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Auditor General Issues Critical PADEP Audit
Pennsylvania Environmental Organizations Applaud Investigation's Goals
Report's findings mirror concerns raised by Pennsylvanians
dealing with water contamination

Harrisburg, PA – Pennsylvania's Auditor General office released a highly anticipated audit of the Department of Environmental Protection's performance regarding shale gas development today. Auditor General Eugene DePasquale stated that the audit "...shows that the meteoric growth of the shale gas industry caught the Department of Environmental Protection unprepared to effectively administer laws and regulations to protect drinking water and unable to efficiently respond to citizen complaints". The report is available here:

<http://www.auditorgen.state.pa.us/reports/performance/special/speDEP072114.pdf>

"The Auditor General's inspection is not just a capture of deficiencies within the agency in present time but a call to the future to take actions that will improve agency policies & operations so that public confidence in the agency can be restored & we can better protect drinking water & public health", **said Steve Hvozdoch, Marcellus Shale Policy Associate, Clean Water Action.**

"For countless Pennsylvanians in the Marcellus and Utica, the Auditor General's findings come as no surprise. His frank assessment of the deficiencies within the DEP accurately tells the story of an agency that was unprepared to deal with shale gas development's impacts on our water supply and, by extension, our communities. The tenor of the agency's response included in the report is discouraging in its denial of many of the problems the Auditor General has cited and its misguided belief that it has satisfactorily addressed some of the other issues, particularly those

dealing with transparency and public access to critical data," **said Karen Feridun, founder of Berks Gas Truth.**

"The Auditor General's report is a sorely needed reality check by an independent office that knows how to perform a straightforward audit. This professional analysis of PADEP exposes the failings of the agency to effectively regulate the industry during this unprecedented shale gas rush that has gripped the Commonwealth. When you delve into the audit's details of how and why the industry got ahead of government in Pennsylvania, lessons emerge that provide the guidance needed for critically needed reform at PADEP," **said Tracy Carluccio, Deputy Director, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

"The auditor general has confirmed what Pennsylvania residents have long been saying and experiencing: the impacts of gas development are real, intense, and not being addressed," says Nadia Steinzor of Earthworks' Oil & Gas Accountability Project. "DEP and the legislature can start putting the public interest first by adopting the report's recommendations, dedicating more resources to enforcement, and working more closely with communities to solve problems than they do with industry," **said Nadia Steinzor, Eastern Program Coordinator, Earthworks.**

"The Auditor General confirmed what many outside observers have been saying -- Pennsylvania residents who live in drilling areas face a significant risk because DEP, the agency tasked to protect them, is ill-equipped to do so. Pennsylvanians deserve better," **said Tom Au, Sierra Club Pennsylvania Chapter.**

"Finally the fundamental flaws in the DEP's management of the impacts from shale gas development have come to light. The Auditor General's report vindicates the ever growing chorus of voices that have been calling on the DEP for years to reform its practices, and for sufficient funding for adequate staffing. Having devoted significant resources to combat the impacts of water contamination, bureaucratic delay, and flawed information on the communities we serve, we hope this report sparks real change in shale extraction oversight," **said Nick Kennedy, Mountain Watershed Association.**

For the last 18 months, environmental and citizens groups have been in touch with DEP regarding our grave concerns about procedures and policies for water quality monitoring, testing, and response in the face of the shale gas boom. It has long been clear that they lack transparency; result in the withholding of vital data from affected households and the public; force residents to undergo prolonged exposure to contaminants that can impact health; and delay action necessary to correct pollution and ensure that operators provide clean drinking water to those who need it. The audit confirms that basic reforms are needed to address the harms communities are experiencing from shale gas development in the Commonwealth.

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