May 16, 2016

Via First Class Mail and E-Mail

Patrick Greter, Executive Director
Center for Coalfield Justice
P.O. Box 4023
184 S. Main Street
Washington, PA 15301

Via First Class Mail and E-Mail

Larry Schweiger, President and CEO
Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future
The Waterfront Building
200 First Avenue, Suite 200
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-1557

Dear Mr. Greter and Mr. Schweiger:

Thank you for your letters dated April 18, 2016 and April 19, 2016 directed to Secretary Quigley and me. The Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Office of Environmental Justice seeks to ensure that all communities, especially those that have typically been disenfranchised, are fully involved in the decisions that affect their environment and that all communities are not unjustly and/or disproportionately burdened with environmental impacts. In pertinent part, we share your concerns about the potential impacts of unconventional natural gas development on not only those communities designated as environmental justice communities, but in all communities and will be engaging in significant outreach and public discussion on the subject.

In your letter(s), you expressed general concern for Range Resources' well siting practices in whole and specific concern with respect to Range Resources' Yonkers well pad. By way of background, the Yonkers pad was permitted for earth disturbance in 2014 and to date four wells have been permitted on that pad site. Your correspondence is the first time a potential zoning issue has been raised. We have never received an objection or comment from local officials regarding an asserted violation of local zoning ordinances. Pursuant to your letter, we are inquiring with Range Resources as to whether the pending applications comply with local zoning.

The Department is currently in the process of reconstituting its policies related to Environmental Justice. This process will include an evaluation of what permits should be included for review, as well as how an environmental justice community is defined. As a part of that process, we will also be conducting a retrospective analysis of previously issued well permits and a prospective analysis of where pending well permits may be sited. We believe this analysis and reconstitution is necessary to serve all residents of Pennsylvania and to improve partnerships with environmental justice community members, the regulated community, and advocates during the planning and decision-making process.
As such, we propose a facilitated meeting in the near future to discuss the larger issues raised by your letters. We very much appreciate your comments and look forward to further engagement and activity regarding our evaluation of Environmental Justice issues.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Carl E. Jones, Jr.
Director
Office of Environmental Justice

cc: John Quigley, DEP Secretary
    Scott Perry, DEF Deputy Secretary of the Office of Oil and Gas Management
    Joanne Kilgour, Chapter Director, Sierra Club, Pennsylvania Chapter
    Joseph Otis Minott, Executive Director, Clean Air Council
    Dennis Degner, Vice President, Southern Marcellus Shale Division, Range Resources