



Clean Water for North Carolina Clean Currents

Fall/Winter 2007

A newsletter of clean water and community environmental justice issues

Beyond Rain Barrels and Reservoirs: Real Water Security for NC

“**E**xceptional Drought.” This Term, used to describe the current drought in most of North Carolina gives the impression that we may not need to plan for such conditions in the future. In fact, one consequence of climate change is that we’ll probably experience *more* periods of extended drought in the southeast. Meeting the needs of people and ecosystems in a world of less predictable supply will require major changes in local, state and even federal policies for water supply pricing, planning, monitoring and funding.

We all know of local governments that have been very slow to respond to depleted water supplies and predictions of continuing drought by requiring mandatory conservation. Current law allows local authorities to make their own decisions about conservation unless the Governor declares a statewide public health emergency. However, it’s more than just trying to prevent inconvenience to residents and businesses that has made local governments slow to act. Selling treated water is a significant source of income for local governments, and they depend on that income to pay off debts for building water treatment plants and laying water supply lines. Those debt payments don’t change during a drought, so a reduction in sales squeezes a town’s whole budget.

Some of that debt is probably avoidable. When a city hires a consulting engineer to look at options for increasing water and wastewater services, they get advice with a built in “agenda”—an engineering firm typically receives 10% of the cost of a project they design. There’s little motivation, therefore, to recommend the most cost-effective approach. We need to make sure that local governments can “tap into” an independent source of advice for resource and infrastructure planning, without such conflicts of interest.

Several towns and counties across the state are considering the most expensive water supply option of all—creating new reservoirs—despite the overwhelming disadvantages. New reservoirs require purchasing large expanses of land, decades of expensive legal battles and permitting and, finally, construction of a dam and infrastructure to use the water supply. Often lower income residents are selectively displaced by such projects, and land around a prospective reservoir is snapped up for high end developments, which often attracts very high volume water consumers.

Even after all of those expenses, surface reservoirs experience massive evaporation in heat waves like those this summer. Slowing down rivers by damming them drops oxygen levels and increases algae growth, degrading water quality for fish, drinking water and recreation. So reservoirs are no guarantee of good water supply.

Some towns have leakage from their water supply lines of up to 50% of their treated water. State policies shouldn’t tolerate such waste. A “carrot and stick” approach of incentives and penalties could reduce every town’s leaks to less than 5% in a few years.

Coupled with the fact that water customers in the southeast have the highest per capita water use in the world, it’s clear that we have a lot of options for reducing the draw of our cities on the region’s water supplies. Eliminating water line leaks, replacing wasteful appliances, changing industrial processes and reforming water rate structures are all much more cost effective and sustainable than “creating” new water supply.

Irrigation of lawns and landscapes, flushing toilets, and many industrial processes don’t need expensive treated water. An average household could reduce its water purchases by over 50% in the summer months—the most likely months for water shortages in a drought— by simply capturing stormwater from roofs and driveways, storing it in underground cisterns (to prevent evaporation), and using it for “non-potable” purposes, or allowing it to gradually recharge groundwater when plentiful. A good storm can yield thousand of gallons from a roof, dwarfing the volume a rain barrel can collect. Planning boards should pass ordinances requiring all new developments to install pervious pavement, and systems to capture and store most of the rainwater that falls on roofs and driveways.

Cities that choose the reservoir route will almost certainly regret it. They’ll end up with enormous debt to pay off and water supplies that will still be subject to evaporation and declining water quality. Smart local government will focus on fixing water leaks, reforming water rates and investing in permanent conservation and on-site water capture strategies.

The largest water users of all, utility power plants and agriculture, must be required reduce their water usage and wasteful evaporation with well-demonstrated technologies. Installing closed loop cooling systems in power plants and highly efficient drip irrigation on farms will go far to make our economy more sustainable as we face increasingly unpredictable water levels and extreme weather conditions.

