



**Delaware River Basin Commission Draft Resolution No. 2023
Authorizing the Executive Director to Amend the Administrative Agreement between the
Delaware River Basin Commission and
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection**

Verbal Testimony

Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network

November 8, 2023

Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) makes this verbal testimony on behalf of our more than 26,000 members. We will be submitting written comments by the new due date of November 20, which was extended by DRBC.

DRN requested an extension of 15 days from the currently noticed deadline for written comments of November 14. The DRBC's granted extension provides another 6 days for comment beyond November 14 but not the full 15 days we requested. DRN will meet the new deadline but notes that this is still not an adequate length of time for the public to understand and comment on the proposed amendment of the DRBC's Administrative Agreement with NJDEP.

DRN also requested that the public should be provided with public presentation materials that further elaborate on the rationale behind the proposed modifications. A comprehensive discussion of the underlying purpose, goals, and implications of the proposed changes is important to provide the public with a full picture of this Agreement. We need to fully understand why the Administrative Agreement is being revised and how this will affect communities and the environment.

While the DRBC has disclosed the items that will be modified in the existing administrative agreement and has discussed this at today's meeting, the review has been superficial and focused on procedure.

DRN is very concerned about proposed changes to the NJ Agreement. As we delve further into the details and research the background, we see complexity that requires close scrutiny. For instance, the details about precisely how, when, and under what circumstances underground storage cavern projects would be referred for review by NJDEP is of great importance. Subsequent public notice through DRBC's One Process/One Permit Project Status page and the Notice of Applications Received distribution system is equally important; the public needs to understand if the changes to these provisions will expand or limit public review and input on projects that could affect them and our watershed.

For DRBC to simply state in its FAQ that the impact on communities will be minimal is not adequate. DRN sees these as important and substantive issues that will impact communities and the environment because they involve consequential projects. We appreciate that a FAQ document has been provided on the DRBC website on the proposed Amendment but we consider these issues to require greater in-depth analysis and public discussion.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment verbally today.