**Talking Points about the South Jersey Gas Pipeline Project:**

Your testimony to the Pinelands Commission is most effective when it is focused on the issues that concern them directly. The Pinelands Commission is tasked with determining whether or not the South Jersey Gas Pipeline project complies with the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). They are not going to rule on the pros and cons of fracked gas for example, as much as you might oppose that.

**Why is the Pipeline a Problem for the Pinelands?** The proposed pipeline violates the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). The CMP only permits infrastructure like gas pipelines in the Forest Management Area if it is "intended to primarily serve the needs of the Pinelands" – that is, only if needed for the towns and villages within the Pinelands. N.J.A.C. 7:50-5.23. To the extent it operates at all, the B.L. England plant primarily serves demand outside the Pinelands, where the great majority of residences and businesses in our region are located. There is no exception for pipes run along or under roads. **This is to protect against the immediate harms this type of construction brings to forests and wetlands. It also protects against future development of the Forest Area that these projects bring in their wake.**

**What Impact Will the Pipeline Have on the Pinelands?**In addition to weakening the Pinelands protection plan, the proposed pipeline would go along populated roads and under Mill Creek, the Tuckahoe River and Cumberland Pond. Any accidents, errors or failures during and after construction would impact county residents and natural resources.

**How Would Approval of the Pipeline Impact the Pinelands?**The survival of New Jersey’s Pinelands is entirely dependent on the regulations that were created to protect it in the first place. The Pinelands Commission would have to waive the rules of the CMP in order to allow this pipeline to go through the Forest Area. **If the Commission can’t uphold their own rules, then no one will!** This will not be the last project looking for an exception to the rules. The future of the natural resources found in the Pinelands and Cumberland County are at risk.

**The Pinelands Commission staff already found this project doesn’t comply with Pinelands Rules.** In 2013 South Jersey Gas proposed this pipeline to the Pinelands Commission and the staff found it violated the rules that protect the Pinelands National Reserve. The full Pinelands Commission then voted on whether or not to waive these rules and allow the project to proceed and they failed to get enough votes to move the project forward. It failed. The current project is not materially different than the first time it came around. In November 2016 NJ Superior Court ruled that the governing board of the Commission MUST vote on this project again.

Please follow the rules that project the Pinelands and vote no on the South Jersey Gas pipeline project.