As this newsletter goes to print, our staff are knee deep in responding to — and resisting — the many destructive plans that the Trump administration has for our food, water and climate. Meanwhile, our civil rights, free press and science are all under attack.

But while it’s easy to feel discouraged, I feel renewed resolve instead. Getting people engaged in politics has been a huge part of my career and is one of the reasons I founded Food & Water Watch. Without large numbers of people raising their voices in unison, we’ll never beat back the pro-corporate agenda that threatens our food, water and climate.

There are so many signs of hope. The phenomenal success of the Women’s Marches, which politicized many, many people, has us feeling invigorated. The federal workers that have stood up to gag orders from the Trump administration — like the person who tweeted climate facts from a national park Twitter account in defiance of the order — show that everyone is mobilizing to resist the assault on our rights, our environmental protections and our freedom to speak freely. More and more people realize that we can’t take our freedoms for granted. And Food & Water Watch is more inspired than ever by people like you who are stepping up to protect our country in these strange and difficult times.

This, indeed, is the silver lining around the dark cloud of the Trump administration. It has mobilized so many people to stop the right-wing agenda that has been assaulting our collective rights for years — including the right to clean water and an environment that supports human health. Trump has just given it an unapologetic face — one that we are prepared to fight until all of our human rights and democratic freedoms are protected.

We called foul — and we won! When the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the final report on the impact of fracking on our drinking water in December 2016, it clearly stated that fracking can and does cause drinking water contamination. The topline of a previously released draft of the report claimed that there were no “widespread, systemic” impacts on drinking water from fracking. When that draft came out in 2015, Food & Water Watch staff and supporters like you jumped into action. You helped us submit more than 100,000 public comments to the EPA and tell 51 members of Congress to send a letter to the EPA telling it to back the claim or drop it from the report. We also testified before the

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Trump’s Corporate Cabinet

We all expected that Trump’s cabinet would mean trouble for many of the things we care about, from clean energy and healthy communities to our democracy itself. But it is worse than we could have imagined. These individuals, responsible for the policies and decisions that affect the lives and well-being of all Americans, so far have a combined net worth of over $13 billion — that’s five times the net worth of President Obama’s cabinet, and more wealth than a third of American households. As you might expect, their ties to corporations run deep, and those ties are reflected in their positions and past actions.

Scott Pruitt, EPA Administrator

- He opposed attempts to regulate fracking on federal lands.
- He condemned attempts by the EPA to study fracking’s impact on drinking water as being “politically motivated.”
- He’s pushed the interests of industrial agriculture in Oklahoma, including a deregulatory right-to-farm measure.

Corporate ties: He’s a member of ALEC and has taken about $300,000 in campaign contributions from the fossil fuel industry. Fossil fuel industry CEO Harold Hamm chaired his 2014 re-election campaign.

Rex Tillerson, Secretary of State

- He’s presided over major deals with Russia to expand oil and gas development.
- Exxon targeted Germany, a nation with a strong commitment to renewables and energy efficiency, for natural gas drilling and fracking.
- Under Tillerson’s leadership, Exxon continued to fund groups that promoted climate denial and spread misinformation about the threat of climate change.

Corporate ties: He was CEO of ExxonMobil from 2006 until January 2017 and owns Exxon shares worth $151 million.

Rick Perry, Secretary of Energy

Corporate ties: Perry is a former board member of Energy Transfer Partners (he resigned on December 31, 2016), the company behind the Dakota Access Pipeline. He also sat on the board of Sunoco Logistics Partners (also resigning on December 31, 2016), which is trying to acquire Energy Transfer Partners for $21.3 billion. And he’s received $14 million in oil and gas contributions to his lieutenant governor, governor and presidential campaigns.

Ryan Zinke, Secretary of the Interior

- He opposed regulation of drilling and fracking on federal and American Indian lands.
- He voted to lift the 40-year ban on crude oil exports.
- He co-sponsored the Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act, a bill to speed up approval for pipelines.
- He praised the EPA when it wrongfully reported in a draft study that fracking does not pose widespread threats to groundwater. That study has since been finalized, acknowledging that fracking can, and does, contaminate drinking water.

