UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

AUG 2 0 2016

The Honorable Michael G. Fitzpatrick
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Fitzpatrick:

Thank you for your June 6, 2016 letter to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy concerning the PennEast Pipeline Company, LLC; FERC Docket No. CP15-558-000. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the proposed PennEast Pipeline Project. In your letter, you request EPA, as a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS, to assist FERC in meeting the obligations of NEPA. In particular, for FERC's EIS to present a substantive analysis of project need and a range of alternatives including renewable energy. You also request EPA to maintain a vigilant oversight role of the project. On July 22, 2016, FERC released the Draft EIS for the PennEast Pipeline for public comment.

As a cooperating agency, EPA has been working with FERC during the preparation of the Draft EIS; FERC is the lead Federal agency for compliance with NEPA on this project. Under NEPA and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, EPA has a responsibility to review FERC's EIS and to provide comment on the adequacy of the analysis and the acceptability of the environmental impacts of the proposed action. Pursuant to these responsibilities, EPA is completing its review of the Draft EIS and preparing formal comments. EPA's letter on the PennEast Draft EIS will provide critical observations and recommendations for FERC's consideration and will focus on many of the topics raised in your letter, including project purpose and need, alternatives analysis, and assessment of impacts to streams and wetlands. We understand that a robust analysis is essential to an EIS and to informed decision making. During our review, we will continue to engage other appropriate federal and state resource agencies, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and New Jersey and Pennsylvania Departments of Environmental Protection, as necessary.

Upon the completion of our review, EPA will provide you with a copy of our comment letter to keep you apprised of our involvement on the PennEast Pipeline Project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or have your staff contact Ms. Kinshasa Brown, EPA's Pennsylvania Liaison, at 215-814-5404.

Sincerely,

Shawn M. Garvin
Regional Administrator

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