A statewide water conservation utility could provide consulting and financing for water audits and conservation strategies to local governments, and direct financing to existing homes and businesses to install water capture systems. These approaches would pay for themselves in a few years in reduced cost of water, energy to treat and pump water, and avoiding costs of expensive new storage projects. It’s time to act.

What About Groundwater During the Drought?

More than half of North Carolina residents depend on groundwater supplies for their drinking water. While hundreds of thousands are public water customers who depend on large wells, over 2.7 MILLION people depend on private wells, most of which are unmetered and untested. To fully account for use of the state’s water, groundwater users should be required to meter their usage, and should be paying fees or penalties for large volume, non-essential uses, just as public water customers do. The rash of wells being drilled by wealthy homeowners to water their lawns is an irresponsible use of groundwater to avoid conservation restrictions, and should be prevented.

In many ways, NC’s groundwater is even more precious and needs more protection than surface water. When rainfall is lacking, the “base flows” of streams depend on groundwater springs. While groundwater levels are slower to drop in a drought than surface water, they are also much slower to “recharge” when rainfall returns. Contaminated groundwater takes far longer to clean itself than surface water, due to slow movement and lack of oxygen, and engineered cleanups are very expensive. All groundwater—quality and quantity—must be protected as a future drinking water source.

Clean Water for North Carolina

Clean Water for North Carolina is a private, non-profit organization based in Asheville, NC. CWFNC works to ensure that all people have a right to live, work, and play in clean and safe communities. Together, we have the power and responsibility to work for a healthy and sustainable environment. Our staff works with an active and diverse board of directors and members to increase grassroots involvement in environmental decisions. CWFNC spearheads action statewide and helps grassroots and environmental groups, individuals, and local governments develop strategies to address threats to the environment.

Our Mission

Clean Water for North Carolina promotes clean, safe water and environments and empowered, just communities for all North Carolinians through organizing, education, advocacy and technical assistance.

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Who to Contact

Asheville

828-251-1291 • 800-929-4480
Gracia O'Neill, Assistant Director
gracia@cwfn.org

Durham

919-401-9600
Hope Taylor-Guevara, Executive Director
hope@cwfn.org

Garysburg

252-537-1078
Belinda Joyner, Northeast Organizer

Highlights from the 2007 CWFNC Annual Meeting!

An amazing array of speakers at this year's Clean Water for NC annual meeting, "Rising Up: Grassroots Efforts for Water Justice and a Safe Energy Future in NC," covered several successful efforts from across the state. In addition, CWFNC staff and Board discussed little known consequences of global warming, why NC needs an energy efficiency program independent of for-profit utilities, and how western NC is trying to prevent steep slope disasters.

Greg Yost of Laurel Valley Watch spoke passionately about how one rural community has taken on the destructive activities of developers whose aim is to make one corner of Madison County a playground for the rich – with little consideration of their impact on the environment, water quality, or the rural character of the area that their neighbors have enjoyed for hundreds of years.

CWFNC's Duke Intern, Jill Logeman, researched how to best implement a concept known as "pre-permit bonding" in environmental decision-making. This is a concept CWFNC has promoted for years, and would require that better financial assurance be in place before any risky endeavors, such as when air and water permits are granted or hazardous materials operations are undertaken.



Greg Yost of Laurel Valley Watch shows a photo of tiny, beautiful Puncheon Fork Creek, threatened by wastewater discharge. Photo: Marshall Tyler



Heather Rayburn tells how Mountain Voices Alliance lead a coalition that stopped a new Progress Energy power plant. Photo: Marshall Tyler

Heather Rayburn, a founding member of Mountain Voices Alliance, which supports responsible, sustainable growth in western NC, told how a group of residents successfully fought off Progress Energy's short-sighted plan to build an oil-fired power plant in the small town of Woodfin, just north of Asheville.

Margie Ellison of NC Waste Awareness and Reduction Network (and former CWFNC Board Chair!) gave a rousing presentation on how the grassroots came together to fight the utility-polluted energy bill (Senate Bill 3, supposed to a renewable energy bill) this past summer. Margie talked of having to elbow her way to the decision-making table early in the game in order to make her voice heard and to be able to keep the grassroots community informed on the changes happening with the bill. While the bill got passed despite our opposition, a broad coalition has formed to link energy reforms to economic and environmental accountability.

