

For Immediate Release
September 9, 2020

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The Public Speaks Out Opposing Gibbstown LNG Export on Delaware River

Governors of Four States Petitioned by 50,000 people to Vote NO Sept. 10

Governors' Offices in New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware – Fierce public opposition to the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Export Terminal proposed for Gibbstown, New Jersey on the Delaware River is being expressed today to the Governors of New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, who are expected to vote on the permit tomorrow at a public meeting of the Delaware River Basin Commission.

Representatives of organizations working in a coalition opposing the project are delivering flash drives today to each of the Governors at their state offices and to the Army Corps of Engineers who has the fifth vote on the Commission. The flash drive contains many declarations of opposition calling for a NO vote by the DRBC, which would stop the project. Included in the submission: **50,962** petitions, resolutions adopted by local governments along the truck and rail routes where the LNG would be carried to Gibbstown from northcentral Pennsylvania, and several sign-on letters from elected officials, community organizations, environmental groups, scientists and health professionals. See *"The Story of the Growing Community, Organizational, and Local Government Opposition"* below for details and comments from those speaking out.

The submission being made today to the Commissioners by the public is outside of the Commission's bureaucratic process with a goal of bringing the information, concerns, opinion, and expressions of public will directly to the Governors to inform their vote. There has been scant opportunity for public input during the DRBC review process with only a few days of public comment before the rushed approval last year and a confused and ultimately intimidating comment period sandwiched in prior to the adjudicatory

hearing this spring. The Hearing was not available to the public as it occurred, but only by tape afterwards.

Controversy has been swirling around the proposed export of LNG from the Gibbstown Logistics Center, a deepwater port in Gloucester County, NJ since the discovery of the plans were unearthed through Freedom of Information Act requests last year. Delaware River Partners, a subsidiary of New Fortress Energy, aimed to expand the terminal with a second dock (“Dock 2”) that would export LNG overseas but they had kept their intention to export LNG secret for years. DRBC confirmed the LNG export plans at a quickly called public hearing in June 2019 and approved a permit for Dock 2 less than a week later. In addition to adding LNG to the planned export of natural gas liquids, Dock 2 would potentially triple the previously planned activities at the facility.

Delaware Riverkeeper Network appealed the approval through the Commission’s administrative process that included an adjudicatory hearing for 8 days in May. The Hearing Officer who oversaw the proceedings issued his recommendation in July that the Commissioners affirm the original approval. After reviewing the record and several more legal filings, the Commissioners are now required to vote publicly on whether or not to accept the Hearing Officer’s recommendation or reject it.

Despite being a public agency, the DRBC has not added the Dock 2 vote to the agenda for the September 10 meeting and has given vague statements to the press about the impending vote, further clouding the LNG export terminal decisions in secrecy and contributing to the lack of agency transparency.

The Story of Community, Organizational, and Local Government Opposition

Petitions

50,962 signatures on petitions calling for the DRBC to vote NO on the permit for the proposed Gibbstown LNG Export Terminal have been collected over the last weeks by several organizations committed to defeating the project. The groups that have participated in the petition campaign have provided files that are included in the submission to the DRBC Commissioners: 350 Philly, Better Path Coalition, Catskill Mountainkeeper, Clean Air Council, Clean Water Action, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, EMPOWER NJ, Food and Water Action, Friends of the Earth, Mark Ruffalo for Move.On, Natural Resources Defense Council, New Jersey Sierra Club, Protect Northern PA, and Surfrider NJ and NY.

“The proposed Gibbstown LNG Export Terminal is fraught with danger at every step of its supply chain; from the fracking and liquefaction in northcentral Pennsylvania, to the

dangerous transport of flammable and potentially explosive liquid methane through 200 miles of communities, to its handling and loading into ships at the Gibbstown terminal, to the “floating bomb” ships that will take it overseas, to its end use as a dirty fossil fuel. The proposed terminal will cause unmitigable harm to our environment, to habitats and species, and to the water quality of the Delaware River, which is the water supply for 17 million people. We call on the Delaware River Basin Commission to vote to protect the watershed and its communities by denying approval for this reckless and damaging project,” **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.**

