



Hydraulic Fracturing Testimony

July 13, 2010

The Western Energy Alliance, formerly IPAMS, represents 400 natural gas and oil companies in the West, where about 95% of wells are fracked. Fracking has been used for decades with an exemplary safety record, and enables the US to be energy secure in natural gas.

Environmental groups are intent on scaring the public into believing that oil and gas development is dangerous and presents an unacceptable risk to the environment and public health. While no energy source is entirely risk free, the greater risk to the American public is posed by those who would shut down domestic development of natural gas which keeps us warm in the winter, generates electricity with greatly reduced air emissions, and powers our economy and way of life.

This misinformation about fracking should not deter EPA from ensuring that the study is scientifically based, and limited in scope to the impact on underground sources of drinking water. Expanding the study away from fracking and into a full lifecycle analysis of water use will dilute the effectiveness of the study, and greatly expand the timeframe.

There are those who blame fracking for various incidents across the country, and who advocate for federal control to replace state regulation. Time and again these incidents have been found not to be related to the process of fracking by state regulators and EPA. In cases where there have been surface spills or other accidents in the drilling process, industry is regulated and held legally liable under the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and state and local regulations. We stand with state regulators, and their organizations such as the Ground Water Protection Council (GWPC) and the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (IOGCC), which, unlike EPA, have the technical and scientific expertise and experience to regulate fracking and have done so successfully. To those who think that only the federal government has the ability to regulate, I point out that not only do state regulators understand the needs of the communities that they regulate much better than a far-removed federal government, but they also have the specific technical expertise, resources and experience that EPA lacks.