The following morning, CWFNC sponsored a canoe float on nearby Salem Lake. Folks from the Yadkin Pee Dee River basin in North Carolina gathered in the afternoon for a picnic and to discuss forming a new River protection group. Friends of the Yadkin PeeDee River have elected a board of directors and are looking for new members!

Many thanks to our speakers for great presentations, and to the Children Home in Winston-Salem, for hosting this event!

Some CWFNC participants in a Sunday morning canoe float on Salem Lake. Photo: Ron Bryant.



Emergency Drinking Water Fund Misspent by NC DENR— Help Us Take Action!

For many years, Clean Water for NC has worked with communities whose private wells have been contaminated, often by spreading “plumes” of polluted groundwater that well-users had not been told about. When we learned that the NC Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) often KNEW about the contamination, but had not notified nearby well users, we were outraged by the injustice. We worked with community groups to develop statewide legislation that would:

- Require agencies to notify well users (residents, not just landowners!) within 1,500 feet of a contaminated site and assist them with testing of their wells;
- Create a statewide Groundwater Quality database that’s accessible to the public and local health departments, showing all contaminated sites and wells;
- Require well testing before sale of real estate that depends on a private well for water supply, and
- Create a large Emergency Drinking Water Fund (\$10 million over several years) to help low income residents pay for testing and replacement water supply.

Since 2005, NC Representatives Bernard Allen (Wake County) and Pricey Harrison (Guilford County) worked hard to get that legislation passed to protect the rights of private well users. While it was repeatedly stalled by real estate and homebuilder lobbyists, Rep. Harrison did succeed in getting a small appropriation for an Emergency Drinking Water Fund. In 2006, \$300,000 was appropriated, and this year, she struggled hard to increase the Fund to \$615,000, still just a fraction of what is needed to cost-effectively provide testing and safe replacement water for low income well users. Rep. Allen died in late 2006, and the Fund has been named in his memory.

Entire fund spent on just 2 contaminated wells

Imagine our horror to learn that DENR ignored the priorities of advocates for the use of that very modest first year’s funding and used the ENTIRE \$300,000 to extend public water lines to a SINGLE SITE involving only two contaminated wells. No matter how deserving the users of those two wells are, this is a decision that was made by DENR officials with no respect for the broader purpose of the Fund or public transparency. It’s hard to imagine a LESS cost-effective use of the Emergency Drinking Water Fund. \$300,000 could have notified folks in dozens of communities at risk, or provided testing and hookups to safe water for many folks on contaminated wells. DENR is sharing few details and says it was a “good decision.” We couldn’t disagree more strongly.

CWFNC, the Environmental Justice Network and impacted community groups have organized to protest DENR’s actions and have reached a consensus on our priorities for cost effective and accountable use of this funding. We are calling for DENR spend the Fund according to those priorities and that there be full public disclosure to prevent squandering of the 2007 Emergency Drinking Water Fund by the agency.

You can help! Please call (919)715-4102 or write a letter to DENR Secretary Bill Ross, NCDENR, 1601 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1601, and tell him his agency must stop wasting the Bernard Allen Emergency Drinking Water Fund that community advocates worked hard to create! Instead the agency should use it as intended: to notify well users of nearby contamination, to create a statewide groundwater quality database, to assist well users at risk in testing their wells (including those within ½ mile of livestock operations) and if dangerous contamination is found, to provide hookups or treatment systems to low income residents. Extending water lines is far too great an expense for the tiny Fund to cover, and DENR has shown that they will only abuse any such flexibility. THANKS for your support of the rights of NC’s 2.7 million well users!

Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program Expands as Development Pressures Increase in Western NC

As land development increases in WNC, there is an urgent need for more extensive water quality data, using biological samples collected with a consistent and rigorous protocol. Thanks to a grant from the Pigeon River Fund of the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, CWFNC is now expanding the Stream Monitoring Information Exchange (SMIE) volunteer monitoring program! SMIE is coordinated by Clean Water for North Carolina, and includes over a dozen non-profit organizations, educational institutions and state and federal agencies in western North Carolina.

The SMIE volunteer monitoring program will add 7 new sites and up to 30 new volunteers by June of 2008. New sites have been added on Reems Creek and in the Swanannoa area of Buncombe County, and on Puncheon Fork

Creek in Madison County, just downstream of a where a high end resort is being built and where developers have proposed to locate a new wastewater treatment plant (which is being challenged by Clean Water for NC and community group Laurel Valley Watch!). With 15 new volunteers as of October, the program has now trained nearly 100 residents to collect and identify aquatic insects, and to document and report water quality problems. The program has also strengthened awareness, built a reliable record of water quality over time and increased volunteer involvement in protecting water quality in the region.



Participants in October SMIE training learn how to collect biological samples from a threatened creek.

Support CWFNC and this extremely cost-effective program! Sponsorship of one site or a full year of data collection and assessment, including training, professional data analysis and reporting, costs only \$400! Fill out the coupon on page 7 to make your contribution!

Residents Fed Up with Corporate Pollution of Groundwater

Residents concerned about their health and contaminated groundwater near the old CTS plant in south Buncombe County have had enough after decades of falling through the cracks of bureaucracy. The CTS plant manufactured industrial switches and resistors on the 57-acre site for 20 years before the plant closed down in 1986 (CTS is still alive and thriving however). Since that time, federal and state efforts to clean up the contaminated site could be considered irresponsible at best and negligent at worst.

EPA tests in 1990 showed high levels of toxic substances such as cadmium, magnesium, beryllium, nickel, zinc, vinyl chloride and TCE (Trichloroethylene, a suspected carcinogen) in soil and stream samples. A 1991 EPA report said the groundwater and air pathway were of concern because of the high concentration of pollutants. Despite these reports, EPA recommended that “no further remedial action be planned for CTS of Asheville.”

The EPA then handed the site off to the NC Superfund program, where it languished until a neighbor reported an oily mess oozing up from a spring being used as a source of drinking water, to NC environmental officials in 1999. Tests performed by State environmental officials found one well and two springs on neighboring properties with concentrations of TCE at a level of 21,000 parts per billion (the safe drinking water standard is five parts per billion).

Although some local residents were hooked up to City water, it wasn't until 2006 that a soil vapor extraction was installed, which could help prevent more TCE from getting into the groundwater but will not remove the source of the contamination.



The CTS plant south of Asheville shut down in 1986, leaving a concentrated plume of solvents and toxic metals that may be poisoning wells and threatening air quality in nearby homes. Photos: Barry Durand

In the spring and summer of 2007, independent sampling of a nearby spring showed TCE at 293,000 parts per billion—more than 10 times higher than the 1999 level. Since that time additional testing has been conducted by local residents, local media and now, finally, EPA and NC are doing free testing of over 70 wells in the immediate area.

Now, with the help of Clean Water for NC and other organizations, local residents are organizing to demand a complete clean up of the site at no cost to tax payers – 20 years is far too long to wait for justice!

One Hundred Years is Too Long: Clean Up the Pigeon River!

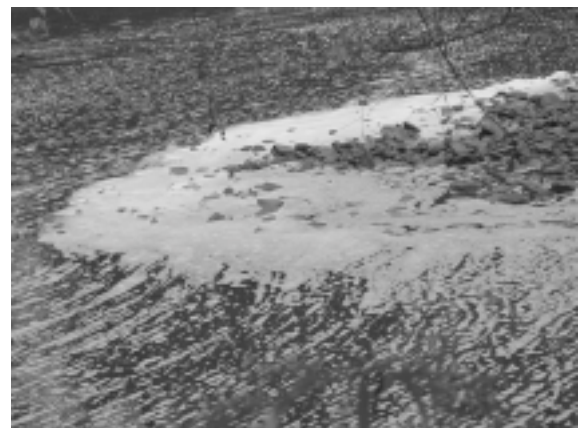
With severe drought, a recent spill and their NPDES (wastewater discharge) permit now over a year overdue, the new owners of the Blue Ridge Paper Products (now Evergreen Products) pulp and paper mill in Canton, NC are not making the best of impressions on their downstream neighbors. Champion first started the Mill in 1908, fouling the river and killing thousands of fish.

