Democratic Establishment Feeling the Heat on Fracking

Wenonah Hauter, Executive Director

The movement to stop fossil fuel development just keeps winning.

On Earth Day, April 22, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo put a stop to the Constitution pipeline, a dangerous project to ship fracked gas from Pennsylvania into New York, intersecting almost 300 bodies of water. Two days before, the Kinder Morgan energy behemoth canceled a gas pipeline that would have run through parts of Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

The fact is, activism — when we apply enough pressure on our decision makers — works. And we need to keep the pressure on: while Cuomo has emerged as a climate hero, other Democratic governors haven’t been as responsive to their constituents on climate matters, even though the Democratic establishment is feeling the activist pressure to keep fossil fuels in the ground (for example, fracking was a

Wenonah Hauter’s book, Frackopoly: The Battle for the Future of Energy and the Environment is now available! Go to Frackopoly.org to learn more (see more, page 6.)

Advocates Bring Suit Against FDA for GMO Salmon

This spring, Food & Water Watch joined a broad coalition of organizations suing the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for approving the first-ever genetically engineered food animal, an Atlantic salmon engineered to grow quickly.

The lawsuit challenges the FDA’s claim that it has authority to approve and regulate GE animals as “animal drugs” under the 1938 Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. Those provisions were meant to ensure the safety of veterinary drugs administered to treat disease in livestock and were not intended to address entirely new GE animals that can pass along their altered genes to the next generation.

The lawsuit also highlights the FDA’s failure to protect the environment and consult wildlife agencies in its review process, as required by federal law. Stay tuned for more updates on the suit.
Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara Youth Group Selects Food & Water Watch in their “Hunt for Justice”

Each year, the Unitarian Universalist congregation in Santa Barbara, California hosts a “Hunt for Justice” on Easter Sunday to teach their younger members about the importance of charity in action. After becoming interested in the work of Food & Water Watch, their 6th and 7th Grade classes selected us as a recipient of the $218 raised at their Easter egg hunt-inspired event. Rebecca Claassen, our Santa Barbara County organizer, said, “I’m thrilled to continue working with these kids on our local and national campaigns to ban fracking and transition to a clean, safe, just energy future.”

Thanks to all the students that helped contribute to our mission with their passion and enthusiasm!

Democratic Establishment Feeling the Heat on Fracking (continued from page 1)

topic of the Democratic primary debates for the first time ever this year).

Despite his rhetoric, Governor Jerry Brown in California continues to frack even in the face of the huge climate disaster in the Porter Ranch community. Governors John Hickenlooper, Tom Wolf and Gina Raimondo (Colorado, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, respectively) continue to support the fracking industry and related infrastructure, despite mounting opposition in those states.

What’s the next step? Keep up the pressure, of course — and amp it up a few volts. The March for a Clean Energy Revolution will hit the streets of Philadelphia during the Democratic National Convention this summer — where Democratic leaders around the country will convene — to call for a ban on fracking, an end to fossil fuel infrastructure expansion and a swift, meaningful transition to renewable energy. We’ll see you in Philadelphia.
We’re so proud of our award-winning staff!

- Alex Beauchamp, Northeast Region Director, was recognized as one of 40 Under 40: Individuals Under 40 Working to Improve Our Food System by the NYC Food Policy Center at Hunter College.

- Santa Barbara County Organizer Rebecca Claassen won the Lois Phillips Founder’s Award from the Association for Women in Communications for her community work to ban fracking and dangerous drilling techniques in her home county.

- Wenonah Hauter was honored in early May with the “Strong Feisty Woman Award” from the Des Moines branch of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

Congratulations to Alex, Rebecca and Wenonah!

EAT, DRINK, RIDE!

By Jay Reighley

After participating in my first Climate Ride event last year, Climate Ride Northeast, I chose to participate in the Climate Hike in Glacier National Park this July, again on behalf of Food & Water Watch! I know Food & Water Watch works hard to secure healthy environments that support healthy communities.

As a nurse practitioner for over 35 years, I know first hand the rapid rise in compromised immune systems of my patients due to hazardous chemicals in the environment, which filter into our food sources. I know that my effort only has impact within the broader work of groups like Climate Ride and Food & Water Watch. But I also know that, by participating in this trek, more people will be touched with the mission of curbing greenhouse gases, easing carbon footprints, and becoming stewards of our land and water. So I’m proud to do my part!