"An historic 2 million acres burned as wildfires explode in California, 100 degree heat giving way to a snowstorm in Colorado, and named Atlantic storms running out the alphabet in record time are collectively sounding the alarm that climate change is here and getting worse fast. The Delaware River Basin Commission can no longer hit the snooze button. It's time they wake up and stop enabling the industry that has caused all the havoc. The DRBC must say no to exports of LNG from Gibbstown, NJ," **said Karen Feridun, Founder, co-founder, Better Path Coalition.**

“To fight the climate crisis, the DRBC should reject this ill-conceived plan to turn the Delaware River into a hub for fracked gas exports,” **said Jocelyn Sawyer, Organizer with Food & Water Action.** “New Fortress’s outrageous and untested scheme would send high volumes of fracked gas by trains or trucks to an export terminal right on the Delaware River, threatening the health and safety of nearby communities and the river itself. Instead of deepening our deadly addiction to fossil fuels, Governor Murphy, Governor Wolf, Governor Carney, and Governor Cuomo must use their votes on the DRBC to say no to this dangerous fracking plan.”

“We are calling on Governor Murphy to stand up for the people of New Jersey and the Delaware Basin by stopping the disastrous LNG port in Gibbstown. This project will impact the drinking water for 3 million New Jersey residents, prompt more fracking, more use of GHG’s, more pollution, and climate change impacts. We have gone to court to challenge Trump’s dangerous rule that will allow New Fortress to bring 100s of bomb trains carrying LNG coming through our communities and neighborhoods. There will also be close to 2,000 trucks that would transport explosive LNG to the site each day. We cannot afford to play Russian Roulette with the safety of the public,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “The entire project has been rushed through by government agencies, disregarding public safety. If Governor Murphy really wants to protect the Delaware River, protect our health, and reduce climate impacts, he needs to put a moratorium on fossil fuel projects. He needs to lead and stop this reckless LNG port.”

"During this pandemic summer, it became clear we were dealing with two crises --- COVID-19 and climate change. During DRBC's inaugural meeting on climate change,

the state was hit by extreme weather including flooding. That is why it is incomprehensible the DRBC would even consider a massive LNG export facility on the banks of the Delaware River. This plant will cause irreparable environmental harm to the Delaware, create a public health hazard and a climate bomb. The DRBC Commissioners and Gov. Murphy must oppose this project tomorrow. The Delaware should not be an international gas highway for the fossil fuel industry that will drown our coastline," **said Doug O'Malley, Environment New Jersey Director.**

"It is unclear if this project will provide any net benefits to Delawareans, who are unlikely to work on the construction of the Gibbstown facility or as drivers of tankers bringing LNG from Wyalusing. Any fees received by Delaware cannot possibly compensate for the damage from one serious incident, and minimizing the possibility of such an incident requires security operations that would severely interfere with bridge, highway and ship traffic as well as general access to the river, whenever loaded carriers travel south in the narrow main channel. Encouraging extraction, processing and export of natural gas will bring significant leaks of methane, an extremely potent greenhouse gas, and will exacerbate flooding along the river," **said Coralie Pryde, representing League of Women Voters of Delaware,** an active member of the interstate Coalition organizing committee opposing Gibbstown LNG.

"In this day and age, it's incredible it's even a question whether Governor Murphy will vote on Thursday to protect the Delaware River from fracking wells and hundreds of communities from frack gas bomb trains, trucks and ships from Pennsylvania with stops in South Jersey past Wilmington and the Delaware Bayshore to Ireland, Puerto Rico, and beyond. This project is a disaster every step of the way, it will only serve special private interests, will cause destructive water and air pollution and will increase methane emissions that will worsen our national and global climate crisis. Governor Murphy's vote is key and he needs to cast it against the Gibbstown LNG terminal ("Dock 2") and for the protection of the watershed's communities, water supplies, and environment," **said Eric Benson, Clean Water Action's NJ Campaign Director.**

"It is always better to not pollute than to say you will "clean up after" - better for communities, for the environment in a wider sense and actually even better financially! This project is a catastrophic event waiting to happen," **said B. Arrindell, Director, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability.**