When the mill spilled black liquor (a byproduct of the pulping process, consisting of black lignin, water and the chemicals used in the process) into the Pigeon River in mid-September, NC Division of Water Quality (DWQ) officials acknowledged that it had turned the River black and foamy. However, DWQ immediately said it wouldn't issue a Notice of Violation or penalty as the spill appeared to be “beyond their control.” Although the incident didn't violate the Mill's permit due to their weak annual average limit for “color,” such a response is a refusal to enforce the surface water “narrative standards” for color, odor and foam that should prohibit the fouling of rivers and streams. Evergreen has refused to comment to local media or return calls from local residents.

For months, the effluent from the mill has made up over HALF of the volume of the water in the river directly downstream from the mill, due to low flows from the drought. Downstream Haywood Co. residents, long reluctant to speak up because the Mill is the largest employer in the region, have started to complain publicly. Resident Kenneth Cole noted

that at times the water has been “so black you can't see the bottom of the river. And all the foam. It looks like it did back in the 50s and 60s.”

Meanwhile DWQ expects to issue a new draft wastewater permit for the mill early in 2008. Clean Water for NC is partnering with NC and east Tennessee groups to get a more protective permit, but we will need your help to finally win one of the nation's longest running Clean Water Act struggles! Contact us TODAY to find out how you can get involved at info@cwfn.org!



Foam buildup appears at several sites along the Pigeon River in TN, more than 30 miles downstream of Canton paper mill. Photo: Brian Overholt

Granville Co. Residents Mobilize to Oppose a National Bio Agro Defense Facility

The Granville Non-Violent Action Team (G.N.A.T.), formed during the 1990 struggle against the ThermalKem hazardous waste incinerator, was reactivated in September with many old and new members from several counties attending. GNAT aims to stop the siting of a proposed National Bio Agro Defense Facility (NBAF) lab by the Dept. of Homeland Security in Butner, just north of Durham. The NBAF would import a number of foreign animal diseases for study on a state research farm, including agents known to be infectious and deadly to humans. Homeland Security's current Plum Island Lab has been plagued with accidents and security breaches since it opened in the 1950's.

The proposed NC site is close to private homes and farms, as well as the natural drainage to Raleigh's water supply, Falls Lake. GNAT is raising a wide range of concerns, including security and community oversight issues, handling of wastewater from the facility and incineration or burial of research materials that might include biological, chemical or radiological hazards.

Working with a network of organizations, including Clean Water for NC, GNAT will educate the public about the diseases that Homeland Security said will be studied, security and accidents at other BioSafety Level-3 and -4 facilities, and potential impacts to air, water and public health. GNAT members have met speakers from the "NC Consortium for the NBAF," a group of biotech, agricultural industry and academic interests supporting the proposed lab, with signs, flyers and tough questions. The nearby cities of Durham and Raleigh are seeking more information, and civic groups are asking residents to sign resolutions opposing the facility.

"There's not enough oversight in the world to make me feel safe with this in my community, and if there were, we'd be sacrificing too much of

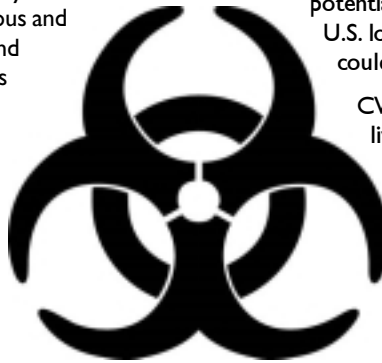
our freedom and public transparency," said Elaine McNeil, who spoke critically about the role that most elected officials played in the process. The site also raises significant environmental justice concerns, as there are thousands of people who could be trapped in nearby federal jails or state mental facilities in the case of a biohazard release.