Corporate ties: He’s taken hundreds of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry.
agency’s science advisers on numerous occasions and wrote a letter signed by more than 200 public interest groups calling on the EPA to correct its report.

We made sure the agency heard from people across the country whose drinking water was made unusable by fracking, including residents of Dimock, Pennsylvania; Pavillion, Wyoming; and Parker County, Texas. The EPA had abandoned people in these communities and left the cases out of the report.

Now, with your help, we’re taking this report to communities across the country as we continue our work to ban fracking everywhere. We know that under the new Trump administration our local efforts to ban fracking will be more important than ever – especially with fracking apologist Scott Pruitt now heading the EPA. Still, this report will help us make the case, from California to Maryland: There is no safe way to frack, and to protect our drinking water, we must ban fracking.
New York Times Confirms National Academies of Sciences Has GMO Industry Ties

Drawing on more than two years of Food & Water Watch research, in December 2016 the New York Times published a damning account of the conflicts-of-interest culture that pervades the National Academies of Sciences’ (NAS) work on genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

The Times noted the deeply one-sided panels of scientists that the Academies convenes to author its GMO reports, many of whom have undisclosed financial conflicts of interest. It also described a troubling revolving door of staff between the NAS and the biotechnology industry.

This conflict of interest is especially troubling because the NAS was created by an act of Congress to provide independent counsel on science and technology issues, and is widely regarded as one of the preeminent scientific institutions in the nation. We’ll continue shining a light on industry influence over our food policies — and how you can take action.

VICTORIES AND MILESTONES

Working with partners and supporters at the national, state and local levels, we recently achieved the following outstanding victories:

VICTORIES

- Defeated the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a horrible trade deal that would have weakened food safety, increased natural gas exports and undermined local fracking bans.
- Passed fracking waste bans in Middletown and Windsor, Connecticut, as part of a larger effort to secure a statewide fracking waste ban.
- Defeated a proposed fossil fuel infrastructure plan in South Philadelphia.
- Passed a local fracking ban in Frostburg, Maryland and resolutions supporting a ban in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County and Frederick County, as part of a statewide effort to pass a fracking ban in the legislature.
- Secured $120 million in federal aid to address the Flint, Michigan water crisis. More than 20,000 Food & Water Watch members submitted messages to members of Congress in support of this assistance.
- The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission upheld its decision to deny a pipeline permit in southern Oregon, shoring up our victory in defeating a fracked gas export and pipeline proposal for the region.
- Defeated a wastewater privatization proposal in Coos Bay, Oregon.
- Passed local fracking ban ordinances in Indian River County and Zephyrhills in Pasco County, Florida as part of a state-wide effort to ban fracking.

- Made progress in our campus campaign against bottled water as water filling stations were installed at universities including Central Michigan University, University of Nevada – Las Vegas and Aquinas College. Beloit College agreed to remove bottled water from vending machines.
- Submitted an additional 45,126 messages to President Obama to reject the Dakota Access Pipeline and held or coordinated actions with allies across the country including in Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.
- Defeated HB 275, one of the most sweeping public/private partnership pieces of legislation, working with coalition members in the New Mexico State House in March.

MILESTONES

- Food & Water Watch and nearly three dozen advocacy groups filed a petition with Scott Pruitt’s EPA, asking the agency to do more to protect communities from the environmental and public health nightmares associated with factory farming.
- Our supporters made over 12,000 phone calls to Senate offices, delivered more than 163,000 petitions to members of Congress, and participated in rallies and visits at district offices in states across the country to oppose Trump’s cabinet appointees and his negative, regressive agenda.
While the Trump administration orders the EPA to do less to protect Americans from dirty air and water, and Congress threatens to dismantle the agency altogether, Food & Water Watch and 34 advocacy organizations are demanding that the agency do more to protect communities from factory farms.

In March, in an effort led by Food & Water Watch, nearly three dozen organizations filed a legal petition with Scott Pruitt’s Environmental Protection Agency citing its duty under the law to hold concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs, or factory farms) accountable for their water pollution that threatens public health and the environment.

