



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John L. Sampson

Senator Sampson Monitoring DEC Hydrafracking Regulations

JOHN L. SAMPSON July 16, 2010

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Gas exploration companies have set their sights on the Marcellus Shale region of New York State for purposes of obtaining millions of cubic feet of natural gas. New York City officials and residents are concerned the process of drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale will pollute the New York City watershed which is located nearby. Senator John L. Sampson instructed staff at the Administrative Regulations Review Commission to review the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) efforts to promulgate new regulations dealing with Marcellus Shale drilling.

While the term regulation is used loosely here, the actual document to be reviewed is the Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS). Currently, DEC is in the process of updating a 1992 Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) which sets parameters that are applicable statewide for State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) review of gas well permitting. The term hydrafracking means the hydraulic fracturing of rock or fracturing of rock with large amounts of water and chemicals so that drilling and gas collection can take place.

The DEC has received thousands of comments concerning the SGEIS. Many Upstate New Yorkers are concerned that nearby wells could be contaminated from the process of

hydrafracking. Those who are in support of drilling want to reap the monetary benefits by leasing their land to drilling companies. Economic development officials believe thousands of jobs will be created Upstate if hydrafracking is permitted.

The Department is expected to release a draft SGEIS concerning hydrafracking by the end of 2010.