"It doesn't make sense to put a facility that represents a significant potential bio-hazard to the surrounding community in a mainland U.S. location with a mild climate, where any escaped organisms could thrive," says Bill McKellar, a pharmacist in Butner.

CWFNC executive director, Hope Taylor, and small livestock farmer about 9 miles from the current proposed Butner site, commented, "If it's really about protecting our food supply, the facility should be sited by an international consortium at an isolated location in extreme hot and dry or cold surroundings. If there's a biohazard release, emergency responders won't be helping folks to evacuate to safety, as happened during the Apex hazardous waste fire last year. They'd be enforcing a quarantine on their neighbors, including thousands of mental health patients and prisoners."

GNAT's efforts back in the 1990's prevented the siting of a hazardous waste incinerator near Oxford in Granville County, raising statewide awareness of the potential impacts of such a facility on the surrounding community's health and safety and even on the local economy. Tobacco farmers linked arms with environmental activists to block site inspectors from state agencies. The state Hazardous Waste Commission eventually scrapped plans for an incinerator altogether after a statewide network staged protests at all of the proposed sites.

Visit www.nobio.org or call CWFNC at 919-401-9600 for more information or to get involved!



The international symbol for "biohazard." Deadly diseases that Homeland Security wants to study at the proposed lab would include those requiring Biosafety Level 4, the highest level.

Italy Approves Moratorium on Water Privatization!

Last fall, Clean Water for NC reported on low income residents who were hurt by high prices and poor service provided by privately owned water utilities, and called for an end to new privatizations and consolidation in this massively profitable industry.

We are pleased to know that on November 28th, the Italian Parliament approved a one year moratorium on private contracts for water services. All privatization processes in Italy will be stopped for this period.

It is the first result at the national level of a campaign for the "Popular Proposal of Law" promoted by the Italian Forum of Movements on Water, now in discussion in the Environmental Commission of the Parliament.

On December 1, a joyful, intergenerational, diverse and determined march of 40,000 people walked through the streets of Rome, carrying banners with the motto: "Returning to public water, defending the common good."

The march celebrated the moratorium victory and called for passage of a permanent ban on privatization (already 406,000 signatures have been gathered). This decision will be valid until the approval of the permanent law proposal. Demonstrators also called for massive financial aid to support public water infrastructure and support for farmers to change to drip irrigation, a far more efficient use of water.

Together with small and large delegation of water activists coming from all over the country, some local administrations and City Councils joined the march, together with activist networks committed to preventing pollution of "land and sky," and those fighting for decent housing.

The Italian public water and social justice activists want their demonstration to remind everyone that the right to water is a global issue and that this victory is only a part of the efforts of a world-wide network fighting for the right to water and against the commodification by water corporations.

Based on reports from the Italian Forum of the Water Movements



Water rights activists march through Rome on December 1st.

Toxic Emissions Projected to Increase Dramatically from New Coal Power Plant

Early in 2007, a statewide coalition of groups successfully pressured Duke Energy to reduce plans for expanding their Cliffside power plant in Rutherford Co. from two 800 megawatt units to just one. However, the planned addition of the new unit would STILL dramatically increase the toxic pollutants emitted from the site even with the "retirement" of four older, smaller units. An analysis released in October by CWFNC and NCWARN, based on Duke's own data, shows all but three of the 57 toxic and hazardous pollutants studied would be allowed to increase substantially in the new permit, some of them by factors of several hundred-fold.

The analysis also shows a projected 10-fold increase in mercury emissions, as well as 13 to 50-fold increases in other toxic metals like arsenic and cadmium. Mercury, which bio-accumulates in sediments and then in fish, is responsible for the fish consumption advisories, including parts of the Catawba River basin, in all rivers and streams southeast of I-85. When mothers or young children eat the fish, modified forms of mercury can cause severe neurological damage, even to fetuses. "Most African Americans, and folks of low and moderate income, fish at least as much to provide food as for sport. That makes the Cliffside expansion a clear environmental justice issue," said Richard McElrath, Sr., a long-time Charlotte educator and environmental justice activist.

