

Fracking Foes Demand Cuomo Fire ‘Wholly Unqualified’ DEC Official

August 9, 2012 By [Ed Sutherland](#) [2 Comments](#)

ITHACA — A group of New York environmentalists and political leaders — including Binghamton Mayor Mathew Ryan — released an open letter to Gov. Andrew Cuomo, suggesting his Department of Environmental Conservation has been co-opted by the natural gas industry. The nearly dozen signators also called for the DEC’s chief of mineral resources to resign.

“We write to express our complete loss of faith in the Department of Environmental Conservation,” the writers told Cuomo earlier this week. The activists, including biologist and environmental author Sandra Steingraber and former Mobile Oil executive Lou Allstadt, charged the DEC “not only concluded with the gas industry in crafting regulations, its preparations to date are wholly inadequate to oversee the roll-out of an industry and practice as inherently dangerous, secretive, and accident-prone” as high-volume fracking.

Earlier this week, the Albany Times-Union reported the Governor’s office is quietly briefing select environmental groups on a plan to slowly roll-out hydrofracturing in the state. The group of writers, which includes Caroline’s Town Supervisor Don Barber and Deputy Town Supervisor Dominic Frongillo, said ‘safe’ development of shale gas is “not possible at this time using existing technologies.”

New York environmentalists have been regular pen pals of the Governor. Earlier this month, Southern Tier [fracking opponents](#) wrote 1,000 of Cuomo’s biggest financial contributors. In the letter, the writers charged Cuomo’s plan would make Southern Tier residents “second class citizens and unfairly subject them to potentially irreparable hazards.”

You can read this week’s [full open letter](#) at WCNY’s Capitol Bureau.