

**Dear Representative,**

On behalf of the more than 24,000 members of the Sierra Club in Pennsylvania, I am writing to you about the most important issue facing Pennsylvania now.

The Marcellus drilling boom has swept across Pennsylvania before our government became aware of it. Permits were issued and drilling expedited before protections were in place to determine how much water could be withdrawn from our streams, how to safely drill for gas, how to dispose of wastewater and dispose of the solid waste. The state was not prepared for the onslaught. As a result, thousands of permits were issued before the problems you read about in the newspapers were revealed. These problems include a gas well explosion in Clearfield County, which led DEP to impose requirements on operation of blow out preventers; the contamination of drinking water wells in Dimock and in other counties due to poor casing and cementing of the wells; the accident at a gas well near Cheswick which killed two workers; the spills that ruined a stream in Greene County; the spills from overflowing lagoons; the lack of wastewater infrastructure to treat Marcellus wastewater; the Pennsylvania State Police finding that 40% of trucks serving the Marcellus industry had safety violations; and the destruction of rural roads by heavy trucks. Just the day before Governor Corbett took office, another gas well blew out in a state forest.

**The state should not rush headfirst into an industrial firestorm before rigorous safety and environmental pollution standards are in place. If we can't protect our communities and natural resources, then we should not drill for natural gas.**

We ask you to:

1. Enact a moratorium on drilling until state government adopts laws and regulations to make Marcellus gas well drilling safe and environmentally sound.
2. Reform the Oil and Gas Act to require mandatory inspections, require disclosure of fracking chemicals, to extend the presumption of pollution, to require adequate bonds, and to allow local government to protect their communities.
3. Continue the moratorium on new gas leases on public lands in Pennsylvania until a full cumulative analysis can be conducted on the impacts of leasing on public lands.
4. Enact legislation to protect surface owners' rights, including protecting water supplies, regulating pipelines, and protecting unwilling landowners from "forced pooling."
5. Adopt a drilling tax comparable to other states to provide for funding for communities impacted by gas drilling and for environmental conservation.

**Our communities, citizens, and infrastructure are stressed by the wave of drilling activity. We need comprehensive regulation and government oversight to make drilling safe.**

Sincerely,

Jeff Schmidt, Director

Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter