

SUSQUEHANNA RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
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**SRBC READY TO START UP REAL-TIME WATER QUALITY
MONITORING NETWORK FOR SMALL STREAMS IN EARLY 2010**
Natural Gas Company East Resources to Contribute \$750,000 to Monitoring Network

HARRISBURG, Pa. – The Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) today announced it will begin in early 2010 installing a monitoring network that will continuously measure and report water quality conditions of smaller rivers and streams located in northern tier Pennsylvania and southern tier New York. SRBC will receive the data collected by the network and will make it available to other resource agencies and the public through its web site. The data will help agency officials track existing water quality conditions and any changes in them on an ongoing, real-time basis.

“With the current concerns about the natural gas drilling activities occurring in the Susquehanna basin, SRBC believes that a data collection effort is critically important as the basis for making future decisions,” said Paul Swartz, SRBC Executive Director.

This week, East Resources, Inc., a natural gas company based in Warrendale, Pennsylvania, announced it will be contributing \$750,000 to SRBC for the water quality monitoring network.

Swartz said, “The Commission truly appreciates this substantial contribution from East Resources. It will allow us to cover the cost of installing the initial monitoring stations in the targeted areas. With this contribution, the Commission has now secured a commitment of the financial resources needed to proceed with the project sooner than planned. If winter weather cooperates, we could begin installing equipment as soon as January 2010.”

SRBC will initially set up 30 water quality monitoring stations in the regions where drilling in the Marcellus shale is most active, as well as other locations where no drilling activities are planned so SRBC can collect control-data. The monitoring network will provide constant data collection with instruments sensitive enough to detect subtle changes in water quality on a frequency that will allow background conditions and any changes to them to be documented throughout the year. This level of data collection would not be feasible without the use of advanced technology.

Each of the monitoring stations will be equipped with water quality sensors and a transmitter to continuously monitor and report water temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductance (ability to conduct electricity) and turbidity (water clarity). The water depth also will be recorded to establish a relationship with stream flows. The monitoring of conductance is key to detecting impacts associated with natural gas activities if they occur; this constituent in water produced by the natural gas industry is generally 200 times greater than normally measured in streams in the Susquehanna River Basin, allowing it to be a leading indicator.

The monitoring network will provide early warnings to help environmental protection officials respond more rapidly and better pinpoint causes if water quality conditions change. It will also help local public water suppliers, local watershed groups and communities stay informed.

Swartz said, “The Commission’s overarching objective of this monitoring network is to apply good science in order to track changes in water quality conditions over time and to allow for timely responses in the case of pollution events. The Commission will rely on the know-how and expertise it has gained through an existing early warning system program and nearly 24 years of continuous monitoring to ensure the successful set up and operation of this expanded remote monitoring effort.”

Other objectives are to reduce the cost of data collection by using advanced technologies, form partnerships, enhance water supply protection through source water monitoring and be responsive to public concerns.

SRBC has already reached out to local government officials, colleges and universities along with watershed organizations to gauge their interest in assisting SRBC staff on the project.

For more information on SRBC’s proposed water quality monitoring network, go to SRBC’s web site at www.srbc.net/programs/remotenetwork.htm. This web page contains a project information sheet, power point presentations and other information.

SRBC (www.srbc.net) is the governing agency established under a 100-year compact signed on December 24, 1970 by the federal government and the states of New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland to protect and wisely manage the water resources of the Susquehanna River Basin. The Susquehanna River starts in Cooperstown, New York, and flows 444 miles to Havre de Grace, Maryland, where the river meets the Chesapeake Bay.

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