

Press Release

from the
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DEP ROLLBACK OF CLEAN WATER PROTECTION FROM MARCELLUS SHALE DRILLING CALLED ILLEGAL AND IRRESPONSIBLE

(HARRISBURG, PA) -- Members of the Pennsylvania Campaign for Clean Water, a coalition of organizations dedicated to protecting Pennsylvania's water resources, issued the following statements today after DEP recently stripped County Conservation Districts of their duties to review erosion, sediment, and stormwater control plans for natural gas well drilling sites in the Marcellus Shale formation. DEP additionally instituted an expedited stormwater permitting process that does not allow for public participation or meaningful agency review of permit applications.

36 member organizations of the Campaign for Clean Water co-signed a letter sent today to DEP Acting Secretary John Hanger condemning DEP's actions.

"DEP's actions are complete give-aways to the oil and gas industry. DEP acted without any public notice or opportunity to comment, and in so doing have increased the likelihood of more sediment pollution to Pennsylvania's rivers and streams. In taking these actions, DEP has ignored its own core values of environmental protection and public transparency."

Maya van Rossum, The Delaware Riverkeeper

"At a time when DEP is admittedly understaffed to deal with the rush of Marcellus Shale drilling in Pennsylvania, it makes no sense whatsoever to strip the Conservation Districts of their duties and give them to DEP staff that lack their level of experience in erosion and sediment control. Many local communities have already been heavily impacted by drilling. The public is looking for more oversight, not less."

Myron Arnowitt, Pennsylvania State Director, Clean Water Action

"Pennsylvania and federal law requires well drilling sites to adequately control stormwater and prevent erosion and sediment pollution to our rivers and streams. We believe a fast-track permitting scheme that eliminates technical review of erosion, sediment, and stormwater plans is illegal under federal and state environmental laws."

Matt Royer, Staff Attorney, Pennsylvania Office, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

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