Duke Energy has been claiming that the decommissioning of "four, older, dirty units" in favor of one modern and cleaner unit will be an environmental improvement for the site. This misleading claim is based on comparing the new plant's emissions to those from those older units before 2002 regulations were applied, and is belied by the new study on toxic emissions. Visit www.cwfnc.org to see a spreadsheet comparison of 2005 emissions for the older Cliffside units vs. the projected emissions for the new Unit 6, including chronic health effects.

When NC Div. of Air Quality held just one official hearing in October for a permit for the expansion, CWFNC joined other groups in organizing "people's hearings" in Charlotte, Asheville and Raleigh, drawing hundreds of additional comments. In November, students from Warren Wilson College, near Asheville, staged a protest in front of Duke headquarters, resulting in the arrest of two activists. In the meantime, Duke Energy's CEO, Jim Rogers, was named "CEO of the Year" at the Platts Global Energy Awards for proposing an energy efficiency program that CWFNC estimates could create profits for Duke shareholders in excess of 400%!

We need to "JUST SAY NO!" to any new coal plants, and to this gargantuan source of added toxic releases. We know that efficiency and conservation programs independent of utilities, and renewable energy sources offer the cleanest and most cost-effective ways to reduce the need for toxic and water-hogging power plants.

Residents have successfully stopped the building of new coal plants in Utah, Wyoming, Minnesota, Delaware, Florida, Washington and Kansas already this year. We can do it in NC too! Email hope@cwfnc.org or 919-401-9600 to help us stop new big new power plants.



Empty chairs show that NC Div. of Air Quality declined to attend hearings on Cliffside organized by a coalition of citizens groups in Charlotte, Asheville and Raleigh.

Biofuels for Autos Will Seriously Impact Water and Food Supplies

For years, ethanol and other fuels derived from crops have been widely touted by agro industry interests to make the U.S. less dependent on imported oil and a way to reduce greenhouse gases. Many environmentalists cheered and supported subsidies before more scientific studies were available, believing that fuel derived from crops had to be a cleaner, more climate-friendly source.

Little or no benefit for climate or air quality

Recent studies of overall energy usage show that fuels from many agricultural sources are far more expensive to produce than renewables like solar and wind, and tens of times more costly than improved auto fuel efficiency standards. They provide little or no net benefit over gasoline in reducing our carbon footprint, and may actually add to greenhouse gas, NOx and particulate emissions, now recognized as a major cause of cardiovascular disease. Grasses, cellulose-containing crops and some oil seed plants may provide a better ratio of carbon than crops like corn, but if used as significant fuel source for the massive U. S. transportation market, the ecological and social impacts worldwide would far outweigh any benefits, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute.

Water use and loss of forests

Growing crops on a scale that could significantly replace petroleum based transportation fuels would result in an increased demand for cropland, with resulting felling of forests, and the accompanying increased carbon

dioxide emissions from burning. Diverse forests are an important means of capturing rainfall, reducing runoff and increasing recharge of groundwater. Increased open land to be used for agricultural crops would speed up erosion of top soil, sedimentation of rivers and dead zones in oceans due to fertilizer pollution, as well as depletion of aquifers as more water is pumped for irrigation.

Food supplies and prices

Oxfam, other international aid organizations and U. N. officials advocating for policies to protect world food supplies are very worried about trends that have already become apparent. Use of crops for fuel is predicted to raise food prices by 20-40% and accelerate competition for land far beyond population growth. They have called for a moratorium on subsidies from the biofuels industry to prevent major impacts on food prices in the third world. Land in Africa is being snapped up for potential fuel crops, and there is a growing concern that a massive new wave of economic colonization of the continent as a source of auto fuels for wealthy nations would lead to displacement of subsistence crops and farmers and to widespread famine.

