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SIERRA CLUB PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER STATEMENT OF OPPOSITION TO THE PROPOSED NATURAL-GAS FIRED ELECTRIC GENERATING PLANT IN JESSUP, PA

The Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club opposes the proposal to construct a natural gas-fired electric generating plant in the Borough of Jessup, Lackawanna County. The operation of this plant would encourage further natural gas hydraulic fracturing in Northeast Pennsylvania and would produce significant air and water pollution for Jessup and the surrounding Lackawanna River valley. The proposed site for this plant is zoned for wind turbine electric generation — not natural gas power plants — and such sustainable, clean power is how electric power should be generated in Pennsylvania. Further, support for and continued reliance on dirty fossil fuels, such as fracked gas, is inconsistent with climate goals for Pennsylvania.

Though the company that is proposing to construct this fossil fuel-based plant may have clean, renewable projects in other areas, this proposal is not one of them. Specifically, we are concerned that the proposed 1500 MW natural gas-fired electric generation plant will:

- Emit methane, NO₂ and other toxic air pollutants from its 200-ft. smokestacks, less than 3/4 mi. from a youth athletic complex and hundreds of homes in Jessup;
- Risk subsidence damage from the massive plant being constructed atop both an abandoned coal mine and an abandoned municipal landfill;
- Deplete Jessup's 12-million gallon per day water reservoir by 5 million gallons per day (resulting in potential risk to the Jessup water supply during droughts);
- Discharge 600,000 gallons of plant wastewater (only partially cleaned and not fully cooled to the stream's water temperature) to Grassy Island Creek, whose upstream portion is a special protection High Quality Cold Water Fishery;
- Cause stormwater erosion impacts on the Grassy Island Creek;
- Accelerate hydraulic fracturing in the Marcellus Shale region of Northeast Pennsylvania (due to the fact that the plant would be supplied with natural gas by the proposed Penn East pipeline and an associated feeder-line);
- Pave the way for the construction of multiple such fossil fuel-reliant plants in the region; and
- Create air pollution and water pollution risks associated with natural gas pipeline construction and usage from the 19 miles of local feeder pipelines to be constructed to the plant by UGI (principal partner of Penn East pipeline).