

## Coalitions Launch Campaign to Educate and Unite PA Communities Impacted by Pipeline

October 13, 2015

**Lehigh Valley, Pa.**-In a campaign called *PA Communities United*, Food and Water Watch (F&WW) and members of Concerned Citizens Against the Pipeline (CCAP) along with a coalition of individuals and communities along the pipeline route are organizing free public forums discussing local impacts of the pipeline, landowner rights and the importance of intervening as PennEast enters new phase of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission application process.

PennEast has formally submitted their application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), providing citizens only 20 days from October 8<sup>th</sup> to sign on as interveners. People will be on site to help landowners and concerned citizens declare online **under the new docket number CP15 – 558-000**.

"We have quickly organized these meetings in an effort to help landowners and affected residents get important information in time to intervene before the deadline of October 29th" said Ann Marshall, CCAP, "The FERC docket is now being flooded by community members who are determined to stop the pipeline; they are concerned for their properties, their water, and their safety. The intervening motions are exposing all the injustices of this pipeline and we are seeing the public trust shift against PennEast and UGI their managing partner. People are not taking the lies anymore, this is not needed, this is not good for our community and we have a right to say no and protect our beautiful communities that we have worked hard to protect."

Landowners and concerned citizens are invited to meet on October 15 at 7:00 p.m. at the Klecknersville Rangers Vol. Fire Co. located at 2718 Mountain View Drive in Bath, PA.

The second forum will be held at the Leithsville Banquet Hall on October 19 at 7:00 p.m. located at 1995 Leithsville Rd, Hellertown, PA 18055

Speakers will touch on a range of topics including cumulative impacts and environmental risks, including environmental degradation, human health and safety, intrusion on property rights, and disturbance of natural areas such as the Delaware River and the Bethlehem Authority Watershed.

"New Jersey has seen a great deal of success in uniting communities along the pipeline route and we would like to implement similar strategies to protect landowner rights, their preserved farmlands and unique environmental features that have been very effective," said Tara Zrinski, local coordinator for LV F&WW, "NJ has generated 70% opposition through denying PennEast permission to survey and, because of it, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has refused to issue permits to PennEast. We need PA landowners to unite and put pressure on the PA DEP to deny permits and Land Preservation Groups to speak out so we can protect PA landowner rights, preserved land and our water."

Speaking at the Moore Township forum, Mike Spille, of West Amwell CCAP and founder of [www.costofthepipeline.com](http://www.costofthepipeline.com), a website dedicated to public education about the impacts of

pipeline construction, will discuss his experience as a landowner impacted by the pipeline route. He will share why he refused to allow PennEast to survey his property and how this have been effective strategy in NJ to create solidarity along the pipeline route, and how to file interventions. Also speaking, Anita Brosky, Moore Township Resident and impacted landowner, will share information about the Intervening process and why it is important for Moore Township residents to join the opposition.

"The PennEast Pipeline project would impact our communities in a way that threatens to degrade our quality of life and suffer irreparable harm to our landscapes, our watersheds, and the backyards of many of our friends and neighbors. Communities along the length of this project have voiced resounding opposition to this project. These informational meetings are intended to let area residents know that we are here to help residents in Pennsylvania better understand the potential impact of this unnecessary gas infrastructure buildout," Arianne Elinich, Bucks County CCAP.

Speakers for the Lower Saucon Township forum will include local residents and impacted landowners, who will discuss the unique features to which the Lower Saucon community is particularly vulnerable given its location along the pipeline route and with the 2 mile, 24" inch diameter extension. From New Jersey, Susan Dodd Meechum will discuss the success New Jersey has had and how that can be replicated by local communities in PA.

"PennEast does not want us to become informed of their true agenda at all costs. The opposition is strong and together we will protect our lands from this corporate greed," said Tina Venini, Durham CCAP, "We have learned from organizations guiding us that have stopped pipelines in the past, the way we stop this is through community solidarity of opposition. Together we can organize and spread the informational resources needed to support our efforts and protect our rights as landowners."

The public forums will also help clarify any misconceptions that PennEast's federal application signals the end of landowner negotiation. In fact, FERC will evaluate PennEast's federal application over the next 12 -18 months, after which time FERC may either accept or reject the application or, PennEast may withdraw their application. In the meantime, landowners need to know that PennEast has no additional rights, cannot survey without landowner permission and has no authority to pressure landowners to sign leases with eminent domain.

## **Background**

PennEast represents a partnership of AGL Resources, NJR Pipeline Company, PSE&G, South Jersey Industries, Spectra, and UGI Energy Services. In October, 2014, PennEast filed their pre-application with FERC for a 108 mile, 36 inch diameter pipeline from Luzerne County, PA to Mercer County, NJ. The billion dollar project has gone through 8 projected routes before settling on the 114 mile route in July, 2015. The pipeline will pump 1 billion cubic feet of natural gas at approximately 1500 psi of pressure under highways, rivers and near protected watersheds.

Over 47 municipalities, including both Moore Township and Lower Saucon Township have passed resolutions opposing the PennEast Pipeline, citing major concerns over the project even though they did not want to go 'on the record' for opposing the project for fear of lawsuits.

Moore Township is a rural community in Pennsylvania with a total area of 37.5 square miles, the land of which drains into the Delaware River via the Monocacy and Hokendauqua creeks, both of which are tributaries to the Lehigh River. The county has a number of registered preserved farmlands, included the newly appointed 39 acre Sunny Slope Farm. According to the Northampton County's Farmland Preservation website, 1,728 acres of the 13,869 preserved acres countywide are in Moore Township.

Lower Saucon Township is a semi-rural community, 24.1 square miles in South Northampton County, Pennsylvania. The township is in the Delaware watershed and borders the Lehigh River to the north, which drains Lower Saucon except for the Leithsville area in the extreme south, which is drained by Cooks Creek east into the Delaware River.

The Lehigh Valley is no stranger to pipelines and their impacts. A 2011 pipeline explosion in Allentown killed five, and destroyed several homes and properties.

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