

Gas and You: The Political Lay of the Land

Federal Lay of the Land

Erika Staaf,

PennEnvironment

PA Progressive Summit

January 22, 2011, Pittsburgh, PA



Agenda

- * **PennEnvironment**
- * **Gas drilling in the U.S.**
- * **Aspects of gas drilling**
- * **Federal Laws and Exemptions**
- * **Current federal legislation**
- * **Gas drilling and the EPA**

PennEnvironment



Who We Are:

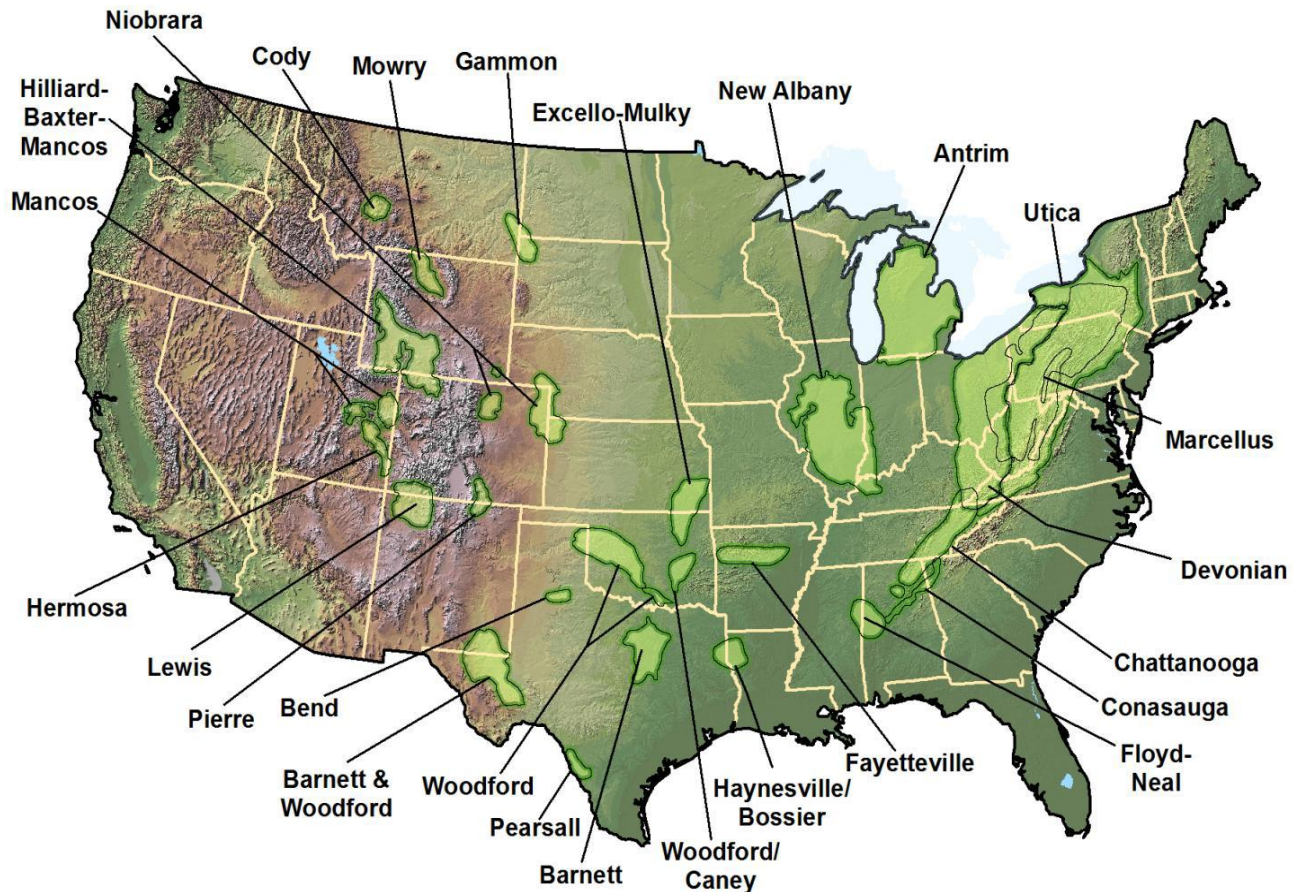
- * **Statewide, citizen-based organization**
 - * **50,000 members and activists statewide**
- * **Work to protect Pennsylvania's air, water and open space**
- * **Work at the state, local and federal level**

