



**TOMPKINS COUNTY  
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

320 Tioga Street, Ithaca, NY 14850  
Phone: (607) 274-5434 Fax: (607) 274-5430  
Email: [tccog@tom-pkins-co.org](mailto:tccog@tom-pkins-co.org)

*Don Barber, Herb Engman, Co-Chairs*

*Richard Driscoll, Vice-Chair*

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## **Council of Governments Releases Study of Potential Hydrofracking Impact**

The Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG) has released a study of the potential impact of hydrofracking on the region: “Tompkins County Community Impact Assessment – High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing (HVHF)”.

The study, which provides municipal officials, community members, and business leaders an assessment of how high volume hydraulic fracturing of the Marcellus Shale might impact Tompkins County, was prepared by GREENPLAN, Inc. under contract with TCCOG, and incorporates work done by TCCOG’S Gas Drilling Task Force and the Tompkins County Planning Department.

Art Pearce, who chaired the Impact Assessment Steering Committee, says the study provides local leaders with a much needed resource. “Discussion on this topic has become so polarized that it is hard to find a reasoned summary of the pros and cons of HVHF,” Pearce states. “We believe this report, and the source documents cited, provide a fair assessment of HVHF’s potential impact on the community. The findings indicate that there would be some benefits to the region from HVHF, but they are more than offset by the expected negative impacts on the economy, community character, and environment.”

The Report finds that “the heavy industrial characteristics of gas drilling and production are incompatible with the County Comprehensive Plan and the comprehensive plans and zoning regulations of the four municipalities studied” (the Towns of Danby, Dryden , Ithaca, and Ulysses).

The Impact Assessment contains a checklist of recommends questions for a community to consider when assessing HVHF and discusses the array of municipal actions that can be considered—including zoning regulations, site plan regulations, Critical Environmental Areas, stormwater management, and road use regulations. Three categories of HVHF impacts are examined in the report: economic, community, and environmental.

The 130-page report includes over 200 hyperlinks to studies and reports that were used in development of the report. The full report, and a 14-page Executive Summary are available for viewing and download at the TCCOG website: <http://www.tompkins-co.org/TCCOG/>.

The study was funded by TCCOG, Tompkins County Area Development, and the Park Foundation.

For further information, contact Art Pearce : 607-279-9377 or [artpearce@hotmail.com](mailto:artpearce@hotmail.com).