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179 Leech Hill Road  
Sabinsville, PA 16943  
January 11, 2010

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2010 JAN 22 PM 3:13  
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
COMMISSION

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

Dear Environmental Quality Board Members:


On behalf of Pennsylvania's waterways, the Chesapeake Bay, and all future generations, please pass the proposed rulemaking changes in 25 Code Chapter 95, Wastewater Treatment Requirements, as published in the PA Bulletin November 7, 2009.

The proposed changes would greatly limit additional TDS from new facilities. TDS cause toxicity to fresh water species through increases in salinity and changes in the ionic toxicity of individual ions and results in a shift in biotic communities. Studies show that other watersheds in Pennsylvania (eg the Monongahela River) are already being adversely impacted by TDS discharges by the gas drilling operations.

Additionally, watershed analyses conducted by the PA DEP indicate that the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and the Moshannon River Watersheds are severely limited in their capacity to assimilate new loads of TDS and sulfates, primarily due to acid mine drainage from long-abandoned coal mines—a legacy of Pennsylvania's last energy rush. Increased TDS and sulfate loading would reverse years of hard-won progress by Pa DEP in improving water quality in these watersheds.

I live in Potter County, where the Susquehanna and Allegheny watersheds diverge. Increased drilling in the Marcellus Shale is a great concern in our area. But it's obvious that our concerns for the local environment are also important for the southern areas of the state. Please act responsibly by protecting our vital water resources.

Sincerely,

  
Mary Anne Heston