The Marcellus Shale

- * Geologic formation that contains pockets of natural gas and runs through West Virginia, Maryland, Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania.
- * Roughly 60 percent within Pennsylvania's borders



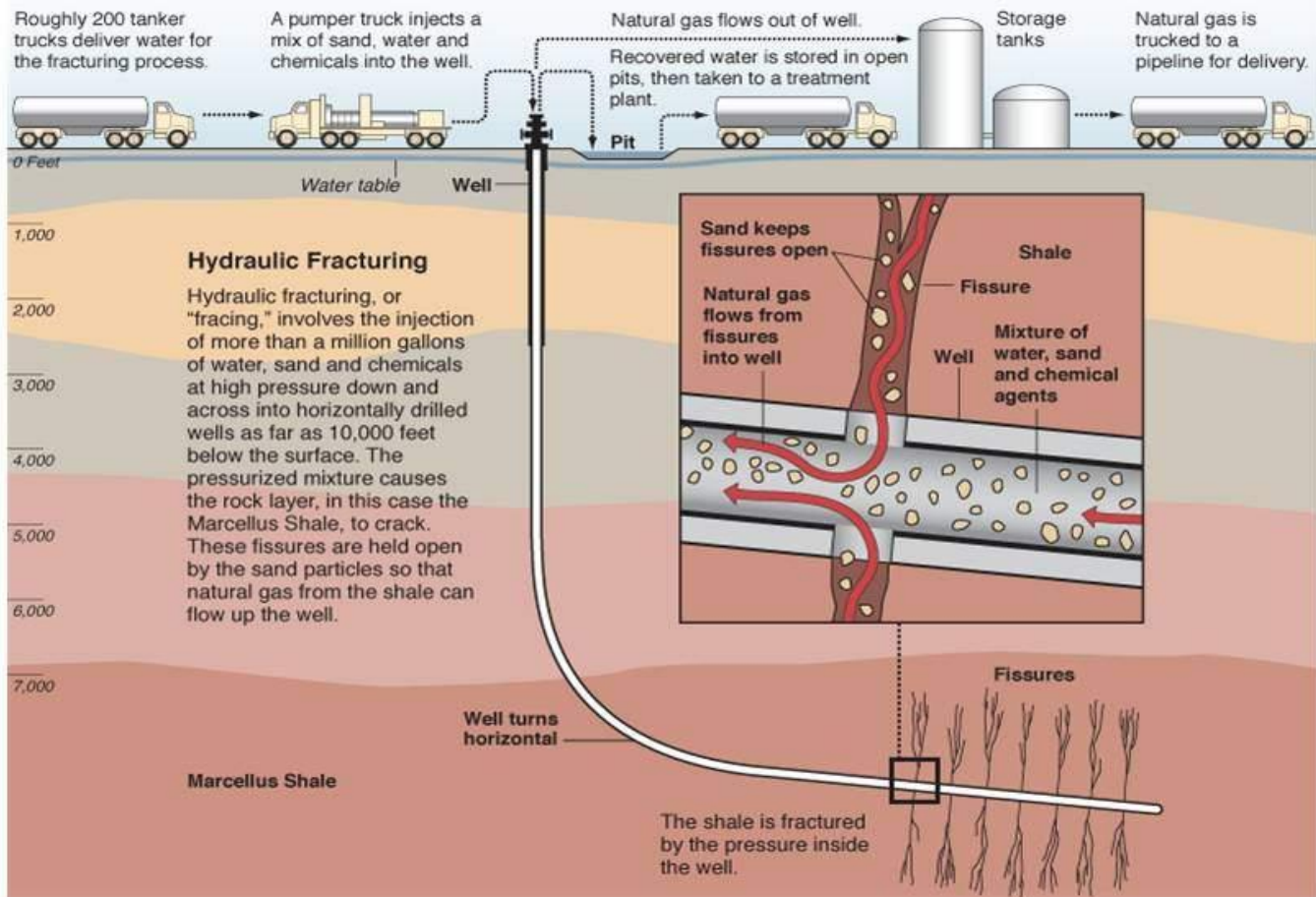
Gas Drilling in the U.S.