Jay Reighley, NP chose Food & Water Watch as one of her beneficiaries last year for the Climate Ride and selected us again as beneficiary of this year’s Climate Hike. She lives in South Freeport, Maine.
FOOD & WATER WATCH REPORT PUBLICIZED FLINT’S EXPENSIVE WATER WOES

Earlier this year, Food & Water Watch released a report that surveyed drinking water rates of the 500 largest community water systems — the most-extensive report of its kind — and one finding stood out among the rest: in 2015, while Flint’s water was being contaminated with lead, Flint households were paying more for water service than households served by any other large system in the nation. This disturbing fact was reported in media across the country, including The Washington Post, CNN, Associated Press, USA Today, TIME, and local and national news broadcasts nationwide.

Mary Grant, director of our Public Water for All campaign, who researched and wrote the report, says the figure is nothing short of astounding. “Flint residents were paying the highest rates for water that was literally poisoning them. It’s shocking. What’s worse, they had little say in how their system was run because it was under the control of a governor-appointed emergency manager. The findings of our report show how communities are impacted once local control of their water is ceded — whether it’s via emergency management or privatization.”

Earlier this year, Food & Water Watch and our allies rallied with people in Flint, where despite water contamination and exorbitantly high rates, the city planned to shut off water service for people who couldn’t afford to pay their bills. In response to public pressure, the state appropriated funds to help cover Flint household water bills, and the city announced a moratorium on water shutoffs and bills. Now, in Flint and elsewhere, Food & Water Watch is advocating for more federal support to ease the burden of high water rates and help ensure that service is affordable for all.

Clean Energy March Partner Profile: ACTION United

By Arielle Klagsbrun • Organizer with ACTION United

ACTION United is a membership-based economic and racial justice organization that works primarily in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh on issues such as fully funded public education, an increased minimum wage and affordable Internet. In the past few years, ACTION United has become increasingly involved in the fight for climate justice. With multiple neighborhood chapters impacted by crude oil trains and the Philadelphia Energy Solutions oil refinery, ACTION United leaders are leading the fight for environmental and climate justice.

ACTION United and Food & Water Watch have been working together closely through the Green Justice Philly coalition to stop the expansion of fossil fuels in Philadelphia, particularly the plan to turn the city into the “Houston of the Northeast.” Together, we are calling for an end to any fossil fuel infrastructure expansion and for a transition to a green economy that works for all.

ACTION United is working with Food & Water Watch on the March for a Clean Energy Revolution because we must push our elected officials to stop expanding fossil fuels, particularly natural gas. We believe that Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney and Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf could be leaders in transitioning our state toward renewable energy and away from fracking. At the March for a Clean Energy Revolution, we will call on them to do just that.
Countdown to GMO Labeling in Vermont!

On March 16, 2016, thanks to pressure from thousands of people like you, the U.S. Senate was unable to pass a vote to move “Monsanto’s dream bill” forward. We’re counting the days until the Vermont law requiring GMO food labeling goes into effect on July 1st, and, as of the publishing date of this newsletter, the industry is still in a panic to try to stop it.

Since we collectively defeated what some people refer to as the “Deny Americans the Right to Know Act” or DARK Act that would ban state GMO labeling laws, several companies — including General Mills, Mars, Con Agra and Kellogg’s — have joined Campbell’s by announcing that they will label all of their products that contain genetically engineered ingredients to comply with the Vermont law. This was big news, and we hope that other food companies will stop lobbying against GMO labels and also comply with the Vermont law.

The industry arguments against labeling include that it will be prohibitively expensive and will increase the cost of food, but those arguments are being debunked as more companies label and don’t raise their prices. We’ll keep you posted on next steps toward making sure we all know what’s in our food as we watch closely what happens with Vermont.

Check out foodandwaterwatch.org for the latest action on this issue.

COLLEGE STUDENTS COMPETE TO REDUCE BOTTLED WATER CONSUMPTION ON CAMPUS

Food & Water Watch’s fourth annual Tap-a-palooza contest wrapped up on World Water Day, March 22. College students from across the United States competed to collect pledges to reduce bottled water consumption, and winners were chosen in two categories: total overall pledges and per capita pledges.

Montclair State University in New Jersey won first place in overall pledges, collecting an impressive 1,926 pledges. The College of William & Mary in Virginia won pledges per capita, with just over 20 percent of the student body taking the pledge. A record-breaking 7,400 total pledges were collected across all 34 participating schools. Both first-place winners received a $1,500 prize toward water infrastructure improvements on campus.

The Tap-a-palooza contest runs as part of Food & Water Watch’s larger Take Back the Tap campus campaign, which encourages students to choose tap over bottled water when possible.

