

**From:** Keith Knecht [kek33@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 12, 2010 12:45 PM  
**To:** EP, RegComments  
**Subject:** Marcellus Shale Issues

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Sirs,

I was advised in the January 12th issue of Pittsburgh Post-Gazette that the State of Pennsylvania is seeking public comment regarding natural gas extraction in the Marcellus Shale geological formation that covers the state.

I am strongly in support of protecting Pennsylvania's valuable water resources from destruction due to irresponsible drilling and coal extraction. As a conservationist and fisherman I find issues with Marcellus Shale drilling very disturbing. As you well know, the process of "hydraulic fracturing" presents serious problems related to environmental health and regulation. It uses large quantities of water drawn from streams or aquifers, this water is turned into a earthen slurry laced with fracturing chemicals which can poison and make turbid the water source, and it has been proposed that drilling wastewater be processed at sewage treatment plants which are not equipped to return the water to a chemical / particle free state. Furthermore, Pennsylvania's DEP has been slashed by budgetary constraints at a time when they should be increasing the monitoring process.

Pennsylvania already has many thousands of miles of streams destroyed by coal mining, how much more damage can our beautiful state endure because of unscrupulous extraction? Every living thing needs clean water and air to survive. Marcellus Shale drilling is still in a nascent state and already streams and drinking well water has been contaminated.

Pennsylvania needs to demand that the highest environmental standards are met, that there is no further degradation of resources and that energy companies carry the full burden of costs associated with policing the process, responsible waste water reclamation and stiff penalties for violations. If these costs are reflected in the price of fossil fuels, so be it, there is no other logical course.

We all have the fantasy of cheap energy, but is just that, a fantasy. While fossil fuels will remain necessary for the foreseeable future, Pennsylvania needs to place stewardship over greed so that sanity prevails in regard to public health and environment.

Respectfully,

Keith E. Knecht

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