Garfield County, CO

The Drilling Process



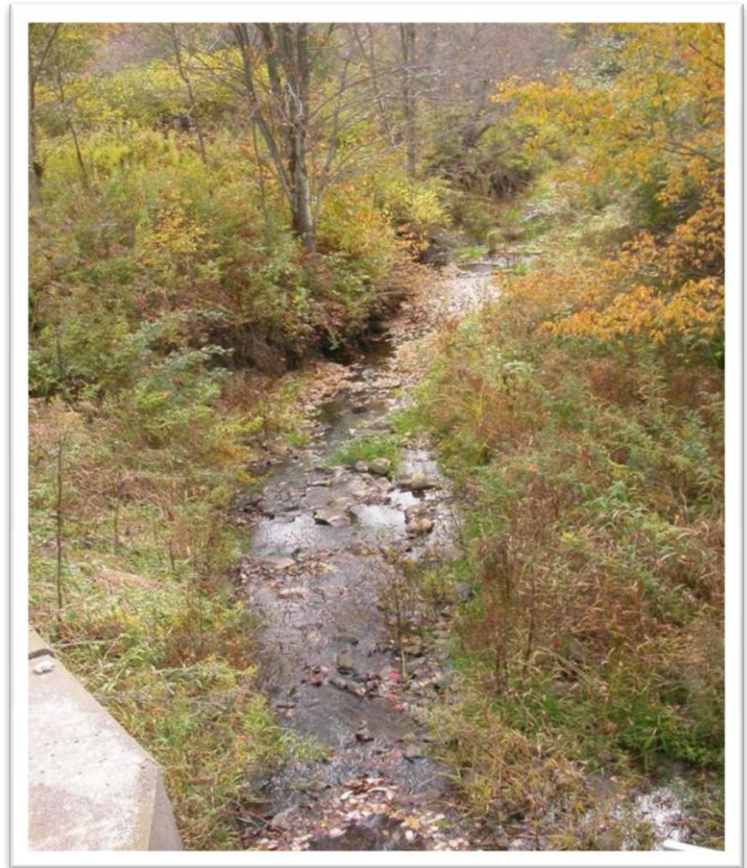
Wastewater Impoundment Tioga State Forest



Photo credit : www.PaForestCoalition.org

Federal Laws and Exemptions

- * **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (1976)**
- * **Clean Water Act (1977)**
- * **Clean Air Act (1970)**
- * **Safe Drinking Water Act (1974)**
- * **National Environmental Policy Act (1970)**



Air Pollution



Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals (FRAC) Act

- * **Would repeal an exemption in the Safe Drinking Water Act for hydraulic fracturing**
- * **Require public disclosure of chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing**
- * **2009-2010 Session: Senator Bob Casey (PA); Companion bill in House by Diana DeGette (CO), Maurice Hinchey (NY) and Jared Polis (CO)**

FRAC Act 2011

46 Co-sponsors

* Rep. Maurice D. Hinchey NY
Rep. Diana DeGette CO
Rep. Jared Polis CO
Rep. Gary Ackerman NY
Rep. Barbara Lee CA
Rep. Howard L. Berman CA
Rep. Earl Blumenauer OR
Rep. Lois Capps CA
Rep. William Lacy Clay MO
Rep. Steve Cohen TN
Rep. Gerald Connolly VA

