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Senate of Pennsylvania

2806

Independent Regulatory Review Commission
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RECEIVED

JUN 15 2010

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

June 15, 2010

Re: Docket #2806 [EQB 7-446: Wastewater]

Dear Commissioner:

We, the undersigned members of the Pennsylvania Senate, write to recommend approval of the IRRC Docket #2806; the new Wastewater rule, proposed by the Environmental Quality Board at its May 17th meeting.

Pennsylvania's rivers and streams account for 60% of our municipal drinking water. The cost of treating water to potable standards is heavily mitigated by the health of the forests in the headwaters and tributaries of our rivers and streams, and many of our most critical headwater forests will likely soon be under pressure by natural gas drilling in the Marcellus and other geologic formations. With the advent of deep shale drilling in Pennsylvania, we are going to see two major forces impacting water quality: massive tree loss and heavily polluted water discharges. Water used in natural gas drilling will be very dense and very polluted when it returns to the public waterways. Studies from Temple University show that it will disperse very slowly, thereby maximizing its destructiveness on aquatic life.

Water from natural gas drilling is saltier than ocean water – certainly salty enough to kill wild trout that Pennsylvania's angling industry depends on, and saltier than humans should be exposed to. Accordingly, it is essential that the IRRC support a standard for treatment of wastewater such that water will be released into public waterways at a reasonably clean level at the point of discharge. It is perfectly appropriate to hold natural gas drillers - newcomers to our state with the capacity to begin business on sound ecological footing - to a higher standard than industries that have been permanent residents of Pennsylvania. A discharge standard 500 milligrams per liter (mg/L) for Total Dissolved Solids and 250 mg/L for Sulfates and Chlorides will ensure that federal drinking water standards are met.

Thank you for working with the Pennsylvania State Senate to secure an appropriate and protective rule for wastewater discharges by natural gas drillers. Please approve Docket #2806 to ensure that Pennsylvanians can responsibly profit from economic opportunities offered by our natural resource reserves, without creating preventable short-term health problems or long-term financial and ecological burdens.

Sincerely,

Senator Daylin Leach
Senator Michael O'Pake
Senator Christine Tartaglione
Senator Jim Ferlo

2806

From: Crompton, Megan [mcrompton@pasen.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2010 10:10 AM
To: IRRC
Subject: IRRC Wastewater.doc
Attachments: IRRC Wastewater.doc

Please find attached comments from Senator Tomlinson regarding final form regulations for IRRC #2806.

Thank you.

Megan Crompton
Office of Senator Tomlinson
717-787-5072

