

New York City Council Committee on Environmental Protection Meeting Regarding Hydraulic Fracturing and New York City Drinking Water Infrastructure Sept. 22, 2011

The following is a summary of the public comments during 3 ¼ hrs. to 5 to 6 hrs. (the room could not accommodate all registered to speak and attend.) Included are comments on the **Revised Draft SGEIS (Supplemental Government Environmental Impact Study) on the Oil, Gas and Solution Mining Regulatory Program (September 2011)**

1. Process is rushed, illogical and not designed for consideration of comments to be reflected in final SGEIS on Permitting for Hydraulic Fracturing, regulations and permitting. The idea that an environmental impact statement is not completed before regulations are written and passed by the legislation doesn't make sense and is perhaps illegal. More importantly, the timetable is not designed to protect the environment of NYS and the health of its people. The proper sequential timetable would be:
 - a. SGEIS on high volume hydraulic fracturing (HVHF) completed with all comments addressed and informing the final version.
 - b. Regulations on HVHF informed by the SGEIS passed.
 - c. Permitting after regulations passed.
2. 3 months public review of 1500+ pages of dSGEIS is inadequate and rushed for HVHF which is expected to be in operation for 3 to 5 decades in the State. Simultaneous review of regulations is unreasonable.
3. Draft SGEIS is not based on rigorous research and science, i.e., a broad based, independent, transparent scientific study of HVHF.
4. Infrastructure (tunnels and aqueducts) is aging, fragile and impaired. Presently infrastructure is leaking about 35 million gallons of water a day. Tunnels are designed to keep water in not to receive pressure from the outside, such as from fracking. The setbacks from infrastructure recommended by Hazen and Sawyer in their 1 year study for NYC in 2009 was seven miles. Al Appleton recommended ten miles to account for length of horizontal well bore. 1,000 feet can hardly be considered adequate.
5. No subsurface upward migration from horizontal fracking was addressed in Draft SGEIS. It is known that naturally occurring methane moves up; why wouldn't produced water from HF? Methane does explode. What if this happened near the Delaware Aqueduct? NYC would lose ½ of its water in 24 hrs. (Al Appleton.)
6. Horizontal fracking could intersect with 75,000 abandoned wells in NY State and migrate up. Dr. Ingraffea of Cornell speaks of the communication of wells whereby drilling stimulates 10,000 psi to another well and explodes out of it. There is a need for identification of sites of all abandoned wells and seismic exploration in proposed drilling areas to avoid explosions.
7. Fracking fluid migrates underground. Not addressed in GEIS. Know Benzene travelled 4,000 ft. to Garfield Creek. Migration needs to be studied by geologists and what they know now and after study should be part of the GEIS.
8. 4,000 buffer of NYC and Syracuse watersheds is inadequate and not permanent in dSGEIS. The horizontal well bore is known to go three miles underground in shale. This would mean fracking

could occur in and under the watershed. Duly noted: the inherent injustice of the buffer for the rest of the state's watersheds, but NYC is pleased with the concept of a buffer for its watershed.

9. Setbacks inadequate for NYC and upstate water supplies; we don't have the scientific research to substantiate safe distances. (Dusty Horwitt, EWG)
10. Disposal of treated wastewater from fracking not reused is not addressed in the dSGEIS. Since Federal Law does not designate fracking waste as hazardous, our State needs to treat it as such. Where will it go – into our water, drilled back into the ground, sent out of state, privately treated in state and then where? We must know where it is going before permitting commences and who has authority to regulate, i.e., discharges from private filtration. As all toxic chemicals and radioactivity cannot be filtered out, should treated or untreated produced fracking liquid ever be allowed into our water sources?
11. Cementing and casing problems remain.
12. Air Quality. Open pits with evaporation sprayers would allow Volatile Organic Compounds to go up into our rain clouds and rain on our watersheds; these compounds cannot be filtered out. In addition, flooding causing overspill of evaporation pits is a danger to our water sources. Open pits should not be allowed.
13. The regional food shed for Southern Tier needs to be protected. Will our food supply for the Southern tier be restricted and perhaps compromised by HVHF.
14. Adequate staff to enforce final GEIS not addressed. We now have 14 inspectors. One for every 10 wells recommended....adding 450 people to 200 on staff now. Recommend Licensing Fee annually to pay for enforcement.
15. Severance Tax would be a good idea to support NYS economy.
16. The following organizations recommended a BAN on fracking: Catskill Mountainkeeper, Food and Water Watch and Gray Panthers.

9/7/2011 - DEC released the [Revised Draft SGEIS](#) and supporting socioeconomic study. The public comment period was opened and will conclude on December 12, 2011. The comments should focus on the changes in the 2011 revised draft SGEIS. It is not necessary to repeat comments submitted in 2009. Please be clear and specific when providing comments. Use facts, examples and scientific or engineering principles as appropriate. If possible, reference specific page numbers of the document.

- Electronic submission using a [web-based comment form](#) available on DEC's website (preferred method); or
- Paper submission mailed or delivered to: Attn: dSGEIS Comments, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-6510. Please include the name, address, and affiliation (if any) of the commenter. Paper submissions also will be accepted at the public hearings