

***Berks Gas Truth ~ Bucks County Environmental Action ~ Catskill Mountainkeeper
Clean Water Action New Jersey ~ CREDO ~ Delaware Riverkeeper Network ~
Environment New Jersey ~ Food and Water Watch ~ Frack Action
Natural Resources Defense Council ~ Sierra Club Delaware Chapter
Sierra Club New Jersey Chapter ~ Sierra Club New York Chapter
Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter ~ 350 Bucks County***

For Immediate Release
July 27, 2017

Contacts:

Tracy Carluccio, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, 215.692.2329 tracy@delawareriverkeeper.org
Sam Bernhardt, Food & Water Watch 267.428.1903 sbernhardt@fwwatch.org
Doug O'Malley, Environment New Jersey, 917.449.6812 domalley@environmentnewjersey.org
Karen Feridun, Berks Gas Truth, 610.678.7726, karen.feridun@gmail.com
Wes Gillingham, Catskill Mountainkeeper, 845.901.1029, wes@catskillmountainkeeper.org
Jeff Tittel, Director, New Jersey Sierra Club, 609.558.9100, jeff.tittel@sierraclub.org
Stephanie Herron, Sierra Club, Delaware Chapter, 302.468.4550 stephanie.herron@sierraclub.org
Kate Kiely, Natural Resources Defense Council, 212.727.4592 kkiely@nrdc.org
David Pringle, Clean Water Action New Jersey, 732.996.4288 dpringle@cleanwater.org
Brandy Doyle, CREDO Action, 415-369-2047 bdoyle@credoaction.com

Over 60,000 Petitions Demanding Fracking Ban Submitted
***Groups bring petitions to doorsteps of four state governors and Army Corps
in Week of Speaking Out July 24 through 28***

**Federal Representative for President Trump, Army Corp of Engineers,
Receives Petitions Friday the 28th at their Philadelphia Office**

Philadelphia, PA – Organizations are holding a week of press conferences to deliver petitions signed by 63,674 people calling for a permanent ban on fracking in the Delaware River Watershed. Each day of July 24 through 28, organizations have been bringing the petitions to the Governors of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware and to the **Army Corps of Engineers** as the voting commissioners of the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC).

The DRBC is the agency that will ultimately vote on the public's demand for a permanent ban on gas drilling and fracking throughout the Watershed. **The federal representative to DRBC represents President Trump, which concerns those working for a permanent frack ban due to Washington's pro-fossil fuel stance, attempts to rescind rules such as methane limits, and the recent proposal to undo Obama-era fracking controls on federal lands, to name a few of the Administration's anti-environmental moves.**

Organizations delivered the petitions at Press Conferences this week:

Monday July 24 – Governor Andrew Cuomo, Million Dollar Staircase, NY Capitol Building, Albany, NY

Tuesday July 25 – Governor Chris Christie, Outside State House Annex, Trenton NJ

Wednesday July 26 – Governor John Carney, Steps of Tatnall Building, 150 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd South, Dover, DE 19901

Thursday July 27 – Governor Tom Wolf, State Capitol Building Rotunda, Harrisburg, PA

Friday July 28 – 11:00am, Brigadier General Graham, Army Corps of Engineers, The Wanamaker Building lobby, 100 Penn Square East, Juniper Street (across from the southeast corner of City Hall), Philadelphia, PA 19107

The voices of people demanding a complete and permanent ban on all gas drilling and fracking in the Delaware River Watershed has mounted over the past months as the public learned that DRBC staff may be moving to adopt regulations and lift the current moratorium due to industry pressure. The rollback of federal environmental protections in Washington has fueled concern that the Army Corps of Engineers, as the federal representative on the Commission, may aggressively push the other voting members to allow drilling to commence, and has brought hundreds of protesters to DRBC meetings this year. Tens of thousands of petitions have been signed by those who want to speak to the Commissioners directly, leading to the submission of the petitions this week, planned by organizations leading the charge calling for a ban in the Watershed.

Groups that collected names on petitions include (in alphabetical order): Berks Gas Truth, Bucks County Environmental Action, Catskill Mountainkeeper, CREDO, Clean Water Action New Jersey, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Environment America, Environment New Jersey, Food and Water Watch, Frack Action, Natural Resources Defense Council, PennEnvironment, Sierra Club - Delaware Chapter, Sierra Club - New Jersey Chapter, Sierra Club - New York Chapter, Sierra Club - Pennsylvania Chapter, 350 Bucks County.

17 million people get their drinking water from the Delaware River Watershed, including New York City and Philadelphia. The water is now clean because of Special Protection Waters regulations that don't allow degradation of the Wild and Scenic Delaware River.

