



The Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology

Dr. Karen Metheny, Chair

January 25, 2012

Mr. Joe Martens, Commissioner
dSGEIS Comments
NYS DEC
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233-6510

Dear Mr. Martens,

On behalf of the Executive Board and the members of the Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology, I wish to express our deep concern with the development of the hydraulic fracturing industry in the State of New York and the lack of protection for archaeological and historical resources during the permitting process. We wholeheartedly endorse the recommendations for the Revised Draft-Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (dSGEIS) on the Oil, Gas, and Solution Mining Regulatory Program (Well Permit Issuance for Horizontal Drilling and High-Volume Hydraulic Fracturing to Develop the Marcellus Shale and Other Low-Permeability Reservoirs) that were prepared by Derrick Marcucci, RPA, on behalf of the New York Archaeological Council (NYAC) (letter dated November 28, 2011). We urge DEC to adopt these recommendations in order to ensure compliance with the State Historic Preservation Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, and to ensure the protection of below-ground archaeological resources, as well as above-ground historical sites, from damage during land clearance, earth moving, drilling, and hydraulic fracturing.

Specifically, we draw your attention to the following recommendations from Mr. Marcucci that are necessary to address the adverse effects to both known and unknown archaeological and cultural resources from this industry:

- Visible cultural resources (above-ground) are not the only resources that need protection; buried archaeological sites are clearly threatened by activity associated with this industry and should be explicitly included for review during the permitting process;
- Not all cultural resources are listed or are eligible for listing on the State or National Registers; many are buried and as yet unidentified; these resources must also be addressed by the permitting process;
- Earth moving and land clearance will have significant adverse impacts upon both above-ground cultural resources, including significant vistas and viewsheds, and below-ground archaeological resources; these two activities must be included in the review process;

- The permitting process must ensure compliance with the State and National Historic Preservation Acts.

The Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology (CNEHA) is a non-profit educational organization with over 400 members in the eastern United States and Canada. Our membership comprises professional archaeologists, historians, educators, and cultural resource specialists. The sole purpose of the Council is to stimulate and encourage the collection, preservation, advancement, and dissemination of knowledge gained through the study and practice of historical archaeology. The Council specifically encourages fieldwork, collections research, conservation, education, and public outreach. This matter is of special concern to us because the Council was founded in 1966 by professional and avocational archaeologists and historians who were alarmed by the destruction and loss of historical and archaeological resources in the Northeast. The Council evolved out of an awareness of the need to preserve and protect the historical archaeological record and to share that past with others. We therefore feel compelled to express our deepest concern for the future of archaeological and historical resources in the State of New York.

We urge you to adopt Mr. Marcucci's recommendations to ensure compliance with all existing state and federal legislation and to allow for a process in which potential adverse impacts to archaeological sites and above-ground cultural resources are identified, assessed, and mitigated where necessary.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen B. Metheny". The signature is written in a cursive style and is centered within a light blue rectangular background.

Dr. Karen Metheny
367 Burroughs Rd.
Boxborough, MA 01719

Attachment (1)

cc: Marie-Lorraine Pipes, New York Archaeological Council