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Pennsylvania officials also have been reaching out to colleagues in New Jersey and Delaware to "answer any technical questions they have," Henderson said. "It's simply a matter of raising their comfort level and getting the three votes that we need" to adopt the DRBC regulations.

Pennsylvania may be getting an ally on the pro-drilling side, as New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo reportedly is considering a plan to permit natural gas drilling in five counties along the Pennsylvania border, as long as local communities approve. The plan would be contingent on New York environmental regulators' agreement, a move that is expected this summer, Bloomberg News has reported. It would cover Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Steuben and Tioga counties.

"No final decision has been made, and no decision will be made until the scientific review is complete and we have all the facts," Josh Vlasto, a Cuomo spokesman, said in an emailed statement to Bloomberg.

If limited drilling gets the green light in New York, that could provide the votes needed to pass the regulations. Henderson said the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was "very supportive" of the regulations last year. "We believe they were in a position to support the regulations last November," he said.

Steve Rochette, a spokesman in the corps' Philadelphia office said only: "The Army Corps of Engineers, in representing the administration's position on the DRBC, will continue to work with the other commissioners on the technical aspects of the draft regulations."

Delaware Gov. Jack Markell — whose state has no Marcellus Shale but is downriver from the formation — has not changed his opposition, said spokesman Brian Selander.

In November, Markell wrote a letter to the commission, saying that critical issues regarding well construction and operation had not been finalized and could be weakened.

"Once hydrofracturing begins in the basin, the proverbial 'faucet' cannot be turned off, with any damage to our freshwater supplies likely requiring generations of effort to clean up. In this case, it is more important to get it right, than to be fast," Markell wrote.

Representatives of New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie did not return a call or email for comment.

Corbett has been a strong backer of natural gas drilling. The state has issued about 10,700 Marcellus Shale drilling permits since 2008 across the western and northern parts of Pennsylvania, according to Department of Environmental Protection records.

The DRBC has declined to discuss why it canceled the vote on the regulations, which its staff workers began developing in 2010.

Commission spokesman Clarke Rupert said members have "some unresolved issues" hey are studying. The commission does not have a new date for a vote on the proposed regulations, he said.

DRBC staffers are trying to put together a meeting to reconcile outstanding issues, Rupert said. "Each of the members is compiling and sharing a list of the outstanding technical issues in anticipation of this face-to-face meeting," he said.

Although the Lehigh Valley is not in the Marcellus Shale formation, drilling could have an impact on the region because the northern reaches of the Delaware River and the headwaters of the Lehigh River, both of which provide drinking water to the valley, are in Marcellus lands. In fracking, drillers inject millions of gallons of water mixed with sands and chemicals into shale deposits deep underground to break up the rock and release trapped gases.

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