

HYDROFRACKING

Downtown Independent Democrats

*** HYDRAULIC FRACTURING FOR NATURAL GAS IN NY STATE THREATENS
TO POISON OUR DRINKING WATER AND
TO CREATE THE NEXT ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND FINANCIAL CRISIS**

The Downtown Independent Democrats demand:

1. Prohibit hydraulic fracturing for gas in and around the NYC Watershed area; and
2. Declare a moratorium in all other areas of New York State; and
3. Withdraw the draft NYS Department of Conservation Report (SGEIS) and address its inadequacies.

It was the Wild West with mortgages and we had an economic collapse.

With the BP Gulf Oil Spill, we have an environmental, financial and health crisis.

Regulations and oversight did not keep up with the financial industry or the drilling industry. We are at the same crossroads with hydraulic fracturing techniques – where unknown chemicals are mixed with water and are injected under high pressure into rocks to create fractures to recover oil or gas not recoverable by other techniques. At risk is the irreversible contamination of our water supply, air quality, and property damage.

The Marcellus Shale gas reserves are large and it is tempting to close budget deficits by allowing hydraulic fracturing. The economy is in dire straits, people need jobs and gas reserves are in the ground. To partially close a short-term budget gap with a long-term water crisis is no solution.

The New York State Department of Conservation (DEC) issued a draft report (SGEIS[i]) that more and more experts are finding is terribly flawed - from weak regulatory oversight of the drilling and transporting of natural gas, to the integrity of well casings, to the handling of the hydraulic slurry and backflow of water contaminated with chemicals and radiation, to the handling of leaks and spills, to land reclamation, to the emphasis on self-regulations.

The draft should be withdrawn and no final report issued until all the inadequacies are addressed and a comprehensive plan is developed to protect NYC's watershed and NYS' water from hydraulic fracturing.

We cannot rely on nor do we have confidence in the energy and other companies who purport the safety of hydraulic fracturing techniques, including the disposal and transportation of large amounts of toxic waste waters.

Nor do we have confidence in our government agencies on the regulation and oversight of these companies.

The State of New York, as landowner, must not seek to close its budget gap by leasing mineral rights connected with our public lands while at the same time that it is charged with protecting the environment for all New Yorkers. Nor should hydraulic fracturing on nearby private land be allowed under public lands.

Follow the money – increases in the real estate and payroll tax rolls are a short-term panacea for a potential long-term crisis. We have been given stern warning signs from recent crises. We are responsible for the stewardship of our environment now, and for the generations after us.

There are not adequate treatment facilities in place for the waste water. It is not acceptable that these toxic waters be held in storage tanks - like storage of nuclear fuel, to be dealt with another day - or to be trucked out of state to make it someone else's problem.

We call on NYS Governor Paterson, DEC Commissioner Grannis and Region 2 Administrator Enck and all our elected officials (Senator Gillibrand, Congressman Nadler, State Senator Silver, State Assembly Member Glick, State Senator Squadron, and the NYC Council) to ban hydraulic fracturing in and around the New York City Watershed, enact a moratorium in New York State, withdraw the Department of Conservation report and address its inadequacies, and – above all – protect our water, wildlife, forests, farms, our health and economy.

[i] Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement

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The club's district covers one of the largest land areas of any club in Manhattan. Neighborhoods represented by the club include Battery Park City, the Financial District, TriBeCa, Hudson Square, SoHo, NoHo, the South Village, the Washington Square area, Washington Square Village, Silver Towers, Village View, and parts of the Lower East Side and the East Village, as well as Governors Island and Ground Zero.

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