

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 7, 2016

Contact:

Debbie Mans, NY/NJ Baykeeper, [732-888-9870 ext 2](tel:732-888-9870)

Jim Walsh, Food & Water Watch, 732-979-6883

**STATEMENT BY NY/NJ BAYKEEPER AND NJ FOOD & WATER WATCH ON WILLIAMS  
NORTHEAST SUPPLY ENHANCEMENT PIPELINE FIRST PUBLIC SCOPING SESSION**

"Williams has proposed a pipeline project to expand its existing Transco transmission system to transport natural gas from the Marcellus Shale region through central New Jersey to New York. The proposed project includes a new 23.4 mile, 26-inch diameter pipeline through Raritan Bay, from Old Bridge, NJ to Rockaway Point, NY. If built, the pipeline will disrupt and impact recreational activities, anchorage areas, and habitat for clams, horseshoe crabs, fish, and other marine animals.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) after a scoping process is conducted to gather the public's input of topics of concern. However, the scoping process ends on September 23, 2016. Our communities deserve more than a thirty day window and a restricted hearing format to effectively provide specific comments and concerns. The public notice for the scoping meetings was only two weeks and occurred over a national holiday weekend. Additionally, the format of the scoping meetings requires a participant to read their comments individually to FERC in a private room, rather than taking the format of a traditional public meeting where attendees hear everyone's comments and learn and hear from other community members. NY/NJ Baykeeper urges FERC to extend the oral comment period to 45 days from the date of the first scoping meeting, and allot 60 days for the written comment deadline.

Additionally, we encourage local elected officials along the Raritan Bay region to engage on this project which will directly impact their residents during construction," said Debbie Mans, Baykeeper and Executive Director, NY/NJ Baykeeper.

"We are proud to stand with hundreds of organizations and community members who are demanding the FERC expand and open up their hearing process. Just when you thought the FERC process could not get any worse, they take steps to trample on democracy by limit public participation through scheduling hearings immediately after a holiday weekend and forcing

people to give comments in virtual privacy. It is clear that they are not interested in listening to the public, but FERC's disrespect for democracy might not matter since New Jersey will need to issue a variety of permits for wetlands, water discharges and coastal zones that are independent of FERC," said Jim Walsh, NJ Director Food & Water Watch.

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Public scoping sessions are scheduled as follows:

1. Wednesday, September 7, 2016

5:00 - 9:00pm

George Bush Senior Center

1 Old Bridge Plaza

Old Bridge, NJ 08857

2. Thursday, September 8, 2016

5:00 - 9:00pm

Aviator Sports and Events Center at Floyd Bennett Field

3159 Flatbush Avenue

Brooklyn, NY 11234

3. Wednesday, September 14, 2016

5:00 - 9:00pm

Solanco High School

585 Solanco Road

Quarryville, PA 17566

4. Thursday, September 15, 2016

5:00 - 9:00pm

Franklin Townshio Community Center

505 Demott Lane

Somerset, NJ 08873

### **About NY/NJ Baykeeper**

NY/NJ Baykeeper is the citizen advocate of the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary. Since 1989, we've worked to protect, preserve, and restore the environment of the most urban estuary on Earth – benefiting its natural and human communities. Through our Estuary-wide programs we seek to end pollution, improve public access, conserve and restore public lands, restore aquatic habitats, encourage appropriate and discourage inappropriate development, carry out public education, and work with federal and NY/NJ state regulators and citizen groups as partners in planning for a sustainable future for the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary watershed.

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