



## HAUDENOSAUNEE

Mohawk • Oneida • Onondaga • Cayuga • Seneca • Tuscarora

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### ENVIRONMENTAL TASK FORCE

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### **Haudenosaunee Statement on Hydrofracking**

*The Haudenosaunee have a unique spiritual, cultural, and historic relationship with the land, which is embodied in Gayananshogowa, the Great Law of Peace. This relationship goes far beyond federal and state legal concepts of ownership, possession, or other legal rights. The Haudenosaunee are one with the land and all that depends on the land, and consider ourselves part of it. It is the duty of the Nations' leaders to work for a healing of the land, to protect it, and to pass it on to future generations.*

The Haudenosaunee know that every part of the natural world is important and interrelated; when humans tinker more and more with the natural balance, we do so at the peril of our grandchildren. In few cases is this more apparent than the proposed method of natural gas drilling known as hydraulic fracturing or “hydrofracking”.

Representatives of the Onondaga Nation and the Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force have visited communities impacted by hydrofracking in Pennsylvania. We have seen first-hand the impacts of hydrofracking; the vast industrialization of the landscape, the pollution of the air from hundreds of trucks, propane stripping stations, gas flares, and compression stations; the fragmentation of habitat and landscape by the incursions of roads and drill pads; the ruining of streams and drinking wells from drilling-related contamination; and most heartbreakingly, the permanent disruption of peoples homes, lives and communities. Even when things are done “right”, the impacts are devastating.

The Onondaga Nation knows first-hand the impacts of messing with the deep bedrock of Mother Earth. Over 100 years ago, a company began solution mining in the Tully Valley upstream of the Nation, pumping water down wells to dissolve the brine deposits found deep below. The necessary time has passed to feel the impacts; our once clear Onondaga Creek is now contaminated with sediments from the mudboils; the Tully Valley has subsided 15 feet; and sinkholes and hundreds of deep fissures have opened up where the wells once were. Hydrofracking similarly desecrates Mother Earth; earthquakes are being felt where no earthquakes were felt before, 8 years after intensive drilling began in the Barnett Shale underneath Cleburn, Texas. Our grandchildren will be the ones to feel the worst impacts.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) promised that it could do a better job of protecting our environment from the

effects of hydrofracking than other states by issuing a draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement. The Haudenosaunee will not comment on this document because in doing so, means we accept the process of allowing hydrofracking into our environment and impacting our future generations. The Haudenosaunee will hold DEC to its' **Contact, Cooperation and Consultation Policy with Indian Nations** to improve government to government relations, open dialogue, face to face meetings, to resolve any differences when it comes to protecting our natural resources that is shared by both. The Haudenosaunee is indeed very disappointed and we determined that this will not be tolerated in the future.

On September 13, 2007, The United Nations General Assembly adopted the “ Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.” This document developed by the mutual efforts of many Indigenous leaders and States over a 30 year period, contains many provisions relating to rights of Indigenous peoples that all countries agree to respect and protect. Of the 46 articles and related provisions outlined in the declaration, there are three (3) that directly relate to this matter. They are:

- a. Article 19, States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.
- b. Article 29, This article contains three important provisions relating to the rights to the conservation and protection of the environment of the lands, territories and resources of indigenous peoples.
- c. Article 37, Indigenous peoples have the right to the recognition, observance and enforcement of treaties, agreements and constructive arrangement concluded with States and their successors.

The Haudenosaunee will not allow hydrofracking on or near their aboriginal territory, and calls on the Government of New York State to similarly ban hydrofracking and other unconventional gas drilling methods within New York State. If NYS Government allows this to happen, and hydrofracking impacts our environment, then DEC will be held accountable. We do so for the future of all our relations.