

Petition to Ban Hydrofracking in Saugerties

Whereas, the process known as hydrofracking for the extraction of natural gas from Marcellus shales has come to attention of the nation as an alternative means for securing energy self-sufficiency;

Whereas, hydrofracking involves the use of a high pressure water-and-chemicals mix injected potentially thousands of feet into the earth to break or fracture shale layers, thereby releasing the natural gas for harvesting by the hydrofracking companies;

Whereas, significant potential damages to water supplies can result from the practice of hydrofracking;

Whereas, the State of New York has determined that hydrofracking may be undertaken in shale deposits in New York State, provided however that the practice may not be employed in the Catskill and Adirondack parks and within the New York City and Syracuse watersheds, due to the potential of contamination of such watersheds;

Whereas, the potential for contamination of significant municipal watersheds exists elsewhere in New York State and should be protected against through appropriate action on the state level,

Whereas, the town of Saugerties contains the easternmost extension of Marcellus shale deposits in New York State and was once targeted for the hydrofracking of natural gas in the 1950s, and whereas, many Saugerties residents still recall the efforts to exploit the "oil fields" of West Saugerties in those years,

Whereas, the Marcellus shale deposits of Saugerties underlie the aquifers and geological strata so important to the pure waters of the Blue Mountain Reservoir and its watershed,

Whereas, both the village of Saugerties, which owns the Blue Mountain Reservoir, and the town of Saugerties derive excellent and highly desirable benefits from the Blue Mountain Reservoir and the 17-square mile watershed that feeds that reservoir,

Whereas residents and municipal water users deserve to be protected against the potential pollution of their waters by the practice of hydrofracking and the potential for hydrofracking chemicals to enter into the waters that they consume,

Therefore, be it resolved, the Town of Saugerties hereby petitions Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to forthrightly act to protect the water resources of the Blue Mountain Reservoir by prohibiting the use of hydrofracturing or any similar technology for the purpose of extracting natural gas resources from the shale resources underlying the town of Saugerties and the watershed of the Blue Mountain Reservoir.