

Public Comment Re: NY DEC Draft SGEIS on the Oil, Gas and Solution Mining  
Regulatory Program (September 2009)

I'm writing as a concerned citizen of Tompkins County. Whether or not my voice carries any weight compared to the corporate profits of the "persons" who have pushed to be allowed to carry on this dangerous process (hydraulic fracturing of the Marcellus Shale) is doubtful, which is a shame and a commentary on the level of corruption evident in the approval process thus far.

This extractive process, using dangerous chemicals and water that would be better used for drinking and agriculture, puts at risk the health of everyone here by contaminating our drinking water with chemicals known to cause nerve damage and cancer. Even if none of the wells experienced a leak (hardly likely), the fluid would so tax our water treatment plants that contamination would be unavoidable. It also threatens to disrupt the relatively healthy existing local economy, which is based on organic dairy farms, vineyards, and the many small farms that feed us, as well as the tourism attracted to the bucolic surroundings and good, healthful cuisine in our many locavore restaurants. Our roads will also be over taxed by heavy trucks hauling hazardous chemicals. It is all around a very bad idea that will benefit only the few who will profit. Everyone else will suffer. It is a glaring example of the corruption of our society by corporations that put their profits above the welfare of human beings. New York State is collaborating with these corporations instead of protecting its human citizens. If our government refuses to protect its citizens, it should not be surprised if some of them use a diversity of tactics to frustrate the fossil-fuel industry's ability to operate here. I would hate to see anyone harmed by such tactics, but I would also hate to see children suffer cancer because our government failed to protect them from gas drilling and its affects on human health.

We moved to New York from Shreveport, Louisiana, where we witnessed a disturbingly high cancer rate, with victims among our friends. We discovered afterward that the area we left had been contaminated by this same process decades before. We chose this area because we wanted our children to be able to grow their bodies in a relatively healthful environment. I implore the Department of Environmental Conservation to rethink its collaboration with the fossil fuel industry and stand instead with the citizens of Tompkins County.

Sincerely,  
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