

To: Edward Hanlon/DC/USEPA/US@EPA

Date: 04/07/2010 12:25 AM

Subject: scope of EPA investigation of natural gas development impacts

Mr. Hanlon,

I have taken a hard look at the scope of studies proposed by the USEPA, and I would like to propose a significant avenue of investigation not included there. Please consider an inventory of organisms that live in deep rock habitats which may be disturbed or destroyed by natural gas extraction activities.

Although the congressional mandate you've received for this work focuses on impacts of this industry on potential and in-use underground sources of drinking water, access to very deep formations that is afforded by drilling for natural gas has not to my knowledge ever been exploited or even considered for the biological resources they harbor. We don't know what is being overlooked and discarded.

As a professional biochemist, I know first-hand the inestimable value of extreme thermophilic and halophilic bacteria and archaea that have been harvested from ocean vents and other inhospitable ecosystems. I am concerned that potentially life-saving life forms are being wasted by our collective lack of attention.

Therefore, please consider inclusion of a biological inventory of deep rock strata in deliberations by the science advisory committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Ronald E. Bishop
Cooperstown, NY