“This petition paves the way for the EPA to finally regulate CAFOs as required under the Clean Water Act, and explains that allowing CAFO pollution to continue unabated by maintaining the woefully inadequate status quo would violate federal law,” said Wenonah Hauter, executive director of Food & Water Watch. “Pruitt’s record as Oklahoma attorney general shows that he’s only looking out for industry interests — including the interests of polluting factory farms. But the EPA is legally bound to protect communities from pollution, and we intend to hold the agency accountable for doing its job.”

Specifically, the petition asks the EPA to remove loopholes that have enabled CAFOs to avoid permitting, and asks the agency to require large corporate integrators that control CAFO practices to obtain permits (instead of just their contract operators, who currently bear the burden of following permits and managing waste). The petition also asks the agency to require pollution monitoring and reporting to better protect water quality, and as well to cover a wider range of pollutants, heavy metals and pharmaceuticals found in industrial livestock waste.

To learn more about our work fighting factory farms, visit foodandwaterwatch.org.

SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT: Craig Voellmicke

In this new political age, folks everywhere are looking for ways to get involved and make a difference for people and the planet. One way some of our supporters are making a difference is by doing live events, like Climate Ride, to help raise money to fund Food & Water Watch’s campaigns to stop fracking and protect our food and water.

Craig Voellmicke of New York selected Food & Water Watch as his sole beneficiary for the Climate Hike in Glacier National Park in 2016. Dedicated to banning fracking and shifting toward a truly renewable future, Craig became a monthly donor (Partner) to further support this work. Craig told us why:

“I’ve always been active outside, hiking, biking and camping, and preserving the environment and clean water and fresh food are important to me. But work was always in the way or an excuse not to get involved — if I couldn’t dedicate regular time, I somehow rationalized not taking action. Thanks to a close friend, I learned that every small step, which I learned along the way, can really add up. So, I made Climate Hike a next step, with the hope of also motivating friends and family to get involved in protecting our food and water. The beauty of Glacier National Park was beyond anything I had seen, and the great people on the hike were inspiring and we encouraged each other to do more. Being a Food & Water Action Partner is yet another step I’ve made to make activism a more consistent part of my life.”

We hope you’ll join Craig as a Partner or by dedicating a life event, like Climate Ride, to stopping fracking and protecting our food and water. Even better, consider doing both! If interested, please contact our Development Coordinator Aliya Mejias at 202-683-2462 or aliya@fwwatch.org.
IN HER OWN WORDS

Saskia Harak
Activist Network Manager

I have talked to so many people over the last few weeks who are ready. They are ready to stand up to protect their community and the environment. They are ready to engage their friends and neighbors with important conversations and to give them ways to act.

Working with Food & Water Watch’s Activist Network, I have an amazing opportunity to connect with people from around the country who are passionate and committed to a brighter future for their communities. Using online tools, we are able to ensure that these local activists are supported and have access to materials and trainings — and, most of all, to ensure that they are connected to each other.

There are challenges that lie before us, but every day I am re-inspired, reenergized and refocused by the strong and powerful people from coast to coast who come to Food & Water Watch and say, “What can I do next?”

Fracking Update: Maryland and Florida

The prospects of advancing important environmental regulations at the federal level — like banning fracking on public lands, for one — look rather dim at the moment. But this doesn’t mean that progress fighting fracking and fossil fuel expansion can’t happen in our new political climate. Although the Trump administration seeks to bolster the oil and gas industry, Food & Water Watch is working locally and state-by-state to ban fracking everywhere. In Maryland and Florida, robust, bipartisan efforts against fracking have been unfolding, and we are playing a critical part in pushing them forward.

When the Hughes Oil Company likely conducted a fracking test in Florida in 2013, Food & Water Watch worked with dozens of grassroots groups to form the Floridians Against Fracking coalition. After years of educating and organizing, we helped defeat pro-fracking legislation in the state Senate last May. And now, a Republican-sponsored bill to ban fracking entirely has been introduced in both legislative chambers and is moving through the state Senate committee process with strong bipartisan support. Our work with Floridians Against Fracking is suddenly bearing fruit.

