Thank You For Fighting Like You Live Here!

WHY CARBON CAPTURE WON’T SOLVE THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Focus on Climate and Energy
DANGEROUS: What You Need to Know About Carbon Pipelines

Donor Spotlight: Carol Johnson

Moratorium on Fossil Fuel-Powered Crypto Mining in NY

SPRING 2023 ISSUE

The Action Report Has a New Name and Look!
It seems like there is no limit to the schemes the fossil fuel industry comes up with to grow their industry. It's driving the climate crisis, the greatest threat to our food and water.

Twelve years ago Food & Water Watch sounded the alarm about the growing threat of fracking, becoming the first national organization to call for a ban on this dangerous practice. Like fracking, carbon capture is the latest industry ploy to continue burning fossil fuels while claiming to reduce carbon pollution in the name of climate action.

But carbon capture will not resolve global warming. As this issue of Livable Future NOW details, carbon capture will keep fossil fuel power plants running, furthering the climate crisis. In the process, it will impact our water, destroy productive agricultural land, and pose a great public health and safety threat.

Because of you, Food & Water Watch is working in communities across the country against this practice, mobilizing people and standing with local partners. Thank you for fighting against this latest threat to our food, water, and climate.

Wenonah Hauter
Executive Director

The Denbury Pipeline rupture near Satartia, Mississippi resulted in a crater dangerously close to Highway 433. The sudden release of CO₂ caused a visible coating of ice in the area surrounding the rupture.

Aerial drone photo courtesy of THE MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY / USED WITH PERMISSION
Dan Zegart was the first national journalist to investigate the catastrophe, which hospitalized nearly 50 people. Now, he’s covering the fight against three corporations plotting 3,000 miles of carbon pipeline through Iowa.

These pipelines are part of the fossil fuel industry’s newest scam: carbon capture. They claim they can fight climate change by capturing CO₂ from the air surrounding their carbon-emitting plants, transporting it via pipelines, and storing it underground. But it doesn’t work, and it’s not safe.

Food & Water Watch Senior Iowa Organizer Emma Schmit sat down with Dan for an interview. This conversation has been edited for clarity and length.

You broke the story on how dangerous carbon pipelines can be. What surprised you?

The people in Satartia were not prepared. They were not notified by the company that [a rupture] could happen. They had very little knowledge about the pipeline. That didn’t surprise me much.

What surprised me was how bad the injuries were. People who had COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) under control are now on inhalers full-time. People are disoriented still, have memory problems. One of the most seriously-injured people can’t recognize his friends on the street. He can’t hold a job.

I was surprised by the sheer level of chaos. Folks overcome by CO₂ were wandering around, disorientated. Their cars had stalled because CO₂ displaces oxygen. And the heroic, almost battlefield mentality, of the first responders surprised me as well.

What did the accident at Satartia teach us about carbon pipelines?

You can’t predict where the plume of CO₂ is going to go, or how long it’s going to be in the air. All the models that had been done to predict this were wrong.

The people in Satartia were not prepared. They were not notified by the company that [a rupture] could happen.

To those who say, “We’ve built pipelines [for other products], we can do it with CO₂.” Nope! You can’t. In many ways, it’s a much more hazardous type of pipeline.

The people in Satartia were guinea pigs, sacrificed for this
Watch Dr. Sandra Steingraber’s excellent explanation of carbon capture’s flaws, in the film Dear President Biden.

fwwat.ch/carboncapture

Landowners and impacted Iowans showed up en masse at the Iowa State Capitol to voice their opposition to the proposed carbon pipelines.

 technology. Unless we want a lot more sacrifices, we better stop because we don’t know what we’re doing.

What are your thoughts on the pipelines proposed for Iowa?

These companies jumped in because the federal government is offering a tremendous amount of money for carbon capture projects. But the amount of carbon they can actually sequester is tiny compared to what we emit.

In the meantime, we’re going to forgo opportunities to produce less carbon as we move through the century.

Why, after knowing the safety concerns and how this technology doesn’t work, are we still trying to make carbon capture happen?

Oil companies have realized that carbon capture allows them

5 Reasons Carbon Capture Is Bogus

Carbon Transport and Storage are Unsafe
Carbon pipeline ruptures can expel lethal levels of carbon dioxide, an invisible asphyxiant, for miles. What’s more, CO₂ displaces oxygen, stalling combustion engines and impairing emergency response. CO₂ can also leak from storage wells and contaminate groundwater and soil.

Carbon Capture is an Expensive Failure
After billions of dollars in public and private investments over decades, there are no carbon capture success stories — only colossal failures. One of the largest was the Petra Nova coal plant in Texas. Once the poster child for CO₂ removal, it closed last year after persistent technological problems such as leaks led to frequent shut-offs — 294 days over a three-year period.

Carbon Capture is Energy Intensive
Our country emits roughly five billion tons of carbon into the atmosphere every year. Capturing just a quarter of that would require nearly the entire electricity output of the United States.

Carbon Capture Has Increased Emissions
Due to the large amount of energy required to power carbon capture and the life cycle of fossil fuels, carbon capture projects in this country have emitted more CO₂ than it has removed. Moreover, 95% of the captured carbon is currently being used to extract more oil in a practice known as ‘enhanced oil recovery.’

