

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA****Dept. of Environmental Protection**

Commonwealth News Bureau  
Room 308, Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg PA., 17120

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

07/27/2018

**CONTACT:**

Neil Shader, DEP  
717-787-1323

**DEP Reaches Agreement with Environmental Groups Over Mariner East 2 Permits**

No alteration to challenged permits

**Harrisburg, PA** - In a significant validation of pipeline permits issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Clean Air Council (CAC), Mountain Watershed Association (MWA), and the Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) settled their appeal of 20 permits issued to Sunoco Pipeline, LLP (Sunoco) for the Mariner East 2 pipeline project. Since the permits were issued, DEP has continued to develop new standards, protocols, and best practices designed to protect the environment during the construction and installation of pipelines.

“DEP is pleased that we were able to reach an amicable agreement with the appellants, resolving all claims related to the issuance of these permits while incorporating new processes to ensure that future pipeline projects learn from the mistakes made by Sunoco in implementing this project,” said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “To be clear, DEP will continue to conduct vigorous oversight to ensure compliance with the conditions of the permits and will issue enforcement actions as necessary.”

The settlement does not alter any of the 20 permits in the appeal. Each permit was lawfully issued after a thorough environmental review involving approximately 35 DEP and County Conservation District staff over the course of nearly two years.

In the settlement, DEP has committed to continue to develop and implement further enhanced procedures for environmental protection associated with the construction of natural gas pipelines in Pennsylvania in collaboration with the appellants.

DEP has responded to the increased natural gas pipeline activity in Pennsylvania over the last five years with a number of initiatives:

- Establishment of a Regional Permit Coordination Office, which includes dedicated staff of engineers and other technical staff to specifically oversee environmental regulation and permitting of natural gas pipeline development in Pennsylvania.
- Developing Best Practices for Design and Operation of Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) including best practices for identification and protection of water supplies.
- Developing a draft model for Preparedness, Prevention and Contingency (PPC) Plans for inadvertent returns resulting from HDD activities.

- Development of numerous special conditions for DEP permits to ensure environmental protection for pipeline projects.
- Establishment of Chp. 78a Unconventional Oil and Gas Regulations in 2016 which included specific criteria (78a.68a) to ensure better management and oversight of HDD for Oil and Gas Pipelines.

###