"It is outrageous that the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) would even consider allowing New Fortress Energy to move forward with this proposal. This export facility would be shipping LNG to Puerto Rico, Mexico and other ports. Meanwhile, all four states in the Delaware River Basin are suing the federal government over the safety of transporting LNG by rail. The Gibbstown export dock is dependent on transporting this climate catastrophe product through Pennsylvania and New Jersey communities. New York's vote should not be a question! Exporting fracked methane at

the expense of our planet is in complete contradiction to the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which is New York State law. We live in crazy times, but a "yes" vote on this proposal is just plain insane," **said Wes Gillingham, Associate Director, Catskill Mountainkeeper.**

"The Delaware River Basin Commission is supposed to protect our river and its watershed and it is supposed to make its decisions on projects that serve and benefit the public and its communities, human and nonhuman. The Delaware River's federally recognized irreplaceable assets are gravely threatened by the proposed export of fracked gas LNG and all the unmitigatable impacts, cradle to grave, on the environment and public health and safety that come with its massive footprint. The DRBC Commissioners must realize that the good of the river and its watershed communities demand that they vote NO on allowing the LNG export terminal," **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

"Transporting this highly explosive fossil fuel through communities is an immediate threat and danger to residents, and a long-term threat and danger as support of this project goes against New Jersey's work and Energy Master Plan to move away from fossil fuels to address climate change, and a path to more jobs and a stable, sustainable clean energy economy," **said Danielle Plá, Chair, Surfrider Foundation South Jersey.**

"From supporting the expansion of fracking to transporting highly explosive liquefied natural gas on trains and trucks, this project would endanger communities and cause pollution along every step of the way," **said Joseph Otis Minott, Executive Director and Chief Counsel for the Clean Air Council,** which gathered signatures on the petition and submitted extensive comment to DRBC and other agencies regarding the proposed Gibbstown LNG export terminal.

Local Government Resolutions

Four **resolutions have been passed by local government** units opposing the transportation of LNG through Pennsylvania and New Jersey communities: Lehigh County Board of Commissioners, Kutztown Borough, and Clarks Summit in Pennsylvania and Runnemede Borough in New Jersey. More than two dozen municipalities are in the process of considering resolutions. See the certified resolutions here: <http://bit.ly/notransit>.

"As a former cryogenic engineer, a volunteer firefighter, and a current Lehigh County Commissioner I am grateful to my fellow commissioners for joining with me to pass a non-partisan resolution condemning the potential bulk transport of LNG product through Lehigh County. We are the voice of our citizens who are gravely concerned about the extreme hazards posed by the previously unheard of volumes of volatile product

planned for transport through our populated communities and the failure of federal and state regulatory agencies to properly consider and correctly analyze the documented concerns voiced by highly respected life safety organizations,” **said Bob Elbich, Commissioner, Lehigh County Board of Commissioners, PA.** Allentown, the Lehigh County seat, is the state's third-largest city behind Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

“Congratulations to all those involved in opposing the transportation of the LNG through our neighborhoods. Runnemede Council has unanimously voted against this proposition. When we know better, we must do better. The time has come to move our attention and investments to safe, renewable and sustainable energy. Thank you all and congratulations,” **said Councilman John Ranieri, Runnemede Borough, Camden County, NJ.**

“The continuous, high-volume transport of LNG through our communities by truck and/or rail poses a risk of fire and explosion, potentially resulting in the loss of life and property. Furthermore, the dramatic increase in truck traffic will alter the character of our linear business districts. Counties along the haul route derive no benefit from this project but will bear the safety risks, harms, costs, and economic damage,” **said Diana Dakey, facilitator of Protect Northern PA,** a group of concerned residents. Dakey presented the resolution opposing the transport of LNG by truck that was adopted by Clarks Summit, Lackawanna County, northwest of Scranton in northeastern PA.

"The Borough of Runnemede, NJ may be small, but it speaks with a BIG LOUD VOICE in opposition to the proposed LNG terminal in Gibbstown, NJ. This is a clear and present danger to our residents, including children and seniors, who live close to one of the roads or the railway that will be used to transport it," **said David L. Steinberg, resident, 2018 Nobel Peace Prize Nominee** by the International Writers and Artists Association. Steinberg worked with his municipality to adopt the resolution.

