



RIVERTOWNCOALITION

FOR CLEAN AIR AND CLEAN WATER

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Dear Staff Leaders of SEDA-COG,

As we read in your mission statement “SEDA-COG seeks to enhance growth opportunities in an *environmentally sensitive manner* while retaining the region’s predominantly rural character” we applaud that mission. We also applaud the “pro-region” approach for our 11 counties, and who can be against economic development? However, as we are learning about the Regional Gas Utilization Initiative Study that you are involved in, there are several items that we believe should be considered that are not currently addressed in this study.

We believe that this project for the extension of gas delivery into this area is not giving consideration to the negative effects of the extreme gas extraction industry in our state. It looks as if business decisions are being considered without weighing the extended consequences of those decisions on health and the environment. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania has a long history of such business priorities and decisions being made without supplemental information. We have seen the effect of unbridled use of natural resources by the logging industry, the lasting effects and unintended consequences on the environment from the coal industry, and the dangerous potential for exposure of the public health with Three Mile Island. Of all the states in the union, we should be the most sensitive to checking out possible unintended consequences to business decisions.

Our mission in the Rivertown Coalition for Clean Air and Clean Water is to “educate about things concerning the environment.” Since this SEDA-COG area is where our members, and those whom we love and care about live, we would be remiss not to share environmental information with this public organization that purports to represent our welfare. To that end we plan to send a series of letters expressing various concerns. We know you are busy and we will do our best to keep them short and to the point.

We want to start by being sure that you know about the *Compendium of Scientific, Medical and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking (Unconventional Gas and Oil Extraction)* compiled by the Physicians for Social Responsibility. This resource is being used all over the world. Since it’s original release July 9, 2014, they have gathered over 500 reports and just released their third edition on October 14, 2015. Due to the nature of research i.e. taking time for gathering information and subsequent analysis, the studies have been slow to appear, but are now being published with increasing frequency and there were over 100 in the past nine months. It is organized to be accessible to public officials such as yourselves and to make this vast body of information more manageable.

We are enclosing copies of the first 15 pages of the report including the table of contents so that you can get a sense of the document. The full document is freely available at www.psr.org. We do not expect you to read it all. However we need to know that you are aware of the wealth of information that is at your fingertips and that you have a ready resource for questions that arise.

Today’s world is full of data, so much that we need machines to process that data and give us information. However, it is only when we integrate those disparate pieces of information that we achieve knowledge. And it is only when we integrate values and long term goals with our knowledge that we can hope for wisdom. We need wise decisions from all of our leaders.

Respectfully,

Carol Parowski, President

Shirley Rowe

Mark Heuer, PhD

Peg Lauver

The Board of the Rivertown Coalition for Clean Air and Clean Water

Lana Gulden

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