

October 1, 2019



By Email

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Re: Sunoco's response to the Department's request for information on PA-CH-0127.0000-RD-16 (HDD# S3-0320-16)

Dear Mr. Hohenstein,

On September 20, 2019, the Department requested additional information from Sunoco regarding its reevaluation ("Report") of the horizontal directional drilling ("HDD") indicated by drawing number PA-CH-0127.0000-RD-16 (the "HDD Site"). Sunoco responded to the September 20, 2019 email on September 22, 2019, revising the Report. Pursuant to the Corrected Stipulated Order entered on EHB Docket No. 2017-009-L on August 10, 2017 ("Order"), and on behalf of Clean Air Council, Mountain Watershed Association, Inc., and the Delaware Riverkeeper Network ("Appellants"), please accept these comments regarding Sunoco's September 22, 2019 supplemental response ("September Response").

1. The Report as revised is not signed and sealed by a Professional Geologist.

Paragraph 5 of the Order reads in part:

Upon completion of Sunoco's re-evaluation of each HDD site referenced in Paragraphs 2 and 3 herein, Sunoco shall provide for each such site a report signed and sealed by a Professional Geologist, describing and presenting the results of its study for that location ("Report"). The Professional Geologist shall be a person trained and experienced in geotechnical and hydrogeologic investigation.

In response to the Department's inquiries, Sunoco revises the conclusion to its Report and attaches the revised Report. However, both the revised and the original Reports are signed by the Professional Geologist and Professional Engineer on June 18, 2019. In fact, it is the exact same signature page for both. In other words, no Professional Geologist (or for that matter, Professional Engineer) has signed the Report as revised. It is not clear whether Sunoco even showed the revisions to its signatory PG and PE. This is not a report the Department can accept, because it violates Paragraph 5 of the Order.

It also raises further questions, such as: Is Sunoco actually using the input of accredited professionals in its re-evaluations? Are the accredited professionals actually reviewing Sunoco's final plans? These are important questions the Department should get to the bottom of.

2. Sunoco's plan for groundwater production is problematic.

The Department raised a concern that Sunoco lacked a plan for dealing with production of excess groundwater at the drill pit. Sunoco responded by adding the following to its Report:

SPLP's drilling contractor will stage pumps and storage tanks to control and contain produced water from the HDD annulus. This water will either be relayed to the drilling rig for use in completion of the HDD, or will be hauled away for disposal at a licensed treatment facility. Upon completion of the HDD; pulling of the pipeline segment into place, and tie-in to the conventionally laid pipeline, the annulus of the HDD will be grout sealed to prevent groundwater production;

This plan raises concerns about the water table. In multiple locations in Southeastern Pennsylvania, most recently in Middletown and Edgmont Townships in Delaware County, wells have had their water depleted during HDD operations when Sunoco pumped out and trucked away water from drill pits. Now, several wells have been contaminated and animals have been dying, including one resident's horse. When wells go dry even temporarily, they become prone to contamination. Pumping and trucking away water for treatment and release outside of the zone where the water table is replenished can be and has been disastrous for those who use water locally. While there are few wells in the immediate vicinity of the HDD, Sunoco has not mapped out the hydrogeology such that the Department can conclude water table depletion would not be a problem at this Site as well. The Department should require onsite treatment and release or offsite treatment and prompt release back onsite at an appropriate and planned-for location.

Thank you for considering these comments. Please keep Appellants apprised of any next steps.

Sincerely,

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