“With these 63,000+ petitions we are delivering more proof to the DRBC voting members that people are clamoring for a permanent ban on gas drilling and fracking in the Delaware River Watershed and they won't be stopped until the four Governors and the Army Corps vote for a ban to provide the essential protection our drinking water requires,” **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

"The Delaware River Basin Commission has one job, and that's to protect this irreplaceable natural resource – a resource that provides drinking water to five percent of the country. To do the job, the commission must ban fracking permanently. Any other decision threatens this ecosystem and the water supply for millions, with only short-term profits for fossil fuel companies in return," **said Brandy Doyle, Campaign Manager, CREDO.**

"While Donald Trump is rolling back environmental protections across the country, the DRBC is the one place where three Democratic Governors can band together and go on the offensive against Trump and the oil and gas industry. Tom Wolf, John Carney, and Andrew Cuomo can work together to protect drinking water for millions," **said Lena Smith, Regional Organizer for Food & Water Watch.**

"The public across the Delaware River watershed is demanding that our state leaders remove any doubt that gas drilling will ever be allowed in the watershed," **said Doug O'Malley, Director of Environment New Jersey.** "In the age of Trump, we need to affirm our commitment to our drinking water and a permanent ban on fracking is the obvious step to protect the Delaware watershed."

"Moratoria provide great protection from fracking until they don't. The only way to truly safeguard the drinking water of 17 million people is to put in place a permanent ban. It's time for the DRBC to ban fracking in the Delaware River Basin," **said Karen Feridun, Founder of Berks Gas Truth.**

"To allow fracking in the Delaware River Basin would be nothing short of disastrous, and we need to stop making disastrous decisions when it comes to our drinking water. It has become abundantly clear that no amount of regulation can make fracking safe. The Commission must do its job and protect this watershed, and the 17 million people who rely on it for their drinking water. Democracy only works when people participate. So we will continue to participate, to protest, and to petition until there is a permanent ban on fracking in the Delaware," **said David Pringle, NJ Campaign Director of Clean Water Action.**

"The Delaware River Basin is still at threat from fracking, as is the drinking water for 17 million people. That's why we're here with petitions from tens of thousands of people who are calling on their Governors and the Commission to make the fracking ban permanent. The potential for thousands of wells with hundreds of harmful chemicals and more pipelines would destroy our valley and water supply. It's become even more important and urgent with the fossil fuel in the White House pushing for the oil and gas companies. They need to act and act soon," **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** "We're delivering thousands of petition signatures from people who demand clean water and action by the Governors and the government to protect this

valley. Don't Ruin the Basin Commissioners! Governor Christie, do your job! Ban fracking permanently!"

"Delaware has nothing to gain and everything to lose from allowing fracking in our watershed" **said Stephanie Herron, Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator at the Delaware Sierra Club.** "That's why we're calling on Governor Carney and the other DRBC Commissioners to protect Delawareans drinking water and health by banning hydraulic fracturing in the Delaware River Basin. Beyond the potential devastation to our drinking water, it's 2017 and Governor Carney knows that we have moral obligation and the available technology to move to 100% clean energy sources like wind and solar. Delawareans are already feeling the impacts of climate change. There is no excuse for new drilling in our region."

"In 2015, under the visionary leadership of Governor Cuomo, New York State became the first state with natural gas reserves to ban fracking. In making this decision, the state cited the overwhelming scientific evidence of fracking's harm to public health. Since then, the body of evidence demonstrating the dangers of fracking has only grown. We're counting on the governors of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware to listen to the science and take a courageous stand for our drinking water and community health by banning fracking in the Delaware River Basin," **said Rob Friedman, Policy Advocate, Natural Resources Defense Council**

"We, all 466 members of Bucks Environmental Action, call for a complete, total and irrevocable ban on fracking in the Delaware River Basin area with these petitions. We do so because this type of resource extraction is dangerous to the land, the water, the people and indeed, all of life itself. And for what? For corporate profit, for venality and greed. We object. Ban Fracking now and Forever," **said Sharon Furlong, founding member and coordinator, Bucks Environmental Action.**

"350 Bucks County supports a permanent ban on fracking in the Delaware River Basin. Fracking in the Delaware River Basin would contribute to the acceleration of climate change and jeopardize the clean and safe drinking water of millions of people in four states," **said Steve Bacher, Board member, 350 Bucks County.**

"New York State banned high volume fracking because of the overwhelming scientific evidence of its threats – especially those to public health. The Delaware River Basin Commission must do the same. This is the only course to protect our water, air, health and communities – it's one to which Pennsylvania's Governor Tom Wolf has committed, one that New York's Governor Cuomo has implemented in New York, and we urge all of the commissioners to follow their lead," **said Wes Gillingham, Associate Director, Catskill Mountainkeeper.**

Since 2010 the DRBC has prohibited natural gas extraction projects in the Delaware River Basin while they study its potential impacts on water resources, a *de-facto* moratorium that does not allow permits to be issued until natural gas regulations are adopted.

Organizations based in each of the four states whose waters flow to the Delaware River – Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Delaware – held separate press conferences to pound home to their Governor and to the Army Corps of Engineers that their vote for a ban will align with the weight of scientific evidence that proves regulations can't make drilling safe and, like New York and Maryland, the only way to prevent pollution is a permanent drilling and fracking ban.

###