MORATORIUM ON FRACKING

Whereas, the Anson County Board of Commissioners finds that the extraction of natural gas in Anson County’s rural and agricultural environment poses a significant threat to the health, safety, and welfare of residents, neighborhoods, and natural features; and

Whereas, the board finds that significant environmental, community, and human health impacts have resulted from commercial natural gas development in other states; and

Whereas, the Board finds that the State’s authorization of natural gas development automatically means allowing such activities to occur within Anson County, thus allowing for the deposition of toxins in to the air, soil, water, environment, and bodies of residents within our County; and

Whereas, the Board finds that existing State laws and regulations do not adequately protect the health and welfare of our County’s residents by not addressing natural gas development’s locality-specific effects on the unique natural, geologic, demographic, financial, and other conditions that exist within County boundaries; and

Whereas, the Board finds the North Carolina General Assembly and the Mining and Energy Commission are moving too fast toward enabling hydraulic fracturing to occur in North Carolina before adequate regulatory protections are established; and

Whereas, the Board finds that natural gas development is a conditional use; and

Whereas, Anson County is primarily rural and agricultural in nature, with the majority of residents living in rural areas; and

Whereas, Anson County’s income is dependent on a healthy agricultural industry, with over $149,000,000 in agricultural income earned last year according to North Carolina Cooperative Extension; and
Whereas, Anson County is home to Pee-Dee National Wildlife Refuge; and
Whereas, the Pee-Dee National Refuge provides critical habitat for 180 birds, 49
amphibian and reptile, 28 mammal, and 20 fish species, including migratory waterfowl,
migratory song birds, and threatened and endangered species; and

Whereas, the Pee-Dee National Refuge provides recreation and environmental education
for 35,000 visitors annually; and

Whereas, over fifty thousand Anson County, Union County and Richmond County
residents depend on the public water supply sourced from Blewett Falls Lake; and

Whereas, Blewett Falls Lake is a likely water resource from which natural gas operations
would draw millions of gallons of water to use for natural gas development; and

Whereas, the State of North Carolina and Blewett Falls have experienced drought within
recent years and cannot afford to endanger already limited water resources; and

Whereas, according to the United States Geological Survey, approximately 2.7 million
North Carolinians depend upon well water for their water supply; and

Whereas, approximately 1,000 Anson County residents depend upon well water for
private water supply; and

Whereas, while private wells are not subject to inspection, citizens using privately
supplied drinking water are at greater risk of drinking contaminated water; and

Whereas, the Board recognizes that all residents, natural communities, and ecosystems
in Anson County possess a fundamental and inalienable right to clean, drinkable, and
usable water that will sustain health and life; and

Whereas, the Board finds that North Carolina’s unique geography and minimal separation
between shale formation and groundwater supplies puts well water users
disproportionately at risk of groundwater supply contamination; and

Whereas, local governments will incur increased costs for services such as regulatory
compliance monitoring, emergency services, maintenance of roads and bridges, and
increased policing and other social services; and

Whereas, Anson County cannot afford to provide additional funding for services such as
regulatory compliance monitoring, emergency services, maintenance of roads and bridges,
and increased policing and other social services; and

Whereas, Anson County already is the 8th most economically distressed county in North
Carolina; and
Whereas, the Board believes it appropriate for natural gas owners and operators to pay for these additional services that the county will have to provide to protect the health and welfare of its citizens;

Therefore, the Board hereby adopts this Moratorium, which temporarily prohibits natural gas development activities, including hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling, from occurring within Anson County while ordinances are developed, enacted and implemented to protect the rights of Anson County Residents and the natural resources we enjoy.

Adopted this 7th day of May, 2013.

Anna H. Baucom, Chair
Anson County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:
Bonnie M. Huntley, NCCC
Clerk to the Board