The 2016 Tap-a-palooza Photo Contest winners were Southern Oregon University (Facebook winner, left) and University of Denver (Food & Water Watch Staff Choice, right).
Frackopoly Tackles Policies, Influence Peddling Behind Widespread Fracking

Frackopoly: The Battle for the Future of Energy and the Environment, written by our executive director, Wenonah Hauter, is now available! Frackopoly looks at the policies and influence peddling that have favored widespread fracking over truly clean energy, and at the growing movement to ban fracking and keep fossil fuels in the ground.

Frackopoly shows how the industry consolidated over the last century and formed strong ties with Wall Street, the media and even leading environmental groups to usher in the fracking boom — with devastating consequences for our environment, communities and public health.

“Hauter delivers a passionate history and critique of the energy industry, from Standard Oil to Enron ... [A] journalistic exposé of fracking outrages in which aggressive entrepreneurs in pursuit of profits wreak havoc on the land and poison the water.”

—Kirkus Reviews

For information on how to purchase the book, visit frackopoly.org.

Big Oil Interlock
Each line represents a common board member, advisor, trustee

One reason the public debate on fracking is controlled by industry? The cozy ties between media, nonprofits, banks and industry are forged in part by shared board members, advisors and trustees.
Working with partners and supporters at the national, state and local levels, we achieved the following victories this quarter:

**VICTORIES**

- **BREAKING:** In early May, after seven years of hard work, Food & Water Watch and local grassroots allies blocked Nestlé from bottling water in the Columbia River Gorge. Despite fierce opposition by Nestlé and the International Bottled Water Association, a stunning 69 percent voted to reject a proposed Nestlé bottled water plant.
- Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously to support a motion calling on Congress to protect consumer health by banning antibiotics abuse on factory farms.
- Water filling stations were funded and installed on campuses including the University of California Santa Cruz, Cal State East Bay and the University of New Hampshire. Our Tap-a-palooza campus contest resulted in 7,400 students pledging to take back the tap in just one month, equating to over 1.6 million bottles reduced from the waste stream (based on average bottled water consumption).
- Successfully blocked liquefied natural gas export terminals proposed by Jordan Cove and Oregon LNG in Oregon.
- Blocked fracking proposal two miles from the city limits of Rio Rancho in Sandoval County, New Mexico.
- Blocked Constitution pipeline, with New York Governor Andrew Cuomo rejecting the project.
- Stopped Kinder Morgan’s Northeast Direct pipeline.
- Blocked efforts to place factory fish farms off the coast of Michigan.
- Stopped legislation in New Mexico that would have given tax breaks to the oil industry.
- Passed a fracking ban in Prince George’s County, Maryland, the first such measure in the state.
- Defeated a dangerous pro-fracking bill in Florida for the second year in a row that would have paved the way for new extreme extraction methods in the state.
- Passed a law in Virginia to require more transparency in state oversight of Aqua America and other private water companies.
- Defeated legislation in Wisconsin that would have allowed a private water company to buy up water systems without a public vote and even sell to out-of-state companies.

**MILESTONES**

Our supporters sent:

- **25,563** letters to Congress asking them to oppose the bad federal energy bill that would support more natural gas exports.
- **Over 170,000** comments to the Senate and made over 10,000 calls to oppose the DARK Act.
- **31,484** letters to California Governor Jerry Brown asking him to shut down the Aliso Canyon Gas facility.
- **37,777** letters to President Obama and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, asking them to withdraw the agency’s revised Protective Action Guides for responding to radiological releases, which essentially increase allowable radiation levels in drinking water.
- **22,873** actions to Congress asking for help for Flint, Michigan and funding for public water infrastructure.
- **28,339** actions to President Obama asking him to declare a public health emergency in Flint.
Get Ready for Climate Ride 2016!

Food & Water Watch teams will be involved in three Climate Ride events this year:

- **California North Coast**
  - May 22-26

- **Bar Harbor to Boston**
  - September 8-12

- **New York City to Washington, D.C.**
  - September 17-21

Interested in learning how you can participate in the ride of a lifetime and support Food & Water Watch at the same time? Contact Aliya Mejias at aliya@fwwatch.org. For more information on Climate Ride, visit climateride.org.

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**Become an activist!**

Want to see the latest ways you can help drive the movement to end corporate control and abuse of our food and water supplies? 
Visit our website at: foodandwaterwatch.org/take-action

**Renew your membership!**

Your donation will help make our food and water safe and clean. Join us at: foodandwaterwatch.org/support-us

Or, please send your check for $20 to: Food & Water Watch
1616 P St. NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036

**Already an activist and a member?**

Spread the word! Join us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and more!