

Some Talking Points on DRBC Public Comment/Public Hearings on Draft Frack Regulations and Proposed Ban- Proposed New 18 CFR Part 440

These talking points are a subset of the larger list of talking points we are sharing about the draft regulations and the proposed frack ban; these are only focusing on the public process that DRBC has set. For more info., see the letter submitted to DRBC for an expansion of the public input process that is still available for organizations to sign on to: <http://bit.ly/2BITq1o>

Here is the DRBC webpage link – find details under Public Hearing and Comment information: http://www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/proposed/notice_hydraulic-fracturing.html

Regarding the DRBC's public participation process into the draft regulations:

- The public comment period is too short; 90 days is wholly inadequate, especially considering that holidays in the midst of this period. Should be at least 180 days.
- Public Hearings at only 2 locations (with 2 sessions on the same day at each) is inadequate. Should be at least one public hearing in each Basin state - Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania - and one in New York City, where up to 9 million people rely on the Delaware's water. Each state should have one in each major geographic region since distances are too great for a person to travel in one day - Pennsylvania and New Jersey: Upper, central and lower region; New York State: Catskills and Port Jervis area, in addition to the one in New York City. Delaware, upstate and downstate.
- The Public Hearings are being held in difficult to reach locations, especially considering the winter travel conditions and the lack of accessibility to public transportation. The Wayne County location is hours from most of the population. The Philadelphia location is an Airport Hotel, not even close to downtown and City neighborhoods.
- To attend or speak at a Public Hearing requires registering on line by December 31, then waiting to be contacted by DRBC with a speaking slot. The public cannot even attend the Hearings to listen without registering on line by December 31. The cut-off of December 31 for Hearings to be held January 23 and 25 makes no sense and severely limits the number of testifiers since many people may not learn of the Hearings until after the holidays and closer to the Hearing dates. The on-line registration form and the cut-off date are impediments for the public, putting up roadblocks rather than encouraging participation.
- The electronic comment process is extremely limited, requiring computer access and use of a restrictive on-line platform. Should be supplemented with written comments by email, fax, postal mail service and hand delivery to allow for accessible and ready public submission of written comment that is just and equitable for all who may want to take part.