Alarming, pending U.S. energy legislation would give huge subsidies to major agricultural corporations. Any climate or oil-independence benefits would be small compared to impacts on water, forest and crop lands and food prices. Contact your legislator and tell them to remove these subsidies!

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Stephen Schewel, Dorothy & David Herbert,
Speed Rogers and Ellen Davis

Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival's Western NC Debut!

In October, Clean Water for NC was privileged to host the nationally known Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival in western NC for the first time ever. The Festival, put on "by activists and for activists," is sponsored by Patagonia Inc. and raises awareness and involvement in local environmental issues.

"Lost People of Mountain Village" is a spoof documentary focusing on resort sprawl, a pressing issue facing western NC. Garland Galloway of Laurel Valley Watch, CWFNC's partner in fighting a new wastewater treatment plant for a sprawling ski resort, was there to inform and educate about the irresponsible and unjust building practices of Scenic Wolf, and its impacts on his community.



"The Pigeon River Project," shown for the first time at the Festival, was perhaps the most moving film of the night. Featuring the century long story of the pulp and paper mill in Canton, NC and the mountain stream that receives its wastewater discharge, the film raised hopes that a united effort between TN and NC activists could finally clean up the Pigeon River. The talented, young TN filmmaker Brian Overholt couldn't attend, but the audience was dotted with many of the films "stars."

Thanks to Asheville Pizza and Brewing for hosting us graciously and hats off to the many local business donors of raffle prizes and desserts. City Council member (and former CWFNC Board member) Robin Cape emceed the event, and CWFNC Board member Isaac Coleman closed the evening with an inspiring speech about activism and environmental justice. Dozens of new volunteers and several new members signed up, with almost \$1,200 raised for CWFNC and 2 grassroots partners.

CWFNC hopes to host the Wild and Scenic Film Festival again next year. We'll see you then!

Join Clean Water for North Carolina

(or renew your membership)!

Here's my donation to join or renew my CWFNC membership:

\$20 \$35

\$50 \$100

Other \$ _____

I would like to volunteer, contact me.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

(Email is a faster & cheaper way for us to reach you.)

Make your check payable to:

Clean Water for North Carolina
and send to: 29½ Page Avenue
Asheville, NC 28801



Clean Water for North Carolina
 29 1/2 Page Ave
 Asheville NC 28801
 info@cwfn.org

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 Asheville, NC 28801
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Do you like the work that we do? If you'd like to make a donation and take a tax deduction for 2007, here's an easy way to support Clean Water for NC TODAY! Go to www.cwfn.org and click on "Donate" on the left side of the screen to make your tax-deductible donation. THANK YOU!

This newsletter is printed on 30% post-consumer, 50% alternative fiber.

NOW AVAILABLE:

Christmas Tree Lead Test Kit!

Concerned your artificial tree might contain lead? You can now get your Christmas tree or garlands tested for toxic lead by ordering a kit from our non-profit CLEAN WATER LEAD TESTING service at www.leadtesting.org. Only \$20 for the kit includes all supplies and instructions for taking a sample, as well as complete laboratory analysis and recommendations mailed back to you. You can order on-line or to print out an order form to mail with your check. Test YOUR tree and trimmings this year, to be sure that your family is safe from lead poisoning!



Also, give the gift of knowledge this holiday season to keep your friends and relatives safe from LEAD, ARSENIC or COPPER. You can order kits for lead, copper and arsenic in water, dust, soil and paint, as well as "wood wipe" tests for arsenic in treated wood. Just go to www.leadtesting.org to get lots of information on the hazards and how to prevent exposures around your home or business.

YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR 2008 CLEAN WATER NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

Friday, January 11, 2008
 4:30-6:30 PM
 29 1/2 Page Avenue, Asheville

Join us for fellowship with other clean water activists, enjoy great homemade goodies and learn how you can get more involved in protecting NC's water and communities!

Contact Gracia at 828-251-1291 or gracia@cwfn.org to let us know you are coming, or if you'd like to contribute a snack or dessert.