Protecting the future of the Catskills


May 15, 2009

Governor David A. Paterson
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Paterson,

As you know, the Department of Environmental Conservation is preparing a Draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement for gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale and other like formations. The Final SGEIS will largely determine the regulatory regime under which permits would be issued for gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale.

The undersigned organizations representing residents of New York, who stand to be directly affected by gas drilling and high-volume hydraulic fracturing, are deeply concerned about the public health and natural resource impacts of those processes. The technical and environmental issues associated with this proposed industrial activity are complex and extensive.

Therefore, we request that you direct the DEC to provide a public comment period of no less than sixty days after issuance of the DSGEIS to permit the public adequate time to review and comment on that document. We further request the scheduling of at least seven regional public hearings that are convenient and accessible to interested parties, including at least one hearing in New York City, whose residents’ watershed could be directly affected by gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale.

In light of the scope and intensity of this major proposed industrial activity, citizen and organizational stakeholders must have the ability to voice their comments and concerns publicly and without undue hardship at the last critical step before the environmental review process is concluded.

Cordially yours,

Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition
Chris Burger
Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy
Bruce Ferguson

Catskill Mountainkeeper
Wes Gillingham

Chenango Delaware Otsego Gas
Mike Bernhard

Citizens Campaign for the Environment
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Damascus Citizens for Sustainability
Barbara Arrindell

Delaware Riverkeeper Network
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The League of Women Voters of New York
Martha Kennedy

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Cc:
NYS DEC Commissioner Peter Grannis
Ms. Judith Enck
Mr. Stuart Gruskin
Mr. Paul DeCotis
Mr. Tom Congdon
Ms. Echo Cartwright
Commissioner Carol Ash, Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Places
Commissioner Richard F. Daines, M.D., Department of Health
Commissioner Lorraine A. Cortez-Vazquez, Department of State
Senate Majority Leader Malcolm A. Smith
Senate Minority Leader Dean G. Skelos
Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver
Assembly Minority Brian Kolb
Assembly Member Robert K Sweeney, Chair, Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee
Senator Antoine M. Thompson, Chair, Senate Environmental Conservation Committee