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Defending the Delaware River Watershed from Fracking
Organizations and the Public Stand Up for the Frack Ban at DRBC meeting

Washington Crossing, PA: Standing together to defend the Delaware River Watershed from fracking, organizations and members of the public gathered to express support for the permanent frack ban that was instituted by the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) in 2021, following a 2010 moratorium.

The Coalition held a press conference on the banks of the Delaware River where George Washington and his army crossed to New Jersey to win independence from royal oppression and exploitation. Freedom from the oppressive and devastating impacts of fracking was expressed in the banner they held: “Delaware River, Frack Free Forever!” The DRBC held their business meeting inside the Visitors Center at noon. Some people went into the DRBC meeting after the press conference to participate in their public comment session.

Fracking interests have been trying to overturn the ban on fracking for more than a year through federal legislation, lobbying, and a [lawsuit in New York](#). In July U.S. Representative Scott Perry (R-PA 10th Congressional District) introduced an [Amendment](#) to the [Water Resources Development Act](#) (WRDA, H.R. 9497) aimed at overturning the ban on fracking in the Delaware River Watershed. A tidal wave of public pushback and action by legislators who support the ban led to the amendment dying in committee. Representative Perry also has introduced legislation to take away the power of DRBC and the other Commissions to ban fracking—the [“Drill Now Act”](#).

Community support for the campaign to defend the frack ban was expressed by people from the region who attended the press conference. Some of the members of the public and Coalition representatives went inside to the DRBC’s meeting after the press conference to speak to the DRBC Commissioners during the public comment session.

“Catskill Mountainkeeper is proud to stand with our allies and support the Delaware River Basin Commission in keeping the Delaware River frack free forever!” **said Catskill Mountainkeeper’s Program Manager, Taylor Jaffe.** “Our communities rely on this watershed as a source of clean drinking water, a destination for recreation and relaxation, and for its ecological and economic benefits. Protecting our shared waters

from the harms and pollutants of fracking will always be essential to supporting healthy, vibrant towns and communities.”

"China is the world's largest greenhouse gas emitter, but the U.S. may not be far behind according to projections from the International Energy Agency that say spending '...will outstrip that of China for the first time in decades.' We here in the Delaware River Watershed refuse to be part of that fossil gas buildout and we urge all the Watershed states to stop the devastating development of more fossil fuels," **said Karen Feridun, Founder of Berks Gas Truth.**

“The Delaware River Basin Commissioners have clear reasons to defend and enforce the Commission's ban on fracking. In Pennsylvania and New York in particular, defending the ban is also an opportunity to protect the constitutional environmental rights of the people, as outlined in the PA and NY Green Amendments,” **said Shaelyn Parker, Advocate & Educator at Green Amendments For The Generations.** “Green Amendments For The Generations stands beside the DRBC as they protect our right to clean, safe, healthy environments from the ruthless attacks by profit-first industry and politicians.”

B. Arrindell, Director of Damascus Citizens for Sustainability (DCS) said, “To DCS, opposing fracking has always been a matter of protecting public health, both in the present as drilling, pipelines etc. pump poisons into the air and water near these activities but also looking into the future since, for example, once an aquifer is contaminated there is no going back and we are witnessing the health and climate impacts of carbon loading our air. The Delaware River Basin Ban is a vital economic and health protection.”

“More than 15 years into the fracking boom, we have overwhelming evidence on the danger fracking poses to our drinking water supplies and environment. This science is what led the DRBC to declare a temporary and then a permanent moratorium on fracking in the watershed more than 5 years ago. Even in the face of Congressional attempts to overturn this decision, the public—and the science—are clear as the waters of the upper Delaware: don't frack our watershed. We urge the DRBC to stay the course and all political leaders across the watershed to support drinking water by upholding the moratorium,” **said Doug O'Malley, Director of Environment New Jersey.**

“We all fought back last month when fracking interests tried to pass federal legislation to overturn the ban on fracking in the Delaware River Watershed. We prevailed and the ban is still in place but efforts to undo that protection are still underway and we are here today to stand with the DRBC to defend the ban, to call for an end to all fracking everywhere and make it clear to all those who attack the ban: We will never tolerate fracking in our watershed, and pledge to ensure our watershed is Frack Free Forever,” **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

"Overturning the ban on fracking in the Delaware River watershed would put at risk the 15 million people who depend on its drinking water, as well as deepening our global climate crisis," **said Matt Smith, NJ State Director for Food & Water Watch.** "Our communities should not be sacrificed for the greedy fossil fuel industry and we stand by the DRBC in maintaining a complete ban on fracking."

More Attempts to overturn the frack ban:

U.S. Representative Rob Bresnahan (R-PA 8th District), who pulled together Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Lee Zeldin and [fracking proponents](#) at a closed-door [meeting in March 2025](#), criticized the DRBC's ban on fracking, calling for "unleashing energy dominance". He also has introduced the [Mid-Atlantic River Basin Commissions Review Act](#), which is a witch hunt to undermine DRBC and the other Commissions' authority by discrediting them. The bill has passed the House and now goes to the Senate.

People Fight Back to Resist Fracking:

[People have pledged](#) to defend the river in an organized resistance to combat these attempts. Despite these attacks, the public remains vigilant as the frack ban lives on.

Background:

The Delaware River Basin Commission is an interstate commission formed in 1961 by a Supreme Court Decree, and Congressional and state legislation, forming a Compact that governs water resource management in the Delaware River Watershed. The voting Commissioners are the Governors of the 4 watershed states—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware—and the federal government, represented by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The agency is dedicated to a watershed-based approach to planning and management to protect the shared waters of the river and its watershed, which is why it adopted a fracking ban. DRBC instituted a fracking moratorium in 2010 when drillers first tried to drill in the Watershed. The agency researched and deliberated for another 11 years culminating in the adoption of a prohibition on high-volume hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking", throughout the Delaware River Watershed in 2021. The DRBC held its "Our Founding Waters" Celebration the morning of September 2 at the state park.

The Delaware River Frack Ban Climate Action Coalition is made up of organizations that have worked to defend the Delaware River from fracking and advocate for action by the DRBC to address the climate crisis and its ongoing/growing damage in the Watershed, many active for at least the past 16 years. The groups include (alphabetical order): Berks Gas Truth, Catskill Mountainkeeper, Damascus Citizens for Sustainability,

Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Environment New Jersey, Food and Water Watch,
Green Amendments for the Generations, and League of Women Voters of Delaware.

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