

# Currents

food&waterwatch

## News from Food & Water Watch's Water for All Campaign

Vol. III, Issue 1

[www.foodandwaterwatch.org](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org)

January 2008

### Arizonans Reclaim Local Control of Water; RWE Delays American Water Sale

It's a new year, and the town of Cave Creek, Arizona is turning over a new leaf. The town delivered a victory for advocates of locally controlled water when it decided in late 2007 not to renew operating contracts with Arizona American Water, a subsidiary of American Water, the largest private water company in the United States. Instead, Cave Creek will run its two water systems locally.

"Customer-service issues will be dealt with by local staff who know the system," Town Clerk Carrie Dyrek told the Arizona Republic newspaper in November. Local officials have also noted that public ownership of the water systems would "save money for the town while improving service for the 4,200 water customers," according to the Arizona Republic.

The move puts Cave Creek in the ranks of other communities around the country that see local control of water as a better option for citizens than having their water systems controlled by American Water and its European parent company, RWE.

RWE, a multibillion-dollar German energy and utilities conglomerate, had planned to sell American Water through an initial public offering on the stock market by the end of 2007, but delayed



the deal because the projected earnings were lower than RWE had hoped for. RWE board minutes obtained by Food & Water Watch last June showed the political resistance to privatization in the U.S. as a motivating factor in RWE's decision to sell American Water.

Will more Cave Creeks further delay the deal? We'll keep tracking the developments for you here in *Currents*. You can also sign up to receive the latest updates by email at: [www.foodandwaterwatch.org/take-action/join-our-email-lists-1/ mailing-list-signup.html](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/take-action/join-our-email-lists-1/ mailing-list-signup.html)

### San Francisco Restaurants Take Back the Tap!

The city of San Francisco is serious about its water. Last July, Mayor Gavin Newsom lauded the city's high quality tap water from the Hetch Hetchy Valley when he implemented an executive order banning the use of city funds to buy bottled water. Now, San Francisco's restaurants are also embracing city tap water.

In collaboration with the City of San Francisco, Food & Water Watch is kicking off a campaign in January to encourage local restaurants to stop selling bottled water. San Francisco restau-



rants Incanto, Delfina, and NOPA are already on board. Despite potential loss of profits from selling bottled water, these and other restaurants have caught on that bottled water is an unwise use of resources and are ready to start serving only tap water. According to Mark Pastore, owner of Incanto, "What we sacrifice in profits by not selling bottled water, we more than make up in increased goodwill with our guests."

Food & Water Watch has developed a guide to help restaurants transition from bottled water to tap water and will launch a nationwide campaign in 2008 to encourage restaurants in cities around the country to Take Back the Tap!

## Ask Congress to Support Water for the Poor

On December 6, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky introduced the Water for the Poor Resolution. The resolution recognizes and calls for the removal of constraints that have kept the international community from providing sufficient support to the world's poor; in particular the more than 1.4 billion people currently living without adequate access to water. Take action to support the resolution by going to: [www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/Alerts/support-water-for-the-world](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/Alerts/support-water-for-the-world)

## California Agency Attempts to Privatize Water

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is considering privatizing a major water facility built and paid for by the public. The Kern Water Bank is an enormous underground reservoir that is part of the State Water Project, which brings water to southern California from the north.

In November, a draft document of proposed modifications to the State Water Project recommended privatization of the Kern Water Bank. Rather than manage the Kern Water Bank as a public trust, the DWR would formally transfer control of the facility to the Kern Water Bank Authority, an agency dominated by private interests. The largest of these is the Paramount Farming Company, a subsidiary of Roll International, which is one of the largest privately-owned corporations in the country.

The proposed change would sanction the sale of water to the highest bidder – often new real estate developments north of Los Angeles – promoting sprawl and unsustainable development. The privatization is also a violation of California's public trust doctrine, which mandates that the state's water be managed for the benefit of all Californians.

## Water Documentary Ready to Make a Splash at Sundance Festival

This month, as moviegoers gather in Park City, Utah for the 2008 Sundance Film Festival, global water issues will be on their minds.

The festival is showing Irena Salina's new film, "Flow: For Love of Water," as part of its documentary category. The film looks at water struggles as far and wide as South Africa, India, and California, where communities are confronting pollution, corruption and poverty in their pursuit of clean and affordable water.

The 2008 Sundance Film Festival runs January 17 - 27. Find out more about the festival and the film at [www.sundance.org](http://www.sundance.org).

Check out our new fact sheet: Economic Failures of Water Privatization. We took a survey of water utilities in the U.S. and found that privately owned water utilities charge customers significantly more than their publicly owned counterparts. Read it online at: [www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/waterprivatization/usa/economic-failures](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/waterprivatization/usa/economic-failures)

## What's Your Water Footprint?



You may be aware of your carbon footprint—the measure of carbon dioxide emitted as a result of your daily activities—but do you know about your water footprint? Well now you can!

On January 8, Food & Water Watch joined with GRACE and the Center for a Livable Future at John's Hopkins University in launching "H<sub>2</sub>O Conserve," a web-based project that shows consumers how much water they use in their daily lives.

The project's Water Calculator measures water-use by factoring in water used for cleaning, bathing, outdoor landscaping and recreation, as well as water use related to an individual's dietary habits, energy consumption and recycling practices. H<sub>2</sub>O Conserve also provides tips for water conservation.

Use the Water Calculator and find out how to reduce your water footprint at [www.H2Oconserve.org](http://www.H2Oconserve.org).

! Become a member of Food & Water Watch at: [www.foodandwaterwatch.org](http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org)



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