City of Philadelphia Officials

Also submitted is a **letter from Philadelphia** City Council members and a member of the PA House of Representatives opposing the transportation of LNG through the city. The letter is sponsored by the community organization **PhillyBoricuas** whose members live in many of the neighborhoods along the railway tracks where the LNG rail tank cars would travel on its route to Gibbstown. See the letter here: <http://bit.ly/ltrPhilly>

"The plans from New Fortress Energy to transport LNG every single day through our neighborhoods in Philadelphia and export it to Puerto Rico are negligent at best. These plans show New Fortress' disregard for people's lives and safety. LNG - transported by ships often called floating bombs - would be carried in rail tank cars through high density and majority black and brown and working-class neighborhoods. We are

grateful to have been working with our partners and leaders in environmental advocacy to fight for our community's, Philadelphia's, and Puerto Rico's safety. PhillyBoricuas is a grassroots community group that works on social issues affecting the Puerto Rican community in Philadelphia," **said Charito Morales, Lead Organizer for PhillyBoricuas.**

"New Fortress Energy's irresponsible proposal to transport LNG through Philadelphia by train and truck puts thousands of lives at risk. We're so grateful to members of our City Council for joining us to urge Governor Wolf to say "no" to this terrifying project," **said Mitch Chanin, steering committee member, 350 Philly,** working in Philadelphia opposing the transport of LNG through the city.

Health professionals, scientists, experts, and representatives of organizations

Last week, more than 50 health professionals and organizations and 133 environmental group representatives, as well as actor-activist Mark Ruffalo, submitted letters to DRBC calling for a NO vote on the project. See the health professional letter: <https://bit.ly/2R1U4Yr>. See the letter from 133 organizations here: <http://bit.ly/133groups>

Mark Ruffalo, actor, environmental advocate and Board member of Catskill Mountainkeeper said, "This is an outrageous Trump-backed plan to export fracked gas overseas. The Governors of NJ, NY, PA and DE need to stop this plan in its tracks and put the health and lives of the public and the water of the Delaware River before the profits of the fracking industry."

In summary, opposition to the export of LNG from the proposed Dock 2 at the Gibbstown terminal is growing as more people find out about all the tentacles of impact that the project entails. The cloak of secrecy that has masked the true intentions of New Fortress Energy is being pulled back as the public discovers the environmental, public health, and climate impacts of this massive fracked gas project. The Delaware River Basin Commission's mandate to protect the water resources of up to 17 million people, the Wild and Scenic Delaware River and the National Estuary cannot allow the Commission to approve Dock 2 for the export of LNG and demands a NO vote. This is the unfolding story of mounting public opposition.

Background:

The Gibbstown LNG export project has many complicated parts, adding up to a footprint with massive impacts. The gas would be extracted from fracking wells in Pennsylvania's Marcellus Shale, and sent to a processing plant New Fortress Energy, the same company that owns the Gibbstown facility, is building in Wyalusing, Bradford County, PA on the beautiful Susquehanna River. From there the liquefied methane, or LNG, would be carried by truck and/or rail every day about 200 miles across PA and NJ to

Gibbstown, exposing hundreds of communities along the way to the threat of a catastrophic accident. See maps of the potential routes here: <https://bit.ly/3gaCBYg> and <https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/taxonomy/term/1174>

At Gibbstown, LNG will be loaded round the clock directly into enormous ships, putting the entire region, including Gibbstown where back yards adjoin the property, Tinicum Township, PA less than mile across the river and environmentally overburdened Chester, PA, at risk from explosion during these dangerous operations. See details in the Fact Sheet here: <http://bit.ly/factsGtown>

Known adverse impacts include: water quality, endangered species such as Atlantic and Shortnose sturgeon, and rare, vulnerable habitats for many animals and plants will be harmed or destroyed by the terminal, the dredging, and the construction and operation of the proposed Gibbstown “Dock 2” LNG export terminal. The ships, dubbed “floating bombs” by some experts, would pass next to densely populated cities such as Wilmington and the Delaware and New Jersey bay shores and coastal beaches as they travel out to sea to import terminals proposed by New Fortress in Ireland, Puerto Rico, and beyond.

Public opposition is fueled by the far-reaching and unavoidable environmental, public safety and health harms caused by fracking for the gas, liquefying the methane, transporting and handling the flammable and potentially explosive LNG and its ultimate use as a burnt fuel. These concerns are compounded by the recognition that methane is the most potent of greenhouse gases in warming the atmosphere during the next critical 10 years, worsening our global climate crisis and threatening us now and our future generations.

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