Likewise, in Maryland, an intensive coalition effort led by Food & Water Watch is tantalizingly close to banning fracking in the state. More than two years ago, working with the Don’t Frack Maryland coalition of more than 100 diverse local and statewide groups, we quickly ramped up an intense campaign to stop the imminent introduction of drilling and fracking to the state. In 2015 we won a hard-fought two-year moratorium and bought some time. Now, a year and a half later, our campaign for a permanent ban is moving fast. On March 10, the Maryland House passed the fracking ban bill with overwhelming bipartisan support, and the state Senate may act soon. For updates on these unfolding campaigns, visit foodandwaterwatch.org.
What’s Next for Dakota Access and the Standing Rock Sioux?

Last December, President Obama announced that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would not grant the Dakota Access Pipeline project the permit needed to complete construction of the pipeline by drilling under the Missouri River at Lake Oahe, near the Standing Rock reservation. The Army Corps was instructed to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the river crossing and to explore possibilities for alternative routes. Unfortunately, Trump has since ordered the Corps to grant approval of the pipeline.

Dallas Goldtooth, a friend and ally of Food & Water Watch and a leader from the Indigenous Environmental Network, had this to say about the latest from Standing Rock:

“We are falling into a dangerous place where the United States government makes up its own rules. We know the Trump administration stands to gain from this project.... Their actions reveal a blatant disregard for the rule of law and a clear interest in lining their own pockets. This decision follows Trump’s unfortunate attacks on immigrants, women and the press. Now he is working even harder to attack sovereign tribal nations and historic treaties. Trump and his climate-denying cabinet are clearly doing what is best for their businesses and are willing to put profit before human rights and the environment. But make no mistake: We are prepared to mobilize and resist this brazen power grab."

In March, Food & Water Watch was proud to join the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and Indigenous grassroots leaders and allies at Native Nations Rise at a peaceful march in Washington, D.C. Huge crowds came together to say “Mni Wiconi” – Water is Life – and stand in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples in their fight to protect our essential water resources from the fossil fuel industry.

IMPACT: Our research on the financiers of Energy Transfer Partners and the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) served as the foundation for Seattle’s recent ordinance ending its relationship with Wells Fargo. We worked closely with Seattle City Council members to provide primary sources for the final ordinance, and are providing related research support to other campaigns across the country, including in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Austin and Columbus.

Resist, Protect and Rebuild!

A climate-denier appointed to head the EPA. A right-wing governor from Texas long in the pocket of Big Oil to head the Energy Department. Billionaires and ideologues with radical pro-corporate agendas being placed in critical positions throughout the government, with a ruthless agenda to eliminate the protections we need for safe food and clean water, and to drill anywhere and everywhere for more fossil fuels that will drive even worse climate change.

The threat is clear, with huge consequences for us, our children and our grandchildren. But while we resist the Trump agenda, we must continue protecting our access to safe food and clean water. We also must rebuild our democracy so that it works for people and the planet. That’s why Food & Water Action Fund is also working directly at the state and local levels where we know real change is still possible.

When you use the enclosed envelope to renew your membership in Food & Water Action Fund today, you are staking your place as part of a larger movement that will resist AND rebuild. Together, we will safeguard the gains we’ve made, like banning fracking in New York and in California’s Monterey County, and passing bills against fracking in more than 600 communities nationwide. And we will stop the Trump pro-corporate agenda and make our democracy work for people and the environment that we all depend on for life. Please take a moment and renew your commitment right now!
act. join. give.

**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](http://foodandwaterwatch.org/take-action)

**Renew your membership!**
Your donation will help ensure your food and water is safe and clean. Join us at [foodandwaterwatch.org/give](http://foodandwaterwatch.org/give)

**Make it political!**
Your non-tax-deductible donation will make possible our uncompromising lobbying and policy work in Washington, D.C. and in statehouses across the country. See more at: [foodandwateractionfund.org/give](http://foodandwateractionfund.org/give)

**Already an activist and a member? Spread the word!**
Join us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and more!

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**To donate by mail:**
Please send your check made out to Food & Water Watch or Food & Water Action Fund and mail to:
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Washington, DC 20036

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Did we miss something you want to hear about? Have ideas to improve our newsletter? Contact us at info@fwwatch.org or (202) 683-2500 to give us your feedback.