



For Immediate Release:**Contact**

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**Protect PT and Three Rivers Waterkeeper Appeal
EPA's Decision to Permit a New Fracking Waste Injection Well
EAB Appeal(s) No.: UIC 23-01**

October 26, 2023 - In a collaborative legal effort, Protect PT has joined forces with Three Rivers Waterkeeper to safeguard the Allegheny River and the surrounding water sources for the Pittsburgh area from contamination risks posed by injection wells. The primary goal of this petition is to prevent permitting injection wells in Pennsylvania, particularly Sedat 4A in Plum Borough, to ensure the protection of water sources above and below ground from potential contamination due to casing failures, spills, leaks, or fluid migration.

Protect PT and Three Rivers Waterkeeper's petition to the Environmental Appeals Board (EAB) is grounded in fact-based concerns and issues that were left unaddressed during the public comment period. These comments were made by community members and community-based organizations and focused on critical topics regarding injection wells near communities. Many of the comments included asking the EPA to deny the permit based on the challenging, if not impossible, disposal of oil and gas waste without environmental and public harm, that the activities of the injection well violate the Environmental Rights Amendment of the Pennsylvania Constitution and the potential contamination of drinking water sources and critical wildlife habitat.

"By issuing this permit, the EPA is sacrificing rural communities for the interest of private corporations. The people of Plum are not asking for much – they are simply asking to let their voice be heard and to protect their right to clean air and pure water," said Gillian Graber, Executive Director of Protect PT.

"The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) violated Pennsylvanians' constitutional right to clean air and pure water under the Environmental Rights Amendment when it issued this permit," said Lisa Johnson, Lead Attorney. "This Amendment is critically important to Pennsylvanians, particularly because the United States Constitution is far less protective,

providing no guarantee of clean air and pure water. Protect PT and Three Rivers Waterkeeper look forward to prosecuting this appeal.”

Penneco, the permit applicant, has violated similar permits in the past, and they have yet to show that they are considering the community's interests. Plum Creek is a tributary of the Allegheny River, which supports recreation and warm water fish while being widely used for navigation and as a source of drinking water. The Allegheny River is one of the headwaters of the Ohio River Basin, providing drinking water to nearly 5 million people throughout. Allegheny County and Plum Borough, where the Injection Well will be located, are among the most impacted areas in the state. 67% of streams in Allegheny County are impaired, and Allegheny County is 9th out of Pennsylvania's 67 counties for the most miles of polluted streams. Because of the high probability of this injection well's contamination of our already fragile environment by toxic and radioactive fracking waste and brine, the EAB should reverse the EPA's issuance of the permit.

“There is no proof that this method proposed will not violate our right to clean air and pure water, but we do know that wastewater contains toxic and carcinogenic additives and components that cause long-term health issues and can lead to death.” Said Heather Hulton VanTassel, Executive Director of Three Rivers Waterkeeper.

Responses from the EPA and other involved parties are due 30 days from the petition's filing date. After considering arguments from both the petitioners and the EPA, the EAB will decide whether to permit additional harmful injection wells in Pennsylvania.

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About Protect PT:

Protect PT (Penn-Trafford) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring residents' safety, security, and quality of life by engaging in education and advocacy to protect the economic, environmental, and legal rights of the people in Westmoreland and Allegheny counties (PA). Founded in 2014, Protect PT is a grassroots community-based nonprofit organization committed to safeguarding our community from the harmful environmental impacts of fossil fuel activity.

About Three Rivers Waterkeeper:

Three Rivers Waterkeeper (3RWK) 3RWK is a Pittsburgh-based environmental nonprofit that serves Southwestern PA with a mission to protect the water quality of the Allegheny, Ohio, and Monongahela Rivers and their watersheds. 3RWK was founded in 2009. 3RWK is both a scientific and legal advocate for the community, working to ensure that our three rivers are protected and that our waters are safe to drink, fish, swim, and enjoy as these waterways are critical to the health, vitality, and economic prosperity of our region and communities. We are one of the over 300 organizations that make up the global Waterkeeper Alliance and work together to connect local communities to global environmental and advocacy resources.