Carbon Capture Diverts Investments Away From Renewable Energy
We need a rapid transition to 100% renewable energy to stop the worst of climate change, the greatest threat to our food, water, and a livable future. This transition will be slowed as long as the fossil fuel industry can fool government officials and the public into investing in carbon capture instead of focusing on safe and proven clean energy solutions.

What’s Carbon Capture?
to stay alive longer. Maybe they’ll never have to change if we bury the emissions. CO₂ is the industry’s waste. They’re forcing taxpayers to pay them to throw out their garbage. Nobody else gets paid to throw out their garbage.

So, think about that in the context of... let’s say, a [pipeline] broke near a school, an old-folks home, a strip mall. What’s going to happen to those people? How are we going to get to them without internal-combustion engines? There’s no guaranteed path to safety.

In Iowa, this issue has brought rural Republicans and left-wing Democrats together. Why has this issue overcome this divide?

First, it attacks a fundamental value in our democratic capital—ist system — private property is not to be messed with.

No one wants to be poisoned, and there’s a good chance of that with these pipelines.

The other issue is safety. No one wants to be poisoned, and there’s a good chance of that with these pipelines.

It’s extraordinary. I’ve been in meetings where people talk to each other as neighbors. You have the makings of a movement when people can put aside their differences.

There are so many reasons carbon capture projects and their pipelines shouldn’t be built here, or anywhere. Only one thing is proven about carbon capture — it doesn’t work. It keeps the U.S. addicted to fossil fuels, degrades our agricultural land, threatens our water, and puts our communities and climate at risk. Thank you so much for powering this fight!
Carol Johnson’s Lasting Impact on the Fight for Our Planet

We are filled with immense gratitude for our long-time monthly donor, Carol Nord Johnson, who recently made a legacy gift of $500,000 to Food & Water Watch. As one of the largest legacy contributions ever made to Food & Water Watch, we are honored to be included in Carol’s lasting wishes.

In her life, Carol’s monthly Food & Water Watch contribution provided steady support for our most critical campaigns. Through her bequest, she will continue to power and shape our work to protect the health and well-being of our planet and its people well into the future. Her lasting investment is an inspirational act of optimism and motivates us to fight even harder for a livable future.

How to Make a Lasting Impact for Future Generations

Many donors interested in giving to charity through a will are surprised to learn that it requires zero immediate investment. If you’d like to learn more, visit fwwat.ch/legacy or reach out to Ryan Nuckel at rnuckel@fwwatch.org.

Carrie Dike, a Food & Water Legacy Society member, says,

“I have always looked to support organizations like Food & Water Watch... that try to solve issues by doing something about it. The least I can do is to help financially support these groups that raise awareness and make things better.
YOUR FOOD & WATER WATCH AT WORK

ACTION SHOTS!

Our Executive Director, Wenonah Hauter, was arrested on Capitol Hill back in the fall. She protested in solidarity with her peers from prominent environmental, labor, and progressive groups against Senator Manchin’s permitting reform proposal, which would have fast-tracked fossil fuel projects and undermined community and environmental review.

Together we’ve successfully prevented this proposal from being tacked onto any must-pass bills.

FEATURED VICTORY

In November, New York became the first state to pass a moratorium on cryptocurrency mining powered by fossil fuels.

Crypto mining companies had been rapidly expanding across New York, reopening retired coal- and gas-burning plants to fuel their operations. This bill stops new permits from being issued for two years. While the state uses this time to study crypto’s impact on its emissions reduction goals, Food & Water Watch will be fighting to make this moratorium permanent.

Your contributions mobilized our community. Thank you for standing against polluting industries and making victories like this possible!

Together we’ve made incredible strides toward sustainable food, clean and affordable water, and a livable future for all.

Visit fwwat.ch/spring23wins or scan this QR code to see more of your impact on our website.

Photo: New York City’s Public Advocate, Jumaane Williams spoke at a rally and press event in front of New York Governor Hochul’s Manhattan office. Photo by Caroll Andrewsk
Our February event featured an in-depth conversation about carbon capture. See the recording by scanning this QR code or by visiting fwwat.ch/LFLccs

MISSION
Our food, water, and climate are under constant assault by corporations who put profit over the survival of humanity. They have seized control of the very institutions that were built to protect us.

We mobilize people to reclaim their political power, hold our elected officials accountable, and resist corporate control — ensuring we all have the essential resources we need to thrive. This is a fight we must win because this planet is the only one we get.

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Everyone needs a plan, no matter what your estate includes. Having a legal, up-to-date will in place is a powerful way to protect your loved ones, make important decisions about the future, and support the causes you care about for decades to come.

We recommend FreeWill as a trusted, secure resource that removes the hurdles that often surround this important life task of making a will. To date, 550,000+ individuals have used their platform and obtained peace of mind for the future.

To learn more, use this QR code or visit fwwat.ch/will

foodandwaterwatch.org
Food & Water Watch is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that educates and advocates for safe food, clean water, and a livable climate.
Gifts to Food & Water Watch are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

foodandwateraction.org
Food & Water Action is our affiliated 501(c)4 nonprofit that mobilizes people to win campaigns that builds political power.
Gifts to Food & Water Action Fund are not tax deductible.