

5 Reasons Why Exclusive Protection of New York City's Watershed Is... Wrong!

by David J. Cyr — May 1, 2009

For some in opposition to the patently environmentally unsound un-natural Halliburton chemical hydrofracking process, which greedily turns stone into gas, while turning our water into toxic waste, it's considered divisive to even mention the problem of New York City's watershed exceptionalism: the advocacy of a permanent ban on gas drilling exclusively within the New York City watershed, while allowing that same recklessly unsafe drilling process to be used everywhere else.

New York City's watershed exceptionalism is the position held by a number of institutionalized "environmental" organizations, like: Catskill Mountainkeeper, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the New York Public Interest Group, Riverkeeper, Inc., the Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter, and the Theodore Gordon Flyfishers, Inc. But no matter how great their influence is; their money funding; their staffing; their membership numbers... they still hold a position that is way wrong in so many ways. There should be a ban to protect all... not just some.

1) It's ill logical (a sick logic):

Advocates for NYC's watershed exceptionalism have argued that hydrofracking can't ever be safely done anywhere within NYC's watershed, regardless of how well the wells might be DEC regulated, so it's a sick illogic for them to consider what could never be safely done there — within NYC's watershed — to nonetheless be safe, if done elsewhere within New York State... in the watersheds of others not so special. NYC should use its disproportionate power to protect all, not just itself.

2) It is *it* that is divisive:

The divisiveness, among those opposed to the Halliburton process, does not come from anyone challenging this truly ill illogical idea, that is so wrong. The divisiveness was created by, and is nurtured by, those who have conspired with this state's and New York City's corporate owned governments, to have NYC's watershed solely and exclusively protected from the insanity of the desperate fossil fuel addiction maintenance measures industry is using to collect the last remnants of gas so tightly bound within stone... a shameful conspiracy to protect just one watershed, while all others are defiled.

3) It's bad science:

The City's watershed may get preferential separate governmental protection, but it would still be on the same planet with the watersheds not protected. Even if no hydrofracking is ever done within New York City's watershed, it will not be protected... *if* the energy industry gets all the other drilling that it desires. To profitably rip those myriad remnants of gas from stone, the extraction industry would need to transform the farm and forest land of upstate New York into a massive Love Canal industrial zone. Over a few decades, up to 250,000 Marcellus wells could be sited, on approximately 16,000 square miles, from the western edge of NYC's watershed westward all the way to Lake Erie. The hydrofracking of just those wells, that could be legally sited under the current spacing regulations, could easily produce 2 Trillion gallons or more of highly toxic waste. Worse, once the industrial extraction Free Drill Zone is created, spacing between wells will be reduced, as it has been in other states. Enough of that volatile toxic waste will eventually drift airborne easterly, and rain down upon New York City's watershed... insidiously endocrine disrupting chemically contaminating its unfiltered water too.

4) It's immoral:

What was the Abolitionist Movement about? The Suffragist Movement? The Civil Rights Movement? The 2nd Wave Feminism? The Gay Rights Movement? What is the fundamental demand that all those great social movements have had in common? Equality! The moral imperative for all persons to have equal treatment under the laws of society. It is profoundly immoral — and hairy knuckle dragging regressive — for the lawyers and fund managers of institutionalized "environmental" organizations to be advocating separate and unequal environmental protection here in the 21st Century... and in a state that prides itself for being so very *progressive*. What of all the tens of millions of people in other states, into which our river waters, contaminated by drilling's hydrofracking endocrine disrupter chemicals, would flow from New York?

5) It's illegal... in a really bad way:

The separate and unequal preferential protection of one watershed, would result in the **denial of equal protection** for all those persons within New York State who would still have that drilling not allowed in New York City's watershed; have that drilling, that can't be regulated into being safe anywhere, allowed within all their other watersheds within New York State.

Consider the clarity of the first sentence of the New York State Constitution's Article 1 (Bill of Rights), Section 11:

"No person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws of this state or any subdivision thereof."

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