Rep. Keith Ellison MN
Rep. Eliot L. Engel NY
Rep. Sam Farr CA
Rep. Barney Frank MA
Rep. Raul Grijalva AZ
Rep. Mazie Hirono HI
Rep. Rush D. Holt NJ
Rep. Michael M. Honda CA
Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich OH
Rep. James R. Langevin RI
Rep. Zoe Lofgren CA
Rep. Nita M. Lowey NY
Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney NY

Rep. Betty McCollum MN
Rep. Mike Thompson CA
Rep. James P. Moran VA
Rep. Jerrold Nadler NY
Rep. John W. Olver MA
Rep. William L. Owens NY
Rep. John P. Sarbanes MD
Rep. Janice D. Schakowsky IL
Rep. Jose Serrano NY
Rep. Jackie Speier CA
Rep. Fortney Pete

Stark CA
Rep. Paul Tonko NY
Rep. Chris Van Hollen MD
Rep. Lynn C. Woolsey CA
Rep. Mike Quigley IL
Rep. Chellie Pingree ME
Rep. Jay Inslee WA
Rep. Bob Filner CA
Rep. Dale E. Kildee MI
Rep. Donna F. Edwards MD
Rep. Steven R. Rothman NJ
Rep. Adam Smith WA

Gas Drilling and the EPA

- * In 2004, EPA released a study *Evaluation of Impacts to Underground Sources of Drinking Water by Hydraulic Fracturing of Coalbed Methane Reservoirs*.
- * Main finding of this study stated: “the injection of hydraulic fracturing fluids into CBM wells poses little to no threat to Underground Sources of Drinking Water.”
- * Energy Policy Act of 2005 codified this finding.
- * Not consistent with the personal accounts of those living in gas patches around the country.

The Whistleblower

- * EPA criticized by internal staff, including former EPA employee Wes Wilson.
- * All critics of the study have challenged EPA's conclusions while insisting that additional studies be conducted.



Weston Wilson, EPA



Canonsburg, PA

- ❖ EPA initiating a new comprehensive study with phase I expected to be completed by 2012.
- ❖ Four public meetings across US: Fort Worth TX, Denver, CO, Canonsburg, PA, and Binghamton, NY
- ❖ Canonsburg meeting drew more than 1,000 people
- ❖ Main message: look beyond hydraulic fracturing, groundwater contamination



**Frack Fluid Spill at Cabot
Gas Well, Dimock, PA, 9/09**

2010 EPA Panel Members

- * **Dzombak, David A. Chair Carnegie Mellon University**
- * Alexeeff, George California Environmental Protection Agency
- * Ballestero, Tom University of New Hampshire
- * Benjamin, Mark University of Washington
- * **Boufadel, Michel Temple University,**
- * **Boyer, Elizabeth Pennsylvania State University**
- * Burnett, David Texas A&M University
- * Davis, Thomas L. Colorado School of Mines
- * Dunn-Norman, Shari Missouri University of Science and Technology
- * Giesy, John P., University of Saskatchewan
- * Griffiths, Jeffrey, Tufts University
- * Gschwend, Phillip Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- * **Hammack, Richard W, U.S. Department of Energy**
- * Harris, Cynthia M. Florida A&M University
- * Kim, Nancy K, Health Research, Inc.
- * Lee, Cindy M. Clemson University
- * Patten, Duncan Montana State University
- * Randtke, Stephen, University of Kansas
- * Reible, Danny, University of Texas
- * Schreppel, Connie, Mohawk Valley Water Authority
- * Thyne, Geoffery, University of Wyoming
- * **VanBriesen, Jeanne Carnegie Mellon University**
- * **Vidic, Radisav, University of Pittsburgh**

Questions?

For more information

PennEnvironment

www.pennenvironment.org

Contact:

Erika Staaf

1831 Murray Avenue, Suite 219

Pittsburgh, PA 15217

(412) 521-0943

estaaf@pennenvironment.org

