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## **50 Organizations Sign in Support of Petition Demanding DRBC Exercise Jurisdiction Over Pipelines**

**West Trenton, NJ:** Fifty organizations from around the region sent a letter supporting the formal petition submitted to the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) in September, asserting that the regulatory body has an obligation to exercise its jurisdiction over the proliferation of pipelines being constructed and proposed within the boundaries of the Delaware River watershed. According to the letter, "Pipelines are a serious and significant source of water pollution, air pollution, and habitat damage for our communities, watershed and region." As a result, the letter supports the Petition, which asserts that pursuant to the Delaware River Basin Compact and DRBC's Rules of Practice and Procedure, pipelines are subject to DRBC jurisdiction, docketing and oversight. The Petition was served during the public comment period of the September 12<sup>th</sup> DRBC public meeting by Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.

"Fracking pipelines shouldn't get a free pass by the Delaware River Basin Commission," said **Doug O'Malley, interim director for Environment New Jersey**. "If the agency is going to regulate water parks like Dorney Park, it can't turn a blind eye to the pipeline invasion."

“The DRBC needs to do their job and take control of all pipelines that cross the Delaware watershed. These pipelines have major environmental impacts to water quality and water supply intakes by erosion, sedimentation and chemical pollution. We also see impacts from staging areas and compressor stations. DRBC needs to review all pipelines in the Basin, otherwise we could have a death by a thousand cuts,” said **Jeff Tittel, Director, NJ Sierra Club**.

**Bob Holliday, founder and resource of Brandywine Watershed Regeneration Initiative**, said, “Pipelines transport things. Rivers and creeks are living systems which transmit the living qualities of water essential to the perpetuation of all living organic systems. The regeneration of the living waters of our nation and our world must be preeminent over all other pursuits, else we risk destroying our own lives or the quality thereof.”

Adds **Lisa Raggiola, executive director of Citizens for a Clean Pompton Lakes**, “The amount of permanent damage that has occurred already is more and more reason why we must take every precaution to preserve our natural resources. Without clean water to drink and good soil to grow our food, how will we survive? More focus and funding must be placed on alternative ‘green energy’ instead of shoving ‘PIPELINES’ down our throats.”

**Myron Arnowitz, PA State Director for Clean Water Action**, stated, “As gas pipelines sprout all across our state, we are seeing no agency, including Pennsylvania DEP, who is looking at the full impact on our waterways from pipelines. Because of the lack of planning, towns are facing multiple pipelines from competing gas companies. We need an agency like DRBC to fully examine how these pipelines impact our rivers and drinking water.”

“We are concerned about how local decisions for natural gas pipelines impact the entire region, including those of us who live downstream from pipeline development. The Delaware River Basin Commission is the best venue for gas pipeline deliberations in the Delaware River Basin, as it provides a voice for downstream stakeholders in Delaware,” said **Amy W. Roe, conservation chair of the Delaware Chapter of the Sierra Club**.

“Because individually and cumulatively, gas pipelines being proposed to cross the Delaware River Basin will have a ‘substantial effect on the water resources of the basin,’ pursuant to the authorities and obligations in the Delaware River Basin Compact, these projects must be subject to the review and approval of the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) prior to their construction,” said **John Hoekstra, Executive Director, the Raymond Proffitt Foundation**.

“Keeping our water pure and free of contaminants is of the utmost importance. What good is money in your pocket if your family cannot drink the water that flows from your tap?” said **Jim Vogt, President, Aquashicola/Pohopoco Watershed Conservancy**. “We must also think about the millions of people that depend on the Delaware for their drinking water. Short term profits do not outweigh the long term consequences of polluted water.”

**Tish Molloy, executive director of Guardians of the Brandywine**, said, “What does it say about the state of affairs in PA, if our state officials tasked with protecting our environment place the needs and concerns of outside business interests before the needs and concerns of our watersheds?”

**Julia Somers, Executive Director, NJ Highlands Coalition**, stated, “More than 30% of the New Jersey Highlands is within the Delaware River Basin. The proliferation of natural gas pipelines across our shared sensitive water resource lands, driven by rush to exploit Marcellus shale-derived natural gas, will

impair the valuable ecological functions that these mostly forested and publicly preserved lands provide naturally and for free. The DRBC must independently assess the true costs and consequences of these pipeline projects and insist upon accountability for any potentially damaging development within the basin.”

“Any gas pipeline but especially those associated with fracking are bad for drinking water, climate change, fishing and recreation, green jobs, and the natural resources of the Delaware River watershed. DRBC is doing its job by analyzing the full impacts, and appropriately asserting its oversight, across the Delaware Basin of the Tennessee Gas Pipeline and similar projects, especially their cumulative impact,” said **David Pringle, Campaign Director for NJ Environmental Federation, Garden State Chapter of Clean Water Action.**

According to the Petition, DRBC is obligated to exercise its jurisdiction and require DRBC approval for any and all pipelines passing through the watershed. The Delaware River Basin Compact, which provides for the mission and mandates of the DRBC, obligates the DRBC to review all projects with substantial effects on the water resources of the Basin for consistency with their Comprehensive Plan. “The level of land disturbance and the invasiveness of the tributary and wetland crossings associated with these pipelines are significant and would most certainly have an impact on the water resources of the Delaware River Basin. There are no limitations or exceptions within the DRBC Compact or its Rules of Practice or Procedure that would exempt pipelines from DRBC jurisdiction,” says **Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.**

Furthermore, according to the Petition, the pipelines proposed, as well as in general, individually and cumulatively:

- will include “significant disturbance of ground cover affecting water resources;”
- have already been referred to the DRBC by the National Park Service for action under the Rules of Practice and Procedure;
- will affect reaches of the Delaware River designated as Special Protection Waters, which, according to DRBC regulations, cannot be degraded; and
- could “pass in, on, under, or across . . . recreation project areas as designated in the Comprehensive Plan” of the DRBC such as the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

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