance, to prevent human error, monetary gain and political agendas from ever incurring harm to this precious resource.

Our property sits directly on the main stem, at the base of and along two watersheds which together are comprised of almost two thousand acres. Beyond these, because of my thirty-six year career as owner/broker of a small real estate office here on the Pennsylvania side of Callicoon, NY and formerly licensed in both states, I spent a whole lot of time walking property boundaries and familiarizing myself with all attributes of any parcel I listed or represented to a client. My work spanned Delaware and Sullivan County in New York State and Wayne County in Pennsylvania. I worked with my township and county officials as well as attorneys and surveyors to provide correct information to all on behalf of clients. I had to know the land. I have also served on my township planning board as well as an interim supervisor. My purpose has always been to bring information, understand process and facilitate outcomes that prevent misunderstanding and harm. Which brings me to...

From a professional standpoint:

Around 2007-2008, our local populations were becoming aware that gas companies with the help of willing designated resident agents were holding meetings across the townships to influence land owners to sign leases. Some nefarious activities included pressure and misinformation, tactics many would have classified as coercive. My husband and I were on the receiving end of several. And, even though we would have found relief from our debts by signing leases, we refused to sign. Because of our own standards we felt a responsibility to protect our environment in whatever way that fell within our prerogative.

However, I soon found that the business of fracking would affect another aspect of our lives. Almost every other call I received at my office was from potential and already invested clients, many of whom I had known for years, asking about the perceived harm from this industry,

something they could never have imagined landing in the Upper Delaware. At that time, my business was suffering, not from lack of customers, but from lack of inventory. The people who were buying here historically came primarily because this area had remained unspoiled. They came for the natural wonder of it all. Retirees, secondary home seekers, river users, artists, writers, professional people willing to take the long commutes to metro areas, all came because they knew this was a better life, a better environment for their children and grandchildren. Luckily I had forged wonderful relationships with them and their referrals sustained me through previous downturns. However, none of us could reconcile fracking with the potential for harm to the land in which we had invested our lives, our monetary resources and our dreams. New clients refused to buy whatever listings that were still active unless I could assure them they would not end up near a drilling operation. Some listings were pulled from the market because the owners, mostly investors or struggling farmers and families, wanted to see if they could profit from the leases and the potential revenues.

By 2010, I was out of business. No worries. It was time anyway. Many of the people now who are fighting to have fracking and all its related activities allowed in the basin credit the disastrous economic downturn for the failure of the local real estate market. For the reasons I have mentioned, the downturn was already happening because of lease signings. Property values tanked. But they were not here to answer my phone, they did not have thirty-six years of experience learning why so many wonderful people flocked to the Upper Delaware to put down roots, contribute to the economic lifeblood and appreciate the incredible way of life we all shared. They did not feel the disappointment and the worry in people's voices. We lost a lot. And I will admit, the arrival of the potential for fracking eventually ran concurrent with the larger economic disaster.

I beg you to consider that I am only one of many people living along the base of our watersheds. Together with my husband and all of them, I will suffer the negative impact of drilling operations that might be permitted on lands which sit above our land. There will never be just the right regulation, nor the oversight at just the right moment, to prevent a spill, a discharge, a non permitted disturbance, a failed retention or that one human error that cannot be undone. I beg you to rule hydraulic fracking and all its associated activities out of the Delaware River Basin and its special protected waters for now and for our futures. Please!

With all due respect,
Jennifer Canfield







